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THEOSOPHY AND ART.

By Lawren Harris

(Second Half of a Talk given at Niagara)

We have for the conduct of mankind on earth four main divisions or categories of ideas.

We have, firstly, laws, fashioned by man to meet the exigencies of time and place and people, and administered by courts and judges and police.

These are the stop and go signs of physical existence.

Secondly, we have a moral code.

This varies in different ages and in different places and with different people.

It is dictated by general self interest or expediency; is personal and possessive, dogmatic and inelastic, and is most frequently derived from some so-called authoritative religion.

It is extrinsic and aims at achieving some degree of outward harmony by outward means.

It is of the desire nature, of and for the lower man.

Thirdly, we have ethics, which is of the mind, is logical and results in a scheme or theory.

And fourthly, we have æsthetics, which is of the intuition or spiritual intelligence.

It is of the life of the soul as distinct from that of the person.

It is an attitude, not a code or creed, nor a scheme or theory.

It is an attitude which discloses the memory of the divine in us.

It is intrinsic and the source of all harmony in life and is essentially creative.

Indeed, it is the source of all the creative arts.

It is indefinable and can only be known when it is lived in terms of direct experience, in some degree.

We find that the laws we lay down for physical living are very definite.

And that moral codes are usually rigid and often arbitrary, and that when they loosen a little bit, people begin to think that life is going to the dogs.

We find that ethics are less rigid and not so arbitrary in that they leave room for the mind to play around with theories of the good life.

And when we come to æsthetics, we find it cannot be a set of rules; it cannot be put into a creed or code nor a scheme or theory, because it is a way of seeing, a way of life, governed and inspired by the indefinable laws of beauty.

Now there is little known about æsthetics.

The moralists do not know that it exists, because they function in a different and arbitrarily regimented realm.

There is little known about æsthetics, because it is something that cannot be analyzed. To try to dissect it is to lose its spirit which is to say, to lose its meaning, its significance; just as an anatomist cannot find the consciousness by dissecting the body.

It is only as a living, functioning attitude, that it has any meaning.

So that to approach the problem of the æsthetic attitude must be the same as the approach to the problem of art and the approach to the problem of the creative life.

For these are in essence one and the same, and imply a living attitude and not a formula.

Furthermore, they can only be understood by awareness at the summit of the soul, at the very forefront of our being.

The reason for this is, that at the summit of the soul, at intensity of awareness, we are every one of us essentially simple; we are pure perception without encumbrances, not a person but a perceiving power.

We are then above man made laws, above all codes, all creeds, all dogmas, all formulas for living, all assistance from scholarship, all earthly comfort and props.

Our back is turned not only to the accumulated debris of the ages but to all the confusing formulations and acceptances of our own day and place.

We then glimpse the real meaning of beauty

And this is the experience of the æsthetic attitude

And once having had that experience, even faintly

Nothing afterwards seems right in human life that is not beautiful

And that becomes the talisman of the life.

The man who is called the æsthete, he who isolates himself for his own enjoy-

ment represents a perversion of the æsthetic attitude.

He does not face toward the heart of being, he is not pure perception beyond personality

He looks backwards into the personality and mistakes a, to him, precious reflection for reality.

Thus all the hedonists in the arts, those who look upon beauty as a mere distraction and not as a power at work in the soul, and all the ivory tower type of writers and artists, all the precious and spiritually sterile individuals who isolate themselves from human resonance to protect their personal preciousness, do no more than fiddle away their days in a refined and unprofitable selfishness.

Such individuals do not represent the æsthetic attitude.

For they have lost contact both with deep human resonance and with the intimations of the spirit.

The individual of genuine æsthetic attitude feels within himself the richness of human resonance and the amplitude of life, as well as the underlying unity of nature.

His understanding is re-engendered and increases with every experience of beauty, and this not only discloses the soul but builds within, a body of good will; almost, a living, inner presence.

In fact, without a profound acceptance and awareness of life in all its manifestations, that sixth sense of the essential harmony behind and deep within all manifestation, which is the source of æsthetics, cannot be found.

And without this sense, alive in some faint degree in us, neither art nor life has any real meaning.

Morality in itself has no meaning.

In itself it is no more than a device.

Morality is actually the dead letter of æsthetics precisely as a creed is the dead letter of the spirit of a religion.

Thus the moral attitude and the æsthetic attitude represent two quite different and usually antithetical attitudes toward life.

Morals presuppose an extra-cosmic god, a law giver outside of or beyond his universe

The æsthetic attitude implies a divine being within each one of us and to be disclosed over the ages by self-devised, creative effort and experience.

The moral attitude is sterile, uncreative, un-adventurous, is led and does not lead.

Whereas the æsthetic attitude is creative and fertile and implies adventure at the very forefront of one's being.

Morality is imitative and institutionalized life, the goose-step of expediency; imitative of what goes on on earth, of what is laid down by man according to the desires of his lower nature.

This means that the whole range of creative powers innate in man remain dead.

Some of you may remember an article by Roy Mitchell on modern art, wherein he states, that there is an idea that was old in the days of Confucius, that was central to the philosophy of Plato and that is peculiarly the working faith of every true artist and that is ever present in every great flowering of creative activity.

It is the idea that in man, wherever he got it, is a whole range of powers that he never could have acquired on this earth.

These powers all have to do with creative activity and are the basis of the æsthetic attitude.

Briefly stated the argument goes something like this.

We have never known or seen two equal things, in spite of which our consciousness sets up its own criterion every time it assumes to say two objects are unequal.

We have never known or seen on this earth a perfect circle or sphere, and yet we judge all circles, spheres, squares and cubes because we have within us an idea of perfect ones.

We arrogate to ourselves the right to judge all mathematical shapes, all causation, perfect justice, perfect right, perfect truth, perfect goodness and perfect beauty.

By virtue of what insight do we dare

set ourselves up as judges of the imperfections of this world, unless we have known and know a superior realm of being?

This insight, this awareness is the sixth sense, awake and functioning in the æsthetic attitude.

And until this sixth sense is awakened in us and commences to function we cannot begin to live creatively but must have recourse to man made laws and moralities and codes and creeds for our regimentation and security and guidance.

Now all these abstract ideas that we could not have acquired on this earth, perfect justice, equality, proportion, order, truth, goodness and beauty, together constitute an inner standard which is the heart of the æsthetic attitude.

And this inner standard is quite impersonal and is applied to our own persons and our own works and our own thoughts and feelings in precisely the same way as we apply it to the person and works of another.

Because its activity is concerned with spiritual values, with the real creative problems of beauty, it is obvious that personal predilections and sentimental indulgences have no meaning for it

Yet it is a glow, a fervour, and an intensity and kind of awareness; but one that does not spend itself like personal passion but seems cumulative and creative of an inner abiding life

While the æsthetic attitude, as attitude is constant, yet its workings in life, its results in conduct and thought and ideas are as varied as life itself and because these result from an inner, constant attitude and not from outer codes or creeds or formulas, they are likely to be at variance with the moral code, the established procedure, of any day or place.

For the expression of the æsthetic attitude is fluid, never fixed. It changes, alters, develops and grows with every increase of vision, every new and vital experience. Such expression is free from the established, the accepted in any day and place, because the vision, the attitude

behind the expression, is of a different order than imitative life.

It is ever creative of new values, because everything is seen in terms of appropriateness or of living harmony or of the mutual accommodation of all parts and phases and tendencies.

Which means that with every new thought, every new experience, every increase of vision, the whole fabric of the life must be readjusted into a more encompassing harmony.

Which means that the individual must be inwardly free from attachment to any fixed code, any creed, any cut and dried philosophy.

Which means that he has nothing to protect or fortify,

Which means that the attitude is non-possessive.

This, it seems to me, is precisely the attitude Christ had despite the fact that the church has solidified and codified it in terms of the letter and has thus lost the spirit.

Karma has been defined as an undeviating tendency in the universe to restore equilibrium

And the æsthetic attitude in man is the same, an undeviating, constant tendency to restore and maintain equilibrium.

Now this is an never ending task, depending for its inspiration on a greater and deeper perception of the laws of the realm of spirit.

Just here we should note a clarifying difference between man-made formulas and the laws of the spiritual realm

We may know any moral code by studying it; we may know ethics by reading and thinking about it, but we do not have to live either of them to know them.

But the laws of the realm of spirit, whose reflection is our ideals and whose functioning is æsthetics, have to be lived in some degree, before they can be known. If they are not disclosed within us by becoming in some degree an indissoluble part of our life, they are then lost to us.

And this, I think, occurs because they cannot be formulated. They are incapable of being confined in a code or creed, because they are beyond the intellect. They have to be experienced before They can be known.

And perhaps this is why the living, enduring content, the spirit of all great art and all true religion remains untranslatable into words.

It cannot be explained, we must become one with it before we can know it.

Thus in one sense, the æsthetic attitude is the essence of all religions. It is the living expression of their spirit.

It is innate in the soul and to be disclosed into fullness of life, into complete integration throughout the ages, by that pure perception that knows no barriers, no inhibitions.

It is its own discipline, exacting a different order of conduct than morality connotes; conduct that is creative and conducive to an increase of perception and understanding.

It dictates conduct in terms of the universality of the higher self, because that alone is appropriate to the life of the soul.

It is inspired by, and aims at divine identity, because that again is alone appropriate to the soul.

It always asks, is such and such a thing, a thought, an idea, beautiful, is it in terms of the highest one knows? And this despite the hells that may rage in the lower nature.

Thus we will see that, that in man which is beautiful, can only put aside a great many of the decrees of morality as an insult to the soul because inappropriate to it.

Morality condemns the poor girl who has conceived a child out of wedlock, and condones endless cruelties that go on within the married state. It condemns illegitimate children, the man who steals to feed his starving family, and a host of other acts. It has sent men and women to the stake, caused massacres, and outcasted innumer-

able human beings, a dreadful form of torture.

And all this because it is a code utterly blind to beauty.

While it varies in time and place it is ever negative and always unenlightened.

The beautiful in man says that all moral condemnation and cruelty is not only negative and unproductive, but that it is essentially ugly and therefore inappropriate to the life of the soul.

In a word it is never the immoral that pains the beautiful in man, either the immoral in himself or in others, but only the ugly, the inappropriate, the disintegrative.

Thus capital punishment and vivisection are outlawed by the æsthetic attitude, because that which is beautiful in man knows that nothing beneficent can come from cruelty, but only ugliness and degradation.

And we will find, I think, when we study the words and deeds and lives of all the great world teachers, that these were motivated by the spirit of beauty.

Thus when Jesus said to those who would hurl stones at the sinful woman, let him who is without sin throw the first stone. It was not a moral statement at all, but an æsthetic one.

Such an act would have been ugly and dishonest because inappropriate to all the factors in the situation.

Thus also, when Jesus cast the money changers out of the temple, whether that was a subjective act or an objective actuality, does not matter; money changing in the temple of the god was wholly inappropriate and therefore to be done away with.

Thus the pharisees, the whited sepulchres, men who pretend to holiness and are diseased with ugliness within, are subjects for the indignation of Jesus, not because of any moral code, but because of essential dishonesty, which is an insult to the soul.

Also, in the Bhagavad Gita, when Krishna addresses Arjuna, when Arjuna is despondent and cannot face the struggle with the powers of darkness; he encourages Arjuna to be up and about his task, be-

cause such despondency was wholly inappropriate to the unconquerable Self that would fight within him.

And Jesus spoke in parables, because perhaps he had no desire to lay down hard and fast rules for conduct or to formulate a code or creed, but rather to convey an attitude toward life.

Thus we find, that when we study the great scriptures of the world, that they do not lay down rules, they do not set up cut and dried schemes of conduct, they do not give us fixed codes and creeds.

Perhaps because what they seek to convey is an attitude creative of an inner life that will eventually purge the outer of all that is inappropriate to the enduring life of the spirit.

Perhaps also, none of the powers resident in the soul; that range of powers that we could not have acquired on this earth, can be elicited by any code or creed, formula or set of dogmas. This is why, I take it, that Theosophy subscribes to no creed or set of dogmas, and where both Theosophy and art are one in spirit, essentially creative, a way of life and not a dead fabrication.

For we find, that like the great world teachers so the great creative individuals in the arts throughout time, cannot give us a set of rules whereby we may create great works. Nor can they give us a code of conduct that will help us to produce greatly. Because perhaps this can only be slowly disclosed by individual creative activity, by the creative unfoldment, each one for himself of his inner life.

Now the arts can show us the divine æsthetic, more clearly perhaps than anything else.

That is their real function, however much they be perverted to other uses.

But they will show this in a different way from any of the other pursuits of mankind.

For they do not teach or preach, that is the function of the moralist, of the re-

ligionist with a creed to uphold and protect.

The genuine inspirations of art come from a higher plane of our being than the ethical or the intellectual, and they cannot therefore be comprehended by the intellect.

Intellectual analysis and categorizing actually prevents our understanding their import.

We can only understand what they imply and embody by first hand, direct experience.

We must be moved by a heightened awareness, by that awareness which is simple because unencumbered and then, and then only are we fitted for the æsthetic experience and can become one with it.

Critics and writers on the arts in endeavouring to explain them, talk about the ultimate order in great works of music. They discuss the main theme and the introduction of other themes and the development and interweaving of these and their resolution into one great conclusive harmony, that floats poised in the air, as it were.

In painting they discuss the design that unifies the whole, the inter-relation of planes and lines and colours and the mutual accommodation of these and all parts of the work into an harmonious whole expressive of the mood or idea or spirit chosen by the artist.

In literature it is the form, the form that contains the whole in order, and the inevitable working out of cause and effect, all following some great law of our being.

In architecture, it is the balance of parts, the proportion and the dynamics of rhythm and the achievement of poised and inspiring works appropriate to their function.

Always it is the achievement of a living order, appropriate to the spirit of the particular subject or idea.

But, it seems to me, that the important thing for us to know by direct, unencumbered experience is, that this is not only the achievement of unity in diversity, a

unity achieved by the ordering and harmonizing of many parts, many diverse parts, each with its own individual life, purpose and function,

But that this achievement in all great works of art is a reflection or even an epitome of an ordered, spiritual, creative universe

And that unity of spirit, the ultimate satisfaction, which is pure beauty, is the one abiding, creative reality, the very heart of the creative urge in mankind.

The awareness of this fact as a living reality and conduct of life in terms of its implications constitute the æsthetic attitude.

THE THEOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS.

(Continued from Page 135.)

CHAPTER V.

DEATH AND REBIRTH.

Knowest thou whither beings go, departing hence?

Knowest thou how they return again?

Knowest thou the division of the two paths—the way of the gods and the way of the fathers?

Knowest thou why that world is not filled?

Chhandogya Upanishad.

By direct perception and first-hand experience, we come to a certainty of the being of the Self within us; a being which is self-existent, self-poised, self-dependent. The Self is; I am: these convictions are reached not by inference or argument or deduction, but by an inward realization which comes closer to us than anything else conceivably can.

It is not the reality of the Self, but the existence of not-self, of all outward things, that is reached by inference and argument and deduction; and we cannot even begin to form this argument for the existence of outward things until we have reached the

full conviction of the reality of the Self to whose consciousness these outward things are presented, and whose consciousness of them is the sole argument for their existence.

The only direct reality we have primary knowledge of, is the reality of the Self; the clear, unshakable sense that "I am". To this is added the further sense of outward things; the sense that "I perceive". And only as a deduction, a more or less likely hypothesis based on that primary reality, do we reach the third affirmation, "things perceived exist". So that, at the very best, all outward things have only a secondary reality, based on and depending on the primary reality: consciousness, the Self.

To this absolute knowledge we are led by pure reason. Once this insight is reached, it can never be lost or modified or abrogated. And therefore a materialist may and ultimately must become an idealist, but no idealist can possibly become a materialist. The door of progress opens only in one direction.

This pure conviction is therefore reached: the Self is, I am; the Self is not dependent on outward things; but, on the contrary, outward things depend on the Self, whose consciousness of them is the sole evidence of their existence.

The Self that really is, independent of outward things, cannot be subject to the vicissitudes of outward things; cannot be under the tyrannical necessity of mutation which runs through the whole existence of outward things. Mutation decrees that all that has a beginning shall also have an end. The Self has no part in this mutation; therefore the Self is before beginning and after end; is born not nor dies, but subsists eternal, immortal, as these fleeting clouds of appearances drift past it.

This is the affirmation of pure reason, of wisdom, the left hand of the higher Self. It must be perfected by the affirmation of pure will, of righteousness, the right hand of the same Self. Pure will expresses the

same affirmation within us: I am eternal; I am the heir to perfection like the perfection of the Father in heaven, like the perfection of the supreme Self; in my proper nature, I am immortal, invincible, infinite, I am the Eternal.

But this affirmation of pure will and wisdom which wells up perpetually within us, which finds an echo in every heart, is true only of the pure Self, after every vestige of imperfection, every stain and limitation, every veil and disguise, is utterly worn away.

And we are still very far from this high perfection at the beginning of the way, when the light of the higher Self has only just begun to gleam and glow in the dark places of our souls. Though we have reached a complete distrust for the habitual lives of our habitual selves, these lower selves have still an enormously strong hold on us, weakening our wills, tainting us with cowardice, staining us with sickly longing for the gratification of desire, even long after we know well that this longing can never be fulfilled.

We already feel that there is in us a higher Self, a more real, more enduring Self, behind and above our personal selves; but this is far yet from such a complete and plenary realization as would make us full sharers in the life of the higher Self, quite heedless of the fate of the personal Self, and already full enjoyers of the immortality which belongs to the higher Self.

We can already see clearly that, once we have carried the sense of our identity upward, and lodged it completely in the higher, immortal Self, we shall thereby become immortal, and all these floating clouds of outward things will drift past us without very deeply engaging our attention; will drift past us, growing gradually thinner and more translucent, until our heaven is altogether clear and we are ushered into the perfect sunlight of realized oneness with the Eternal.

This is a far away hope for us who have already caught the dim light of the Self within. But for those who are still in

darkness,—still taking the false fires of outward things for the true light, still pledged to desire, to the struggle for personal satisfaction and personal triumph,—what fate is in store?

They are still entirely confident of the reality and sufficiency of outward things. They are still full of hope for their personalities, full of belief in their personalities. They have implicated themselves in outward things, identified themselves with outward things; they must abide by this identification, and endure the necessity that lies on all outward things.

This necessity is perpetual change, eternal mutation; building, unbuilding, rebuilding, and again rebuilding. To this necessity they also must submit.

They are identified with the outward life of the senses, the pictures that continually pass and change before their eyes. They too must pass and change, with the endless mutation of necessity.

They are identified with the life of dreams, of mental images mirrored in desire and fear; they must share the fate of dreams, fugitive as dreams; they must have a part in the destiny of desire and fear; desire with its shadows, disappointment; fear that has torment.

These things have as their essential qualities suffering and sorrow and death; those who put their trust in them, who identify themselves with them, must share the suffering, the sorrow, the death. The mutation of things is endless, incessant. They also must submit to an endless, relentless destiny.

But there is another law in outward things, besides the law of ceaseless mutation; the law of alternate activity, which makes night give place to day, darkness to light, new moon to full moon, winter to summer. And this law of alternation is universal, permeating outward things through and through, encompassing the life of our personal selves; so that, for us, evening follows morning, sleep follows waking, age follows youth, death follows life.

Our personal life is made up of a double stream: outward appetite and inward desire. Outward appetite belongs to waking day; the mirror world, the world of dream, catches the images of appetite and prolongs them through the night. When the outward appetites with the whole organism that gives expression to them,—the physical body,—sink to sleep under the law of alternation, the inward desires and images continue, flowing into each other in rapid succession, blending, changing, whirling past in chaotic luxuriance.

Then again comes waking; the vital force of the outward appetites, coming under the other phase of alternation, reasserts itself; the physical body wakes; a new period of the activities of day is ushered in.

Under all this changing flow of things, there is the unchanging reality, the higher Self in us, which is lasting, immemorial, eternal; for the purposes of which all these outward things exist; in which all these forces adhere. But while we are quite unconscious of the Self,—in other words, while we have never realized that we really are,—we are utterly at the mercy of outward things, tossed backwards and forwards between waking appetite and dreaming desire.

Yet we have all a certain dull, dumb consciousness that we really are; and by this dull consciousness the mutability of things is tempered and mitigated; a certain permanent quality is given to our destiny; we feel a certain selfhood that inheres and endures, in spite of the changefulness of things. And this dumb, hardly realized selfhood binds together the perpetually changing appetites, the incessantly fugitive dreams, forming them into a more lasting unity, which we call the personal life of our personal selves.

This more lasting unity makes us feel that we who wake to-day are the same as we who went to sleep yesterday; that we who dreamed last night are the same as we who dreamed the night before.

But if, between going to sleep and wak-

ing, our circumstances and everything round us were so completely transformed that no outward objects remained to remind us of the day before, our sense of unity would be greatly blurred and we should only recognize ourselves by the inward objects in our minds; by the continuity of our waking dreams, our thoughts.

If our thoughts also had become worn out and left us, we, though the same personalities all the while, should have nothing at all to recognize ourselves by as the same; we should die out of each moment to be reborn in the next, without memory or sense of identity.

And this is what actually happens to us, so long as we trust, for our sense of identity, to the continuity of outward things, of things outward from, or other than, the Self that we really are. We are tossed from one stream of outward things to another, restlessly, incessantly, by the laws of change and alternation; retaining our sense of identity only so long as each stream lasts. While the stream of waking appetite lasts, we are our waking selves; when it gives way to the stream of inward desire, we are our dream selves; when this again gives way to the waking life, we are our waking selves again,—with just as much sense of continuity as is given us by the sameness of our outward circumstances and of our thoughts, and no more.

There is no conceivable reason why the very same laws of mutation and alternation should break down for us at a certain point—the moment of death. The only really permanent element in the whole endless mutation is the Self within us; this, as altogether foreign to, and apart from, outward things can have no part in death, which is merely a breaking off of one stream of outward things, just as going to sleep is the breaking off of the stream of outward appetites, their powers, and satisfaction. As the one stream, broken off, is immediately followed by another of a different kind, so the stream of activities that made up life must be followed by a new

stream of activities making up death. And as waking followed sleep, so must a new life follow death. The reawakening of outward appetites brought about a new day of life; there is no reason why, under the same law, the reawakening of the same appetites should not bring about another life of day, a new rebirth.

We take up each morning the stream of appetites and waking energies exactly where we laid them down the night before; there is no reason why the law should not hold good for each new life; why we should not take up again our energies and desires where we laid them down at death.

And just as our sense of waking identity depends on our finding the same objects round us in the morning, and extends only so far as these objects are each day the same, whether they be the furniture of our rooms or the furniture of our memories, so our sense of identity in a new life depends on the identity of the outward things around us. And as this identity hardly goes farther than the outward nature of life and our humanity, so our sense of identity in a new life goes no farther than a sense that we are alive; that we are human beings; as all outward details are changed, we have no sense of identity in detail. So long as we are utterly oblivious to the real life of the real Self, and rest wholly in outward things, there seems very little to choose between the different streams of outward things; little to choose between waking and dreaming, between waking life and dreaming death. We are probably convinced that each is the best while it endures; or perhaps with our native unrest and dissatisfaction, in the presence of the one, we are discontented with it, and long for the other. So that now in waking life we say that sleep is better than waking; that death is better than sleep. When the dream of death is with us, we shall probably say the very opposite, and thus by degrees will ourselves into outward waking life once more.

But we are in reality never utterly oblivious to the real Self; no living being

but feels, though only in a dull, dumb way, that real being is, that the real Self is, the Self that is immortal, the Self that is bliss. And thereby the restless mutation of things is mitigated and tempered with gleams of joy, with dreams of rest and immortality; and with the overshadowing presence of the real Self comes also the consciousness of our other selves, so that the dreary changefulness of things is now and again touched and gladdened by echoes of divine love; of love that, even amid the mists of appetites and desires, never entirely loses its divinity.

And as, in dreams, the rigidity and pressure of outward unrealities disappear, so in the longer dreams of death we cannot doubt that a certain measure of unreality also disappears; that we draw, even unconsciously, one step closer to the essential reality of things; apprehending one degree more clearly the closeness of our other selves, and feeling more strongly the unison that is the foreshadowing of perfect unity.

But these dreams of paradise we shall know more about by-and-by, when our little day of life comes to its close, as all days, even the longest, infallibly will. The Upanishads do not greatly expatiate on these dreams of paradise; whether the little they say is true, we shall soon see for ourselves. What the Upanishads do say is this:

"The knowers of the Eternal say that the light and the shadow,—the self and its vesture,—entering into the secret place in the upper half of the life cycle, enjoys bliss, the fruit of good deeds done in the world."

And again:

"Master, he who, amongst men, thinks on the imperishable Om his whole life long, what world does he gain thereby?"

"To him he answered, Om represents the supreme and manifest Eternal; hence the wise man, meditating on it, gains one or other of these:

"If he meditate with one measure, enlightened by it, he is soon reborn in the world. The Rg verses bring him to the

world of men; he there gains power through fervour, faith, service of the Eternal.

"And if he meditate with two measures, he is led to the middle world by the Yajur verses; this is the lunar world; after enjoying brightness in the lunar world he is born again."

[*Prashna Upanishad.*]

(*To Be Continued.*)

LIFE AFTER LIFE

or The Theory of Reincarnation

By Eustace Miles, M.A.,

Formerly Scholar of King's College, Cambridge

(*Continued from Page 138.*)

CHAPTER II

WHY I MUST BELIEVE IN IT

At the end of the first chapter I gave, as my chief reason for believing in Reincarnation, the fact that the belief helps me in daily life. I believe, not because any high authority tells me to, but mainly because I like believing; because I find that the theory is of great comfort and encouragement to me, and because I cannot see that it does any harm to any part of my life as my life affects either myself or others.

It is good for a person to believe that Providence—which generally appears to him in the form of circumstances and people with whom he has dealings—is both just, loving, wise, and powerful; that he is himself responsible for getting from these circumstances and people magnificent training for his own character, and the best possible opportunities for his own future health, happiness and helpfulness.

But I should not be able to believe in a theory which conflicted with what I believe already. While above all things I want ideas that are useful, I cannot induce myself to try them fairly until I feel that they are also reasonable.

In this chapter I wish to explain why I believe now in Reincarnation—namely, because the theory is to me, now, at the

same time reasonable and useful.

Some day it may be otherwise. Few of us realize that what we believe quite genuinely to-day, what we feel sure that we know, we may some day reject, so as to be unable to see why or how we could ever have believed this at all! In all matters of religion, as of diet, exercise, methods of work, and so forth, one should reserve the right of believing differently when—well, when one does believe differently.

This is a matter of great moment—this genuineness of belief. We are apt to repeat the words of prayers and creeds like parrots, not realizing what these words mean and involve. In the Lord's Prayer millions daily say that they want God to govern them in every detail of life: this is the sense of *genheto to thelema sou*, translated in the A.V. and R.V. as "Thy will be done." Now, before one can heartily agree to this, one must believe that God is perfect—a perfectly safe Governor of everything. So the preceding sentence is a prayer that God's characteristics may be known to be perfect; *agiastheto to onoma sou* is mistranslated in the A.V. and R.V. as "Hallowed be Thy Name." It is really a prayer that we shall realize God's characteristics, ways, nature, to be absolutely such as we should love. Then, and only then, can we submit ourselves and our circumstances wholly to God.

And, it is to a great extent Reincarnation—the theory of complete justice and infinite opportunity—that enables me to say the Lord's Prayer heartily and genuinely. Apart from this theory, how can I pretend to revere a Power that visits the sins of fathers upon children, that causes innocent because ignorant children to be born and die in pain and misery? How can I pretend to worship as supremely fair, wise, and loving, a Nature that I should abhor in a father, mother, brother, sister, friend, master—or myself? I refuse to submit all my life to a Power that would do what I should be ashamed to do. But let every circumstance be the result of a cause, and I recognize fairness, wisdom,

love, as well as power. I recognize what seems to me the very essence of a comfortable yet inspiring religion—a Power in every respect nobler than any human self, and nobler than any self one can imagine.

One reason, then, why I must believe in Reincarnation is that it, and it alone, enables me to see that the Power is absolutely perfect.

If I did not believe in Reincarnation, or the theory of Life after Life, of Cause and Effect, I should not be able to keep from uncomfortable and unhealthy thoughts—especially from worry in its two aspects: first, discontent; then fear, including fear of death; or from anger, or impatience, and other undesirable states of mind.

Then again, if I did not believe in Reincarnation, I should not have enough motives for trying to lead the best possible all-round life, and for training with a view to it—training in self-control and sensible self-expression.

I am helped by knowing that every good choice must inevitably count, if not immediately here, yet somewhen and somewhere. And I am helped by knowing that every mistake must certainly work itself out, or else be cancelled by some good choice. No other theory makes me feel sufficiently responsible. As it is, I believe that, as I make my body, my intellect, my character, here and now, so I shall inherit these afterwards in the present and future incarnations. If you can get people to tell you quite candidly why they say they believe this or that, eventually you nearly always find that the answer is, "Because it is orthodox—high authorities tell us that it is true." They will not reply satisfactorily to searching yet quite fair questions, such as the following:—

"Can you explain to me on what principle you consider God to be just?

"Or wise? Is it wise, is it sensible, to provide a world full of invaluable lessons for progress, a magnificent training-ground for character, and then to allow each soul only one life in it—perhaps a life of a few years or days, or even hours? Is it not as

if a schoolmaster had a fine school, but dismissed many of his pupils after they had spent only one hour in one class?"

It seems to me that the person who genuinely believes in Reincarnation can easily answer all such questions about the Power in which he trusts.

Such a person, while he does not rush through life with hurry and worry, putting third-rate things in the first place, does not, on the other hand, sleep through life with laziness and apathy. While he sees some truth in John Burroughs' words,—

“Serene, I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind, nor tide, nor sea;
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,
For, lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays:
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face.—

The stars come nightly to the sky,
The tidal wave unto the sea;
Nor time nor space, nor deep nor high,
Can keep my own away from me.”—

he does not fold his hands and wait. He works with a purpose: namely, to improve himself all round, so that he may help himself and everyone else here and now, and hereafter in a series of more or less similar lives.

While he has respect for the Power, as perfectly just, loving, and wise, he has respect for himself. He does not demand any special favour; his prayers are not selfish. He demands only that which he believes he will get—training. He asks for no private boon. He asks for the thing that is always granted to everyone—the best possible opportunities for building character.

Such are some of the reasons why I *must* believe in Reincarnation. I must believe in it not for the reason which seems to have influenced most of those whose letters were published in the *Daily Mail*—namely, sup-

posed recollections of personal incidents in a previous life. I must believe in it—I must believe that I have lived as a human being before, that I shall live as a human being again, that whatsoever I sow I shall reap, that whatsoever I reap I have sown—because I cannot find any other theory that explains so much, or that helps so much.

CHAPTER III

IT IS NOT PROVED, AS THE LAW OF GRAVITATION IS

That a stone falls to the ground if one lets it out of one's hand, is a statement that can be tested by an experiment appealing to the senses of sight, hearing, and touch. That one has lived as a human being before, that one will live as a human being again, is a statement that cannot be thus tested.

Even if one seemed to remember incidents in one's previous life, this would not be “scientific” proof. There may sometimes be other possible explanations—for example, mere imagination, and so forth.

The theory has to submit to a different sort of test and proof, and yet to a test and proof that is eventually an appeal to the senses, if among the senses we include the “sense” of comfort and discomfort.

Reincarnation is a theory which asks us, not whether we can see it, hear it, touch it, taste it, smell it, and so forth; but whether we live better and happier lives by taking it for granted.

The better and happier life would be a life that appealed to the senses and sensations of the liver and others: by these senses and sensations it would be ultimately tested and proved.

I suppose that if—through the use of hypnotism or of some drug, let us say—everyone could remember everything in his or her previous lives, even material “Science” would begin to recognize the theory as not beyond the limits of proof.

But such proof would be of little importance compared with the usefulness of

the theory—or the uselessness or harmfulness—when believed in and acted on by mankind, as a criterion for doing this or that, or for not doing it.

For that which convinces the physical senses is of little importance compared with that which compels to action, filling with hope and responsibility, and leading to health, happiness, and helpfulness. By the side of this latter sort of theory, the proved fact that the earth moves round the sun is of minor moment.

The theory of Reincarnation, then, is not to be tested as the Law of Gravitation is.

Moreover, it is not necessarily a universal law. It may be that here and there an ego shall not need, shall not desire, to be reincarnated. It may be that some day an ego shall prolong his life by healthy thoughts and healthy deeds and abstinences, so that constantly he reincarnates his refined and improved body without requiring to leave it and later on inhabit another.

And, by the way, when one reflects, the Law of Gravitation is itself not necessarily a universal law. Anyone who states that any stone which is dropped from the hand must fall to the ground is no longer scientific. He can say, "We have never observed an exception to the theory." But, directly he prophesies that there never will be, never can be, an exception, he is off the ground of proof. For—who knows?—some day a person, trained to concentrate and use his thought-power, may be able to stop the stone in mid-air without what we call physical contact, and may even compel the stone to rise again into the hand.

The theory of Reincarnation is not proved. Neither is the theory of Gravitation, at least in the form in which it is usually stated. It should be stated in the historical form, not in the prophetic or imperative. It should be stated as a summary of the observations by a certain number of people of a certain phenomenon under various conditions.

(To Be Continued.)

AS IN A LOOKING GLASS.

By Mrs. Walter Tibbits

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap. —Paul the Apostle.

"I heard you talking before the seance about the Book of Plans. This world you live in is like a looking glass reflecting the real happenings on our plane. The Strings of Destiny are pulled from our side. But your Will power can sometimes mould or alter the plans that are made for you."

Major Walter Tibbits
(through Raymond's medium).

I.

THE SOWING

I first met the mysterious Mr. X* in India, in Kashi.

Some think of the guru as a dried up ascetic in the jungle. Mine was a man in the prime of life who drove in a dog cart to the hotel. He spoke of the White Lodge of the Himalayas.

"Have the Masters physical bodies?" I asked

"They have," he replied, "but more ethereal than ours."

"How should we seek Them?"

"You don't have to ask for introductions," he replied, "nor to rush off into the jungle. When the hour strikes the Master will appear. It may happen during the night, or in some solitary place such as a mountain top."

And I did not then know that my own Guru sat before me.

"Can you see people's auras?" I asked. He hesitated. "I always think I must have such a bad one," for I had been accounted the black sheep in a family of religious bigots."

"Then I can tell you you have not," he

* He appears in "A Passionate Pilgrim", under his own name, as Mrs. Besant's one-time guide, philosopher and friend.

replied, and if you will permit me to instruct you it will do you good."

Next day he introduced me to his wife. She emerged from her purdah radiant, silent. We talked of indifferent matters and she showed her new born babe.

Then we returned to the hotel, the guru and I. It was evening. We sat in a quiet room giving on to the flowery verandah.

"Do you hear the Temple Bells?" he asked. "It is the hour for evening worship". The shades were falling fast. We sat in a pregnant silence. My Guru sat with closed eyes and his body twitched as though touched by electric wires. The room seemed to vibrate with a Presence.

"There seems to be someone in the room," I said.

"You are not wrong," he said slowly and softly. "Bow your head and worship Him who is to be the Lodestar of your existence. Your eyes are blinded so that you cannot see Him, but He is here." Presently the room became more normal again. My guru's eyes unclosed and the electric twitches ceased. "You asked me of auras before", he said in his ordinary voice. "We were in a very powerful electric aura just now and, as to that, there was more than one person in the room." For his wife who was to be my guru on the physical plane had, as she afterwards told me, been summoned by her Master to come too.

"Do you know where your husband has gone?" said the Master.

"He has gone to see your daughter of past lives. Come!"

I have recently stood beside my mother's grave. She represented the karmic aftermath of the sin of the last life. As I looked at the handsome, determined features, the diminutive corpse which had borne so many stalwart sons, my thoughts winged away through the window over the wheat and poppies of the Wiltshire downs, the willows of the Avon's meshes encircling our lovely home, to a flowery verandah of a quiet bungalow beside the Gunga. The temple bells of Kashi were pealing all along the river bank for the evening worship. The

shades of night were falling fast. The quiet voice of a brahman was vibrating in the silence, and ever and anon his body twitched with a powerful electric Aura of Another in the room.

"Do you never think", said the Guru, "What your 'Hindu fascination' means? You were one of us. You were born in the west," and he smiled, "Because you were a brahmini of the orthodox, bigoted type. *You hated the English!* That is why you are now an English woman. I am directed to tell you not to think evil of any person or any religion. All religions lead up." That message, bridging the gulf of death and re-birth, came from the Head of the White Lodge of the Himalayas Himself. It was a rift in the veil of time, bridging two lives, and explaining details of a karma on which I do not care to dwell. It is condensed in two lines of fearful import:

Look, you have cast out love!

Whatsoever a man sows *that* shall he also reap.

That is why the vivisector comes back deformed.

That is why I had as a mother a religious maniac.

II.

THE REAPING

Look, you have cast out love.

What Gods are these you bid me please?

The Three in One, the One in Three?

Not so. To my own Gods I go.

It may be they shall give me greater ease
Than your cold Christ and tangled
Trinities. —The Convert.

Do you not see how necessary a World of Pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a Soul? A place where the heart must feel and suffer in a thousand diverse ways. Not merely is the Heart a Hornbook, it is the Mind's Bible, it is the Mind's experience, it is the text from which the Mind or intelligence sucks its identity. As various as the Lives of Men are—so various become their Souls,

and thus does God make individual beings, Souls, Identical Souls, of the sparks of his own essence.—Keats.

Booth led boldly with his big bass drum—
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
 The Saints smiled gravely and they said:
 "He's come."

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
 Walking lepers followed, rank on rank,
 Lurching bravos from the ditches dank,
 Drabs from the alleyways and drug fiends
 pale—

Minds still passion-ridden, soul-powers
 frail!

Vermin-eaten saints with mouldy breath,
 Unwashed legions with the ways of
 Death—

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
 —Funeral march for the founder
 of the Salvation Army.

Nothing is so boring to others as "family prayers". But I am compelled to recite mine, as briefly as possible, to show the working of the Law. Also it is a picture of early Victorian life seen after three reigns.

My mother's father was a very remarkable man. He rose from an office boy to be the father of the whole medical profession.

He was a Dorset Churchill so we are all afflicted with Winston cheeks. He was born in 1801 and therefore saw the defeat of Napoleon in 1814 as his grand-daughter saw the triumph of Foch a century later.

Coming to town with the proverbial half-crown, he sought to be apprenticed to a sawbones. The sawbones said "my assistant is a bad hat. He might corrupt you. Lodge with a bookseller of St. Thomas' till he goes." This "chance fortnight" changed his whole career. He chose the bookseller's calling and became publisher par excellence to the medical profession. His hero was the handsome Sir Astley Cooper, "The Idol of the Borough School," his King of Men. He went by coach all over the country to collect black letter medical books. He possessed the first

printed books on Surgery and Midwifery. He published the *Lancet*. The cream of the medical profession were his friends. He pounced on rising men to enroll them as "his authors". Sir Erasmus Wilson's reputation was made by getting him to write a book on skins. But he was a gourmand and died of eating decayed Severn salmon. My grandfather's dinners to that profession which "strewed his path with flowers", at his Wimbledon mansion where he was a county magistrate, were famous. He dined there later in Pembroke Square where I first saw the light. In fact the joke against him by one of "my authors" was that he seemed to think that the medical profession belonged to him! His three girls and youngest son married brilliantly into English, Scotch, and Irish families, and I am the first fruits of the Irish marriage.

(To be Continued.)

THE THREE TRUTHS

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, but yet may remain silent for lack of speech.

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.—*Idyll of the White Lotus.*

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OFFICERS OF THE T. S. IN CANADA

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GENERAL SECRETARY

Albert E. S. Smythe, 33 Forest Avenue,
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OFFICIAL NOTES

Members will confer a great obligation upon the officials of the Society by sending in their dues as soon as possible. These were due on July 1, \$2.50 each for Lodge members, \$5 for Members-at-large.

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We call attention to our new department, "Theosophy and Modern Life," conducted by Mr. F. B. Housser of the Toronto Lodge, which should prove attractive to readers who wish to coordinate Theosophy with current thought and events. It is designed also to be helpful to students who are beginning to be interested in Theosophy and for those who wish to pursue its application in their studies.

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The death is announced in The American Theosophist of Dr. Weller Van Hook on June 30. He was a member of Akbar Lodge, Chicago, and had been General Secretary of the American Section follow-

ing Alexander Fullerton in 1907. He formed the Karma and Reincarnation League and issued a little magazine as an activity of this body. He was a well-known surgeon. His funeral was conducted by Englewood Commandery, No. 59, Knights Templar.

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It is announced that beginning with the September issue The Occult Review will be known as The London Forum, the reason being a desire to avoid the prejudice that unreasonably attaches to the idea of things occult in many minds. The Occult Review has been issued for a quarter of a century and has done good work in the field it has occupied. In recent issues since Mr. Strutton has been editor it has been notably fine in its editorial articles.

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A. A. Steer, president of the Panama Lodge, Box 331, Ancon, Canal Zone, writes to say that plans for celebrating the first year of the Lodge had been made for this month, the feature of which was to be the establishment of a Public Library with books in English, operated by an organization or person other than the Government. Thirty volumes have been gathered, and Wheaton has promised 11. The Lodge appeals for help from this and other National Societies and Lodges, by donations of books suitable for the purpose, and offers to pay postage, or if in quantity, instruction will be given as to shipment by freight or otherwise.

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There is a notable decrease in the birth-rate of Great Britain. The population of England and Wales decreased by 21,327 during the first three months of this year compared with a decrease of 1336 in the corresponding quarter of last year. There had been a remarkable increase in deaths also, owing to the influenza epidemic, which accounted for 11.85 per cent. of the 170,000 deaths during the quarter. There were 3441 fewer births than in the corresponding quarter of 1932, while deaths increased by 16,551. To those who accept

reincarnation as the law of human existence on the earth, this will mean that Britain has become a less attractive place for the birth of souls than it has been. In other words its cycle has ended, and a new cycle draws the reborn souls to other national conditions more attractive to them, better fitted for their evolution and development.

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Chr. Gale writes from headquarters, 28 Great King Street, Edinburgh, of accepting the office of General Secretary for Scotland, elected at the Annual Convention on June 10. "I shall be happy to cooperate with you in every way for the good of our Society. I trust that the near future holds for all Sections fresh and increased opportunities of activity and service. With cordial greetings and good wishes for the success of the work in your Section," is the message sent by our fellow worker in Auld Reekie, and I most heartily reciprocate it. Living in Edinburgh during 1887 till 1889 I happened to be staying in the same lodging as Mr. and Mrs. Fothergill, then members of the Scottish Lodge, a private lodge of which Dr. Dickson was President and J. W. Brodie-Innes, the novelist was secretary. I was not invited to join but the Library of the Lodge was placed at my disposal and was a great and valuable opportunity for study. I read all the available Theosophical literature at that time with the result of doing a little propaganda on my own account. As a result Mr. A. P. Cattanaeh, Mr. Charles Oliver and some others became interested, and after my departure Mr. Cattanaeh, who had become a member, was instrumental in publishing *The Transactions of the Scottish Lodge*, with many valuable papers and illustrations. He also founded the Edinburgh Lodge for public work, and when he moved to London later was a force in the Battersea Lodge. Mr. Oliver was the author of a fine sonnet on the death of Madame Blavatsky—recently reprinted from *Lucifer* in *The Theosophist*. These memories naturally enhance my in-

terest in the work of my Scottish colleague, for whom I wish the most notable success.

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"Buddhism in England" announces the death of Hevavitarana Dharmapala, known more recently as the Bhikkhu Sri Devamitta Dhammapala, who passed away on April 29 at Sarnath, near Benares, at the age of 68. He was born in Ceylon of a distinguished family. In 1880 he came under the influence of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott and four years later joined the Theosophical Society. On the advice of Madame Blavatsky he took up the study of Pali, and renouncing the householder's life, spent the remainder of his days in the revival and spread of Buddhism throughout the world. In 1886 he joined Col. Olcott in his campaign for the establishment of Buddhist schools, and travelled with him far and wide under the name of the Anagarika Dharmapala. In 1891 he visited Buddha Gaya and founded the Maha-Bodhi Society, with the object of regaining for the Buddhist peoples control of the sacred spot of the Buddha's Enlightenment. In 1893 Dharmapala attended the Parliament of Religions at Chicago and was one of the most striking figures of that Assembly. Since then he has spent a busy life of ceaseless activity in his chosen mission. In 1925 he first came to England, after which a branch of the Maha-Bodhi was founded in London. Since 1928 his health has been failing but with diminished vigour he still kept up his work. His correspondence with Mr. Christmas Humphreys since 1925, dealing with his work in the West, will be published in the Magazine of the English Buddhists. The Editor pays this tribute to him: "It is sufficient to say that he stands as the greatest modern example of a life entirely and tirelessly dedicated to the preservation and promulgation of the Teachings of the All-Enlightened One."

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Sorcery is any kind of evil influence exercised upon other persons, who suffer, or make others suffer, in consequence—Practical Occultism.

AMONG THE LODGES

Some notes from an Orpheus Lodge meeting:—What kind of individual would emerge from the successful application of Theosophical principles? To begin with let us contrast the “good” man with the man to whom goodness belongs as a result of individual effort. To be good in its popular connotation is to be pious, well-intentioned, and conventionally blameless; but here are suspicious signs of mental indolence, fear of censures, love of security and approbation. The second man on the other hand, is living by a standard of values determined for himself by intelligent effort and experience instead of standards borrowed from convention, tradition, and public opinion, and holding himself entirely responsible for his thoughts and actions he fearlessly stands up to the consequences. On the surface the lives of these two men may appear very much alike, doing the same things, conforming to the same standards, yet there is an evolutionary gulf between them. The second man, the individual, is living his own life and accepting full responsibility, whilst the “good” man is living merely at second hand. Two streams of influence flow down the centuries of our Western civilization, one, free-spirited, confident, daring,—the Aryan; and the other, fearful, cringing, submissive,—the Semitic. Each marks a stage in human development, and has its place in individual and racial growth. To the Semitic attitude belongs the herd spirit with its dependance upon mass thinking, its subservience to convention, and in religion conformity to type. And its characteristic is a shrinking from responsibility. With this spirit man creates the image of an All-Powerful Protector, referring to him all ultimate responsibility. There is nothing wrong with the Semitic influence in its proper place. For inexperienced types it is probably a good thing, but for the children of an Aryan race to be subjected to this influence throughout their most impressionable years is nothing

less than a calamity. There are many in our civilization today who are Aryan by nature but who have never cast off the Semitic influence imposed from childhood by a faulty religious teaching. They are those whose lives are better than their beliefs. No doubt the Christian teaching has been predominately Semitic, but with Christianity in its mystical sense Theosophy finds no fault. Christian mystics have given unmistakable evidence of their apprehension of Truth. Theosophy is a redeclaration of the Ancient Aryan Wisdom as a scientific basis for sane, wise living. Its appeal is to the higher energies of the human spirit. The first step for the student is to constitute himself an individual. Are his opinions on subjects of importance to himself his own, or has he accepted them uncomprehendingly from some ready made source? Unless we are thinking for ourselves and standing up to our responsibilities we are living at second hand. This angle of approach to this philosophy brings about a parting of the ways. It will stimulate and attract the courageous, and deter the fearful. The fold of the Church offers to these latter comfort, security, and peace of mind, the Aryan stands fast on individuality as his primary responsibility.

REVIEWS

“SPLENDOUR IN THE NIGHT.”

This is a little booklet of xxii + 65 pages, by an anonymous writer signing “A Pilgrim.” It is introduced by Rev. Rufus M. Jones, one of the most intuitive of our Christian writers, and is dedicated to Evelyn Underhill “and those who climb with her the Mystic Path.” The credentials are adequate.

Mr. Jones writes: “Christianity has always held that life’s refusals are a part of life’s assets. I had a visit recently from a Monk of Mount Athos who thrillingly told of his joys of renunciation. ‘What I cannot understand,’ he said with simpli-

city and in broken English, "is the way Christians seem to think they can carry so much baggage on their spiritual adventures. They act as though they expected to go to Heaven with their galoshes on!"

The author in a preface submits: "When this is read by those whose understanding surpasses mine, they will bear with me. If I have placed emphasis where they do not; if I have failed to stress the signs which may mean much to them,—they will be patient with me. The road is new to me. Many are nearer the sun of revealing than I, but they will recognize the purpose of my soul, and stay their flying steps to the slower music of my faltering words. I too, will follow after. The important thing is for each of us to be uncompromisingly loyal to the wisdom which unrolls before our inner gaze, taking from the widening river of truth that which is our own. For here and there, around the globe, there is evidence that a new dawn is breaking!"

The narrative, which tempts one to quote largely, is that of a dutiful soul who came to the "stepping-off place," and conquered fear, and made the passage. These experiences are rarely told, and in this case there is taste and modesty, and a fitting language of expression to do no violence to what in many respects is a sacred confidence.

"I realize that the only significance that can be attached to a personal record lies in the assumption that the man or woman writing is merely the symbol for all personality. The individuality is of value mainly because he is part of the mighty whole, and anything true of one is therefore true of all."

In younger days, the writer says: "I was forming my own conclusions and they thrilled me. . . . I wanted to tell someone about them. Inwardly I left their safe, square boat and launched a gay little craft of my own. As one appeared to whom I could talk, I confided in one whom I could not see with my eyes, but whom I could envision with some inner sense. I called

him God!" Then came the great realization.

"Life is One. There is a great Personality in which we are all contained. . . . The man Jesus, feeling identity with this Life-in-One, tried to express it. 'I am the vine, ye are the branches.' For He symbolized the universal Son of Man, not merely the son of David. All life is embodied in this timeless Person. His mind contains the whole spectrum of truth, of which each of us is but a fraction. His heart is formed of the love which man feels for his brother. His hands are the world's workers, his eyes are its vision. And his feet are composed of the friendless, the humble and lowly."

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" Not inappropriate words for "A Pilgrim."

—(Mosher, Portland, Me.)

THE CIVILIZATION OF JAPAN

By R. Shimizu

In Japan the West and the East have already met and every historian is saying that we are witnessing the Birth of a New Era. With the West you are well acquainted, I believe; but the East may be a stranger to some of you. I shall take the occasion to introduce him to you in my present paper.

First of all, I should like to call your attention to the historical facts with which you necessarily come face to face, in your reading of the history of the Western civilization. You will find in your reading that there are two main currents of thought running through the whole history from its very beginning down to our own days; one starts from the Greek mind and the other from the Hebrew. I have no doubt that the Roman cut a figure in history; originality, however, he had none except in politics. And the Arabian made some contribution to Europe in the Middle

Age, but he is even less significant than the Roman. In this way it may be safely asserted that there are practically two essential factors of civilization in the West; one, native to Greece, embodying itself in art, philosophy and science; the other, native to Judah, expressing itself chiefly in religion and more or less in customs and manners. However diverse the aspect of the Western civilization may be, the very diversity will be reduced to the two original elements of civilization, of which I have just spoken.

Now turn to Japan. According to the orthodox conception of the History of Japan, the date of the foundation of the Empire is put in the year 660 B.C., but Modern Japan in its full significance dates from the very recent year, 1865, in which she adopted the open-door policy toward the foreign countries and thus she has ever since come in contact with the West. The civilization of Japan in the past was somewhat homogeneous; its main elements were entirely limited to the production of Eastern mind. There were three elements or factors of civilization in Japan. One was the traditional code of morality prevalent among the whole race; the second was directly introduced from China and the last, from India through the introduction of Chinese civilization. Now, let me review in order these elements.

(1) The first element has played, though traditional in itself, a great part in the formation of the national character of the Japanese race. It is very difficult to say positively what it is. It is not religion, but moral doctrine apart from the religious conviction of the existence of the Supreme Being. It is not philosophy but practice. It is not the formulation of scientific theories, but spiritual culture. Some writer designates it as the Japanese chivalry. Filial piety, loyalty, patriotism, bravery, honour, benevolence, veracity, politeness—all these are considered to be the cardinal virtues, although there are some minor ones. And all these virtues should be practised, according to the doc-

trine, not from the idea of individual or selfish gain, but that of self-sacrifice.

(2) The second is represented by a great variety of the Chinese element which first came to Japan in 285 B.C., as is recorded in the Chronicle of Japan. In those days China was a very flourishing community in the Far East. Literature, art, philosophy, politics, social institutions—all these were introduced from China to Japan. We should not look on the Chinese civilization at that time, from the point of view of China at present. Today China is "buried in dotage"; it is often reported that China is awakening; but she has not as yet started in any epoch-making activity on her own part. China that effected a great influence on Japan is all but dead; nothing is left in the mother country, except the empty form and skeleton without any spirit or life. Let us take, for instance, the doctrine of Confucius. The true teaching of Confucius was a very rigorous moral doctrine which was very much like the Stoic Philosophy, which brought up some representative characters of Rome, such as Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius Antonius and so on. Such spirit of Confucius as this is still living in the Japanese mind, especially was this very conducive to mould the Japanese chivalry in the feudal age. In China, however, it has taken on a form of religious creed which is haunted by a host of demons. Some sarcastic Japanese critic has declared that Confucianism in China has been developed into a religion; but I frankly profess that it has been degenerated into superstitions. Some famous literary works have been perfectly lost, or even destroyed by the hand of Emperors in China; it was only recently that some copies of them could be brought back from Japan to their native land.

(3) Lastly, let us look at what Japan owes India. Whatever Japan might have borrowed from India, it was not right from India, but through the medium of the Chinese civilization. And this Indian element is represented by Buddhism, taught by S'akya-muni, Crown Prince of

Kapila-vastu, a Kingdom of Northern India. He was born in 562 B.C. and died, I repeat, died, in 483 B.C. The original teaching of S'akya-muni was a very simple and practical creed of faith; it had no systematized dogma as at present. In the course of time, however, it went up to Middle Asia and thence to China and at once it penetrated into a very abstruse philosophical speculation. And such results of human activity as this are preserved to us only in Japan, just as with the Chinese civilization, the essential parts of Buddhism have disappeared in its mother land.

It is perhaps too much to expect any student to define Buddhism with a half dozen words, partly because of the comprehensiveness of the creed as a whole, partly because of the confusion of the Buddhistic and the non-Buddhistic elements. So far as I am concerned, I am fully convinced that Buddhism as well as Christianity rests on the conviction of the rule of the Highest Reality—it does not matter what name it may take—throughout the universe. And I also believe that the fundamental difference between Christianity and Buddhism chiefly lies in the manner in which the Highest Reality is represented as the object of worship. That is to say, with Christianity the object takes a form of monotheism, with Buddhism, however, it takes one of pantheism. To say which way of representation is better will be merely a matter of quibbling, at least, for me as a student. Because when we look at the universe from the point of view of the unity which is no doubt eminent in the world as the very expression of the Highest Reality, we can with reason say that the Reality is one, that is, we grasp the Reality by means of conception as one, exactly in the same way as Christians do. There is another way. If we consider the universe from the point of view of the All which takes the world as the expression of the Highest Reality collectively, then we can say that the Reality is All. Here we have the two alternatives, the One in All and the All in One,

in other terms, the unity in the infinity and the infinity in the unity, again; the monotheistic and the pantheistic view of the world. It seems to me that the Christian dogma is based on the first, and the Buddhistic, on the second alternative. The choice of either alternative will chiefly depend on the individual temperament. It is not a very uncommon thing that what is in one's favour is not in the other's. Let me take, for instance, a very commonplace example. Thousands of millions of pounds of tea are imported from the East to the West every year. And most of the Western people cannot take tea without milk or sugar, in most cases, both; but the Eastern people are of opinion that tea is spoiled by such adding as that and take it clear of anything else. What will the case suggest to us? It tells us, does it not, that the individual temperament or taste is, in a certain degree, different each from the other, according to the historical environments? And it also tells us that even the same thing can be taken in a different manner. Thus interpreted, the monotheistic and the pantheistic view of the world are not at all contradictory to each other. Now, you may be able to get some idea of Buddhism which rests on the pantheistic point of view, though it has a great difference from Christianity in respect of the outer garments which often seem to the superficial observers who have been very much "handicapped" in reading Buddhistic Scriptures which are written in classical Chinese, to be essential to the creed.

You will see that the civilization of Japan in the past was thus composed of the three elements, as I have already said,—one native to Japan, another from China, another from India. Modern Japan that dates from 1865 has, however, added to them two other elements of civilization—the Greek and the Hebrew, as I have also said before—which have been introduced from Europe and America to Japan. What these newly introduced elements are, you, as Westerners, will know full well; the

great change of Modern Japan has chiefly come from the introduction of the Western civilization. It will not be enough, however, to say that Modern Japan has been built up with the Western civilization; I should like to say definitely with what materials the West has furnished Japan for her building.

(1) The first material we owe the West is the various branches of natural science. The absence of science is the weakest side of the Eastern civilization. Botany, astronomy and the elementary parts of mathematics existed in India and also in China, but nothing more else, in so far as natural science is concerned. Even these branches of science were very simple and naive, compared with those produced by the Western mind. When once Japan came in contact with the Western civilization, she was quick enough, to pick them up, so that we have now in Japan a dozen of Darwins, Newtons, Haeckels and such-like. We are still honoured with some useful scientific discoveries by native students. So if you visit Japan, you will see that the gunpowder and automobile civilization has penetrated into its very depth.

(2) The second material from the West was the democratic conception of the individual person, or the idea of right. The idea of right, the Indian had none. There was in China a time when the doctrine of right seemed to be philosophically formulated by Mencius, who introduced to the Confucianistic school the idea of rectitude or justice in addition to that of Benevolence (some translators use, instead of the term, the English, love, for the Chinese, jin, I prefer the former) as the fundamental ethical principle of the school. Unhappily, however, warfare after warfare followed the time and learning was for hundreds of years put down by sword and consequently the Chinese thought remained destitute of the idea of right. In Japan the idea of self-sacrifice was strongly emphasized in the native ethical system, so strongly that individual rights were often

submitted to the will of the elders. Under such circumstances it is no doubt impossible to see a rise of democracy, or individuals insisting on their natural rights. But these conditions have disappeared since the introduction of the Western civilization. In Japan we can now find everything, I may repeat, everything good or bad brought about by modern democracy, from the constitutional system of government to the very radical anarchist. You will soon hear the Japanese on the other face of the globe crying for "vote for women, vote for children, vote for babies, vote for monkeys".

(3) The idea of personality and liberty we also owe the West. Of course, we had a vague and implicit conception of personality or liberty in Japan as well as in India and China; but it was owing to the Western ideas that the Japanese could come to conceive personality or liberty quite vividly and explicitly. You will have no wonder when you have already seen that the idea of individual rights could not arise in the East, that personality or liberty could not be recognized in its full significance.

We have thus with great pleasure accepted from the West such contributions as natural science, the ideas of right, personality and liberty which the West in turn owes the Greek and the Christian civilization. Now, it will be easy to see that there are in Japan these five elements of civilization—the Greek, the Hebrew, the Indian, the Chinese and the native. And each element has its own peculiarity; therefore, it is no very uncommon thing that one element comes in collision with another, especially is it so in case when they are not well united or harmonized with one another, as was the case with Japan for a time. It was thus chiefly on account of this kind of collision that the Japanese thought was extraordinarily confused and all the social conditions appeared quite abnormal some twenty years ago. The strife between government and people, between capital and labour, between handi-

craft and machinery, between the old and the new idea in domestic life, and the sudden increase of criminal cases, insanity, suicide and the weakening of the hold of public morality and customs and manners, —all these undesirable phenomena of society appeared as consequent on the introduction of the Western civilization. Fortunately these dreadful conditions of community are disappearing day after day; and the Eastern and the Western civilization are now on the way to be put in order, according to its own virtue.

This arrangement of society we owe our own enlightened native minds that are still striving to harmonize the Eastern and the Western factors of civilization, taking our own history as the unifying principle, and at once allowing due consideration to each factor. For the purpose of harmonizing the East with the West there are journals, associations and the "Extension of University Lectures" which are delivered by academic people in local towns, mostly before the meeting of public school teachers. A certain phase of the modern civilization of Japan has already taken on a form peculiar to the country. Let us review, for instance, Christianity in Japan. Christianity in Japan is assuming a quite different colour from that in Western countries; notwithstanding the assertion that they belong to the same minor denomination. If once religion has been introduced to Japan, it cannot remain free from the native elements, so long as it struggles for its own existence. Let us turn back to my former example of tea. You will mix tea with milk and sugar and you will enjoy it; it does not at all matter whether or not it is in its original home taken clear or anything else. The way of serving tea should depend on the temperament or taste of the majority of people. Exactly with the same reason we, as Japanese, import Christianity from the West and we mix it with something like milk or sugar which is native to or prevalent in Japan. In this way we modify Christianity in Japan, just as it is fit for our own temperament or

taste. And we expect to construct the pure Japanese Christianity and I hope that we can in a long run send our own missionaries from the East to the West. If you are to blame us for the admixture of the Christian and non-Christian elements, I do not know what to say; I simply submit it to the just criticism of the world at large. This is nothing more than a mere example of the religious aspect of modern Japanese civilization; but any and every other field of activity in Japan is tending in the same direction, that is, to the unification of the Western and the Eastern civilization. This is, I am convinced, the great mission in the New Era to the Japanese race that has no doubt an advantage over the Western nations that have not yet come in close contact with the Eastern civilization.

7th October, 1911.

ABOUT SINING-FU

By Reginald Farrer

in "The Rainbow Bridge."

It lies in an open vale, at the tie-point of a cross where four valleys meet. At right angles one broad valley runs down to the Sining-Hor through the Northern Hills; and on the south confronting it, another comes straight from the south out of the Kweite-Salar ranges. Just west of the juncture the city lies expanded within the irregular precinct of its walls; up above on the west several pale tower-structures on the plain commemorate the repulse of a Tibetan invasion. . . . Outside the north wall, close under its cold shadow, there falls away a steep slope, wooded delicately with poplars and willows and threaded by bubbling little rills as clear as diamond in their beds of marsh and lawn, unexpectedly emerald in April among the sere twenty of the scene. Here are toy pagodas and walks and little pavilions for tea; and down below by stony stairways from the northern gate you descend into sparse suburbs where the peach blossom is brilliantly pink by the end of the month. Beyond is

the Sining River, an exiguous thread of water in April, which becomes a roaring waste of waters when the snows of Tibet are loosed in summer.

Those April days were nearly always vibrant with the crystalline loveliness of the northern spring. Morning by morning I used to stroll over the flat mud roofs to see how the lilacs and viburnums (Mr. Farrer was a botanist) were advancing in the little courtyards. . . . Being a big city and so near the border, Sining is the special centre of the four races—Tibetans, Mongolians, Mahomedans and Chinese. . . . The high street is comparable only to a minor lane in Lanchow; its houses are low, scattered and ramshackle; big trees overshadow the wider space in front of the decaying Yamen. But the moving crowds are more brilliant; for besides the flow of Chinese and Mahomedans, you here have also the musty red of monks, the rich yellow of high ecclesiastics, or magnificent strapping Mongols with peaked caps of fur and scarlet and great square reliquaries of silver flashing on their breasts. . . . From the city walls you look down into long strips of garden with tall old trees, dark spruces, and jungles of flowering shrubs, and sumptuous bushes of Viburnum. . . . Every day the peaks of the Koko Nor seem to grow bluer. . . . The Viceroy of Koko-Nor Tibet is not really supposed to have his residence in Sining at all. His proper seat is in a crumbling and utterly deserted walled town, out near the dreary borders of the Dark-Blue Sea, Ching Hai the Holy, the vast and mournful Koko-Nor that gives the name to his Viceroyalty. But Koko-Nor Tibet is a wild and dangerous land; untameable nomad tribes sweep across its undulating plains of grass, and very long ago the Viceroys concluded that they would be a great deal safer in Sining. . . .

The Spring was really come at last; we dined out of doors in the yard, under a night now glorious with stars and moon, in an inexpressible tranquility of warmth. And the Spring in Sining floods the whole city in a sudden sea of pink peach blossom.

In the end of April it is all a haze of shell-pinkness, with the blue blur of bare poplar branches beyond, and then in the westward direction, bluer than all, the Alps of the Koko-Nor. . . . Sining is a notable place for horse-coping, and here, for a price, you can get special specimens of "dzo-ma"—that is, ponies trained to a very rapid amble, quick as a smart trot but perfectly smooth and effortless, and easy to the rider as if he were sitting in a Pullman arm-chair. . . . This whole country runs so high that the peaks themselves by no means have their proper height-value in the view. The wide open vale of Sining and its encompassing shallow downs suggest nothing in the world less than an Alpine country; yet Sining itself could look down on Mont Cenis, for its elevation is about 7000 feet, and you are well up here already on your way to the Roof of the World. When you have reached the Koko-Nor itself you have still no realization of height, and the Sacred Sea, the highest of the world's lakes, lies so vastly expanded in so vast and dull a country that you might be down on the level of the ordinary sea itself instead of 12,000 feet up in the Tibetan highland, with Alpine chains all round you, camouflaged as downs and dunes. . . . Lanchow, among big Chinese towns, is my dream city. It is precisely what I have seen Sian-fu, in visions which Sian-fu entirely declined to fulfil. . . . The Yellow River is as broad at Lanchow as the Thames at London. . . . No words can do justice to the glare and glory of midwinter in Northern Asia. . . . There is hardly a day when the air is not like champagne in Lanchow.

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A particularly dangerous misconception in regard to the nature of occultism is to confuse it with some form of self-realization. Occultism has nothing to do with the transference of personal desires and ambitions to a wider plane. Self-surrender rather than self-realization is the key-note of occultism. "The passion for personal stature," indeed, is one of the great stumbling-blocks of the aspirant to chelaship.—July Occult Review.

THEOSOPHY AND THE MODERN WORLD.

Conducted by Fred B. Housser

CYCLES OF CIVILIZATION

Sir Flinders Petrie, who has spent the greater part of his 80 years in digging among the ruins of previous civilizations, considers that our present civilization is in its later stages, according to an article in the *Toronto Star Weekly* of June 22, 1933.

In the early years of this century he foretold in detail, it is claimed, the afflictions and tribulations through which we are now passing, basing his predictions on his knowledge of the rise and fall of many earlier cultures.

Fifteen hundred years, Sir Flinders states, fulfils the cycle of birth, growth, fruition and decay of a civilization. In the early stages, sculpture, painting, literature and music flourish and in his opinion they appear in the above order. Then comes science and a mastery of mechanics, which in its turn permits surpluses (or wealth) to be accumulated. The nation then rests, ceases from effort and sits back to enjoy the luxuries it can command. This period persists until there is a breaking down of the economic system; then follows internal revolutions and finally conquest by outsiders. The conquerors fuse their culture with that of the conquered race and a new cycle comes into being, marked by a renaissance in the arts.

To the man in the street it is incredible that our present civilization could vanish utterly, leaving only the ruins of a few of our most substantial buildings for the archeologists of some thousands years hence. Possibly the Babylonians, the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, the peoples of Central and South America thought likewise in their day.

But all forms come into being, grow and decay in their time cycle—and a civilization is but a form for race consciousness. Nations decay when the stronger egos no longer incarnate there.

The renaissance of art on this continent, notably in architecture and painting, may indicate that the North American race is now at the beginning of a new cycle. There has been an invasion by other races through immigration, and the arts and crafts of the newcomers are finding freer expression in this new land.

Mr. Sinnett asked the Mahatma K.H. whether there had been at any former period civilizations as great as our own in regard to intellectual development which had utterly passed away. The reply was "No doubt there was. Egyptian and Aryan records and especially our Zodiacal tables furnish us with every proof of it, besides our inner knowledge. Civilization is an inheritance, a patrimony that passes from race to race along the ascending and descending paths of cycles. During the minority of a sub-race, it is preserved for it by its predecessor which disappears, dies out generally, when the former 'comes of age'. At first most of them squander and mismanage their property, or leave it untouched in the ancestral coffer. Instead of neglecting, you now accumulate and add to your wealth. As every other race you had your ups and downs, your periods of honour and dishonour, your dark mid-nights and—you are now approaching your brilliant noon. The youngest of the Fifth race family, you were for long ages the unloved and the uncared for, the Cendrillon in your home."—(*Mahatma Letters*, p. 150).

By the way, Sir Flinders Petrie has a small booklet of interest to students of comparative religion entitled "The Cross in Egypt" and the illustrations show the fusing of the ancient Egyptian and early Christian symbols, the ankh, the 'sign of Constantine' or the Chi rho, the lock of Horus and crosses with the Greek Omega and Alpha suspended from the arms.

THE CONTINENT OF LEMURIA

Captain C. B. Mayo, of the United States naval tanker "Ramapo" plying between San Pedro and Manila is reported in a recent Associated Press despatch from San Diego, California, to have discovered a vast continent beneath the Pacific Ocean. Last May Captain Mayo is said to have found with a sonic depth-finder, "a new deep" off the coast of Japan.

Describing his discovery, Captain Mayo stated, according to the *Toronto Mail and Empire*, that "stretching beneath the surface of the sea lies a continent twice the width of America. . . On it are mountains higher than Mount Everest, and great depths six miles to their bottoms. Between the ranges of the under-water mountains are great valleys marking ancient rivers. There are submerged volcanoes, still active, and all these with the broad plateaus go to make up the terrain of the Pacific sub-continent."

Madame Blavatsky said that before the end of the twentieth century science would have corroborated much that she wrote in the Secret Doctrine concerning the lost continents. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Captain Mayo's vast continent beneath the Pacific is a part of the old land of Lemuria, the home of the third race which, according to H.P.B., perished by submarine fires about 700,000 years before the commencement of what geologists call the tertiary age. When the fourth race was still in its infancy and its continent Atlantis was still submerged, the Secret Doctrine states "Lemuria was then a gigantic land. It covered the whole area from the foot of the Himalayas, which separated it from the island sea rolling its waves over what is now Tibet, Mongolia, and the great desert of Shamo (Gobi). . . From thence it stretched south across what is now known to us as Southern India, Ceylon and Sumatra; then embracing on its way as we go south Madagascar on its right hand and Australia and Tasmania on its left, it ran down to within a few de-

grees of the antarctic circle, and from Australia, an inland region on the mother continent of those ages, it extended far into the Pacific Ocean, beyond Rapanui (Teapy, Easter Island)". (*Secret Doctrine* II., 324).

The Lemurians are said to have built "great rock cities out of stone and lava" one of the first of which was in the region of Madagascar. Another great city of primitive structure was built entirely of lava "some thirty miles west of where Easter Island now stretches its narrow strip of sterile ground", and is said by H. P. B. to have been wholly destroyed by a series of volcanic eruptions. (S.D. II., 317). The only remnant of the Lemurian race which lived in the Madagascar area are the Australian bushmen and possibly some of the black tribes of Africa but the Secret Doctrine informs us that Lemurian culture at its peak was far superior to ours. The command over the psychic nature was "innate and congenital" and "came to man as naturally as walking and thinking." H.P.B. quotes a master as saying that "the Egyptian civilizations (of our fifth race era) are as nothing compared to the civilizations that began with the third race" (on Lemuria).

The third race at its zenith is spoken of as consisting of "towering giants of god-like strength and beauty and the depositors of all the mysteries of heaven and earth". They were the pre-Adamite or divine races which science knows nothing about but which formed the basis of the divine dynasties of Egyptian and Hindu legendary history as well as those of Greece, China and other ancient peoples. The later Lemurian era marks the date of the emergence of man from a psycho-physical being into Plato's Man-God endowed with the sacred fire of the intellectual principle. The myth of Prometheus is said to be an allegory "history as much as myth" depicting this event.

Theosophy teaches that there is no need to despair because man in our era has fallen so low in comparison with his Le-

murian and Atlantean ancestors. Their's was the pristine glory of the race's youth when the life force was still in its downward sweep of involution from the formlessness of spirit into the forms of matter. That sweep reached its lowest point ages later in the civilization of Atlantis, and is now in the process of evolution back to the source whence it came. At some time in the future the race will again reach relatively the same point of development which it had in its golden age on Atlantis and Lemuria, and as it will be the same souls mellowed and chastened by the experience of countless incarnations, it will be as superior to the ancient Lemurians in its grandeur and nobility as the enlightened spirituality of maturity is to the innocent purity of the child.

SOLAR ENERGY AS POWER

It is said that the iconoscope or electric eye, which is hailed by radio engineers as a revolutionary invention in television, makes practically certain the harnessing of the solar energy (electricity) as power for the machines of men. An article in the *New York Times* of June 26th says that television and the making of electricity direct from sunlight are the "supreme achievements" for which the electric eye is now being groomed and made ready. "For on to each square foot of the earth's surface," the writer adds, "the sun delivers 175 watts. The front page of the *New York Times*, viewed in the sunlight, has the equivalent of 500 electric watts pouring upon it. An ordinary cottage roof 30 by 30 feet, is receiving heat energy at the rate of over 150 kilowatts, or 200 horse-power. It has been said, and truly, that the sunshine falling on the decks of the average Atlantic liner is more than enough to drive her at full speed."

The modern theory of light resembles in many respects the theory advanced by H.P.B. in the *Secret Doctrine* and that of the Pythagorean philosophers who declared that "the universe was unfolded in light". Light is now conceived as electricity and

electricity as atomic matter. If the scientific thinkers would advance a step farther they might provide a tremendous spiritual stimulus to modern philosophy and once more unite science and religion as the two were united of old.

Madame Blavatsky claimed that the men of science will never understand the mystery of the universe until, among other things, they "have fathomed the mystery of electricity in its true essence".—"All these",—she writes, "'Light', 'Flame', 'Hot', 'Cold', 'Fire', 'Heat', 'Water', and the 'Water of Life' are all, on our plane, the progeny; or as the modern physicist would say, the correlations of ELECTRICITY. Mighty word, and still mightier symbol! Sacred generator of no less sacred progeny; of fire,—the creator, the preserver and the destroyer; of light,—the essence of our divine ancestors [the gods]; of flame,—the Soul of things. Electricity, the ONE Life at the upper rung of Being, and Astral Fluid, the Athanor of the Alchemists at its lowest; GOD and DEVIL, GOOD and EVIL." (*Secret Doctrine* I., 81-2).

Commenting on a statement of Helmholtz in 1881 in which he suggested the modern theory that electricity is atomic substance, H.P.B. writes in a footnote—"We will go further than that, and assert that Electricity is not only Substance, but that it is an emanation from an Entity, which is neither God nor Devil, but one of the numberless Entities that rule and guide our world according to the eternal Law of KARMA." (*Secret Doctrine*, I., 111).

In the *Secret Doctrine* the entity of which H.P.B. speaks is called "Fohat" which she defines as "the personified electric vital power, the transcendental binding Unity of all Cosmic Energies on the unseen as on the manifested planes". He is metaphysically "the objectivised thought of the gods." On the lower scale, "the Word made flesh" spoken of in the *New Testament*. In his secondary aspect in occult cosmology "Fohat is the solar energy," and in his physical aspect "the animal

soul of nature, so to say, or Electricity." (S.D., I., 111.).

The continent of Atlantis is said to have been destroyed because its inhabitants put the cosmic forces to base and selfish uses. One of these forces is electricity or solar energy. The Atlantean, or fourth root race, made the discovery which our modern scientists are apparently only now on the verge of making;—the harnessing of solar energy for mechanical power. The Atlanteans understood *Vivana Vidya*, the knowledge of flying in air vehicles, and the Atlantean aeroplanes are said to have been propelled by solar energy. They doubtless used this energy for many other purposes, physical, astral and mental, sometimes for good ends, sometimes for bad. (S.D., II., 426-7, 444-5.).

Modern science has already learned how to utilize light direct from the sun for mechanical power but to date it has not been found commercially practical. The time is evidently approaching when it will be and one may ask if its use for commercial exploitation and selfish private aggrandizement will not be making as base use of it as the Atlanteans did, and whether the result might not be the same.

Fortunately, it looks as though before this "supreme achievement" is commercially realized, this continent at least will be living under an economic system which will forbid the kind of exploitation which has so long prevailed under capitalism. This is one more reason for hoping that the machine will soon be made the economic servant instead of the economic master of man.

MAYA OR ILLUSION

"Between us and reality there stands an insurmountable barrier beyond which our knowledge and consciousness can never pass" Professor Henri Pieron of the Institute de Psychologie of Paris, France, is quoted by the *New York Times* of June 26th as having told the American Association for the Advancement of Science at its summer meeting in Chicago. "While

this conclusion dates back to Plato", says the *Times*, "the proposition is now established on a much less debatable foundation. Its first scientific proof was furnished in the theory of sensation of Helmholtz. The latest evidence utilizes the revolutionary findings of quantum mechanics hitherto applicable to light, X-rays, radio waves and the like, in the study of the inconceivably minute quantities of that radiant energy which, somehow, in the mysterious chemical laboratory of our nervous system becomes transformed into thought processes".

Ever since Einstein with his theory of relativity revolutionized scientific conceptions of the nature of the universe—and before that—Dr. Pieron's conclusion as to the unreliability of our physical senses was scientifically inevitable. He has arrived at his theory through a somewhat different approach but, even to a student of science, there seems nothing new in his conclusions.

"It can be said", Dr. Pieron states, "that under certain circumstances the limit of sensitivity of some of our receptor mechanisms is of a molecular order. This makes it all the more remarkable that there should be certain wave-lengths of light... to which our eye is absolutely insensitive, or a wave-length of sound above or below the hearing threshold, or that we should be totally insensitive to such forces as magnetism."

He finds under experiment that this insensitivity is due to the fact "that not only is each particular type of sensation dependent qualitatively on a special neurone or 'telephone line', but that there exists a special neurone also for the various intensities of the same sensation. Thus the reason we can distinguish between a dim light and a bright light, a loud sound and a faint sound, is because there are special separate neurones leading to special separate centres in the brain for the faint and loud sounds, the dim and the bright lights, and all the minute gradations in between."

By the same line of reasoning Dr.

Pieron shows that "not only the sense of orientation in space, but sense of duration or time is wholly the product of our sensory experience."

It is now orthodox science that we live in a universe of maya or illusion,—a conclusion which was long ago reached by philosophers—but the significance and implications of this does not seem to be realized in the field of religion, psychology and ethics. The field is now wide open for a philosophical-religious synthesis of the discoveries of modern science and the only system which offers this is the archaic doctrines embodied in Theosophy.

The Christian Scientists are one modern religious sect which have attempted to interpret Christianity in the light of the fact of maya or illusion but this school of thinkers makes the mistake of declaring that the illusion of the senses is nothing at all, thus ending by denying the existence of things as they are i.e. as illusion. Less spiritual modern thinkers adopt the reasoning that if everything is illusion, there is no use in anything. These end up in a shallow agnosticism which brings on creative paralysis.

Madame Blavatsky wrote—"Maya or illusion is an element which enters into all finite things, for everything that exists has only a relative, not an absolute, reality, since the appearance which the hidden noumenon assumes for any observer depends upon his power of cognition. . . . Nothing is permanent except the one hidden absolute existence which contains in itself the noumena of all realities. The existences belonging to every plane of being, up to the highest Dhyān-Chohans (creative entities) are, in degree, of the nature of shadows cast by a magic lantern on a colourless screen; but all things are relatively real, for the cognizer is also a reflection, and the things cognized are therefore as real to him as himself. Whatever reality things possess must be looked for in them before or after they have passed like a flash through the material world; but we cannot cognize any such existence directly

so long as we have sense instruments which bring only material existence into the field of our consciousness. . . . Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now at last we have reached reality. But only when we shall have reached the absolute consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya."

No one in whom the development of the inner life has been at all active needs any one to tell him that as we rise in the scale of development we perceive that we mistook shadows for realities. This perception is a common experience in the creative life. No creative person, especially if he is a Theosophist, could ever accept Professor Pieron's statement that "between us and reality there stands an insurmountable barrier beyond which our knowledge and consciousness can never pass." This negative attitude was the cause of much of the persecution imposed by the Christian churches in times past when people were burnt for seeking to find Truth, and meddling with things which the church claimed were not lawful for man to know. It was in fact the wedge which first separated science and religion, and to-day, unless a more enlightened and spiritual interpretation of the discoveries of science is realized, science itself is in danger of disillusioning man until he has no values left except those which he can perceive with his five senses.

The Secret Doctrine, and all the great teachers declare that man, in his essence, is a divine being and that he must learn to think of himself in this way; that, as Whitman said, "no condition is prohibited, not God's nor any." The Hindus say, "Thou art That"—the Supreme Spirit. Brahma,

during the process of creation, thought of himself as the father of the world. "This thinking of oneself as this, that or the other", writes H.P.B. "is the chief factor in the production of every kind of psychic or even physical phenomena. The words 'whosoever shall say to this mountain be thou removed and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt that thing will come to pass' are no vain words, only the word 'faith' ought to be translated by 'will'. Faith without will is like a wind-mill without wind—barren of results."

NEW ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY

On all sides there is evidence of the emergence of a new economic philosophy on the American continent. The words "new era" are on every lip. In this movement the United States is leading the way. We are learning at last that economics and ethics do not successfully function separately. If a people gets the kind of government it deserves it may be assumed that this realization extends beyond the confines of Washington.

The recent wave of unrestrained speculation on the stock and commodity markets indicates that the old ethical standards die hard. On July 23rd the *New York Times* stated—"An astounding illustration of the result of individual unrestrained speculation as it affects commodity prices has been brought to the attention of the President and his Secretary of Agriculture. . . . To-day it turns out that one man who had been 'long' on corn by roughly 13 million bushels, and who was also probably 'long' on other grains to the extent of several million bushels, was caught in the decline of prices. . . . was unable to put up any more margin and would have to be sold out. This would mean that on Monday morning his brokers would have to dump 13 million bushels of corn and several million bushels of other grain on the market and this dumping would naturally cause a severe break in grain prices—all the result of the selfish speculation of one individual."

Three short years ago this would not

have been regarded as "selfish". To-day the representatives of the grain trade are called before the Secretary of Agriculture and it is made clear that such orgies of speculation will not be tolerated. In the ensuing proclamation the Administrator for the Adjustment Act said, "It is just as much the duty of the government to protect the farmer against such ruinous prices for his products as it is to protect the city man against the breaking in and robbery of his home."

There have been many recent expressions of this same attitude from government officials at Washington. Donald R. Richberg, General Counsel of the National Recovery Administration said recently in an address to the Merchants' Association—"There is no choice presented to American business between intelligently planned and controlled industrial operations and a return to the gold-plated anarchy that masqueraded as rugged individualism."

President Roosevelt himself stated the issue clearly in his statement of June 16th when he said—"This law (the Industrial Recovery Act) is a challenge to industry and to labour. That challenge must be met within the next sixty days. If the organized groups of either management or labour fail to meet that challenge, they will be indicted for incompetency by the suffering millions who are now giving to industrial leadership one more chance—perhaps the last—to justify its authority."

The time will come when the ethical standards of what is now called "good business" will be considered as crude as the extortion and usury of ancient Rome and the Middle Ages. There are many now who feel that prosperity on the old terms, even if it were possible, would be a mockery. The emerging new economic philosophy, when it has matured, will not countenance the stimulation of acquisitiveness by lurid, expensive advertising in order to raise prices on the buyer. It will be considered unethical for banks to lend out the people's savings to finance orgies of speculation

and allow the poor man to go hungry because he cannot borrow. It will be illegal for pools and syndicates to take advantage of the ignorance of the public and the columns of the daily press to unload securities at artificially manipulated prices for which the sellers know there will be no market when they are sold. "What we need instead of this myopic view" said a recent American speaker, "is for each to so conduct himself that he does nothing for selfish purposes which will stand in the way of the progress of the entire country or even of that segment in which he operates."

Writing to A. P. Sinnett, fifty years ago, the Mahatma M said—"Will you, or rather they, never see the true meaning and explanation of that great wreck of desolation which has come upon our land (India) and threatens all lands—yours (England) first of all? It is selfishness and exclusiveness that killed ours, and it is selfishness and exclusiveness that will kill yours—which has in addition some other defects which I will not name. The world has clouded the light of true knowledge and selfishness will not allow its resurrection, for it excludes and will not recognize the whole fellowship of all those who were born under the same immutable natural law." (*Mahatma Letters*, p. 252).

It is too much to expect that selfishness can be wholly banished from the economic philosophy of the new era but, as is stated by Secretary Tugwell in the *New York Times Magazine* of July 16th "great things can be done here and now." The effort which the Roosevelt administration is making is, he declares—"to save our institutions from the poison of unlimited greed and to turn the results of common effort toward more general benefits."

FAMILY KARMA

Newspaper reports of the murder of Mr. David Burton Emeno, the manager of the Bank of Montreal at Mexico City on July 11th, recall to public notice the tragic deaths of the male members of the Emeno

(Emenaud) family, beginning with the murder of the founder of the Canadian family branch in Lunenburg County Nova Scotia.

The male members of the next succeeding generations, we understand, also met violent deaths. The grandfather of Mr. D. B. Emeno was drowned at sea; his father was killed in a recent automobile accident.

Here is a problem in family Karma. Mr. Judge in his 'Aphorisms on Karma' says, "Family Karma governs only with a nation where families have been kept pure and distinct; for in any nation where there is a mixture of family—as obtains in each Kali Yuga period—family Karma is, in general, distributed over a nation. But even at such periods some families remain coherent for long periods, and then the members feel the sway of family karma." Mr. Judge also points out that "Three fields of operation are used in each being by Karma; (a) the body and the circumstances; (b) the mind and the intellect; (c) the psychic and astral planes."

The family into which an incoming Ego is to take incarnation, provides the physical, mental, psychic and astral 'sieves' as it were for the new member and unless these conditions form a suitable background for the Karma which will be operative during the coming physical life, the incoming ego is not attracted there. These conditions are the chief factors in what are commonly known as 'hereditary traits'. The newly born child does not 'inherit' a family likeness, but because of his affinity with the family conditions—physical, mental, astral and psychic—he takes incarnation through that particular family screen, and family characteristics will very likely show forth in his body and character.

In this particular case, some cause set in motion in the past has resulted in a sorrowful tragedy in this life and from the history of the family it would seem that a continuing rupture or tear in the subtler sheaths of the preceding generations, permitted the entrance of egos who were similarly fated by Karma, to violent deaths.

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