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MEDITATION OR REASONING FROM THE KNOWN TO THE UNKNOWN

BY WILLEM B. ROOS

I. THEORY

In an article entitled "The 'Elixir of Life' " published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. III of April 1882, it is said: ". . . . The strengthening of the more ethereal and so-called 'spiritual' parts of the man must go on, at the same time. Reasoning from the known to the unknown, meditation must be practised. . . ." (p. 169). More than two years later, Damodar K. Mavalankar wrote in the same magazine: ". . . . a *chela's* meditation should constitute the 'reasoning from the known to the unknown'." (Vol. V. August 1884, p. 268). It is this process which will be described in the present paper—a process by which the skilful student of esoteric philosophy may reach eventually to the realm of Occult Metaphysics. Although it is not impossible to write a systematic treatise on this subject, the magnitude of such an undertaking would exceed by far the limits of a conference paper. Besides, such a treatise would serve no purpose at all in this present age of material achievements, with spirituality at a low ebb. As the matter stands, even a simple discussion, as given in the following

pages, may prove quite indigestible for many a student of Theosophy.

All knowledge is based, in first instance, upon sense perceptions. These perceptions combine to form facts and by relating facts to each other by a process, called reasoning, further knowledge is obtained. But not all facts can be related to each other. This is only possible when there is a causal connection between them, or between some of their component elements on any plan. Such a causal connection may be wholly abstract, as that between a principle and its manifestation. The process of reasoning can be employed for finding effects—starting from causes—as well as for finding causes from a knowledge of their effects. The student of Occultism will generally be more interested in the latter, especially if the search leads him to causes on the higher, i.e., more spiritual planes.

Passing now from theory to application I will select from the ocean of facts a few which will serve me as starting points for meditation, by which I shall establish a path towards the realm of Occult Metaphysics. The order of the

selection will be arbitrary, inasmuch as only fragments of this vast subject can be given here. But the results obtained will be of fundamental importance for the study of Theosophy and the student should not spare any effort to try and follow, step by step, the selected applications of Meditation. And if the student comes at some point of the reasoning process to a chasm, let him try to bridge it by applying his own meditation, his own reasoning from the known to the unknown.

II. APPLICATION

A. PROPHECY:

Is prophecy a fact? This should first be settled, at least by those who have no personal experience of true prophecy on their records. By *true* prophecy I mean the exhibition of a foreknowledge of some future event, which is either sufficiently complex or too remote as to make very small the probability of the prophecy being merely a lucky guess. A demonstration of the fact of prophecy would be quite a subject by itself and cannot now be undertaken. Those who are in need of it should study Nostradamus, Swedenborg, Boehme, and the lives of other true seers and mystics, not to speak of the prophecies made by H.P.B. herself. Let them get acquainted with what the Scotchmen call "second sight" and let them find out the rationale of true astrology. Meanwhile they may, for the sake of argument, consider the fact as already established and follow me in the search for causal implications.

First then we must conclude that all events are governed by Causality—or at least all those events intervening between the moment of foreknowledge and the event foreknown. The limiting restriction, however, is not important, inasmuch as a detailed study of authentic prophecies, second sights and the like, reveal how enormous a range of events is involved and that the step towards a

universal Causality Principle is a logical one indeed.

Next we notice that the events, which are the subject of prophecy, range from the most simple ones to those which involve whole nations or occur far into the future. In other words, the power of prophecy manifests in a great variety of degrees just as is the case with any other human power. On the other hand, as this power transcends the limitations of time and space, it also transcends the human body, including the brain. Hence it must be a power—not of the body, which is subject to both time and space, nor of the mind which, although not subject to space, is still subject to time, but of the SPIRIT, which is subject to neither. And if for no other reason, the fact of prophecy compels us to accept the presence of Spirit in MAN, at least in some men.

Another conclusion which can be derived from the fact of prophecy is that of the existence of a *medium* through which this spiritual power works. Inasmuch as the Law of Causation is universal, so the process by which foreknowledge is obtained must also be subject to that Law. This means that the general rule of knowledge is equally applicable to foreknowledge, making, therefore, of the latter also a form of perception. But is it *the event itself* which is perceived? This cannot be, as it would imply a violation of causality. Then we must conclude that coming events throw, so to say, their "shadow" in advance. Where is this shadow? Certainly not on the physical plane, where the PRESENT is only a thin "film" between the PAST and the FUTURE. We must then postulate another plane where this film is of considerable thickness. This plane is the *medium* already referred to, and must have peculiar properties of which some can be derived from the fact of prophecy. It is called by the Hindus *akasa* and by the Old

Greeks *Aether*, as can be seen from the following sentence from The Chaldean Oracle of Zoroaster:

"Tous tupous ton charakteron, kae ton allon theion phasmaton en to ætheri phænesthæ, ta logia legousin."

(The oracles assert, that the impressions of characters, and of other divine visions, appear in the æther.

Cory, 263.)

Finally it will be useful to derive a conclusion of a restricted nature. The fact of prophecy proves that *some* future events are already inevitable long before their occurrence. To this category belong all events foreknown in detail at a certain time. It follows that the postulate of an omniscient Deity, i.e., a Deity foreknowing *all* future events, implies that everything is inevitable and, therefore, predestined; which is a logical conclusion derived from a false premise.

The reasoning processes described in this application consist often of logical steps which had better be called "jumps". Those, for whom the jumps are too large, will have to supply themselves with intermediate steps. Almost, if not all our intellectual processes consist of such jumps, and they are perfectly justified, provided some time in the past their validity was established by the meditator.

B. DREAMS:

Although there are many types of dreams and it is not given to everybody to know them all by his own experience, yet there is not a man, I believe, who never has dreamt. This is fortunate, because in dreams we find plenty of material for meditation. The least common of all dreams are the prophetic visions and the allegorical dreams, but as they lead, principally, to the same conclusions as the general subject of prophecy, already discussed under that section, we will here consider only the more common dreams.

Whatever the particular dream be, on which we are going to meditate, it will first be necessary to get a clear picture of the powers and limitations of the dream-entity. By dream-entity, which should not be confounded with the dreamer, I mean the consciousness active during a given dream. A correct analysis of a dream-entity is best done by the dreamer himself, although occasionally a dream may be described with sufficient detail to enable another person to make the analysis.

The common dream may or may not be coherent, yet the dream-entity, as a rule, takes the dream for granted and never doubts its reality. It will converse with deceased relatives and never remember the fact of their having died. It will find itself many years back in time, say at a school examination, and never realize that the event belongs to the past. It will walk in a city wholly unlike to anyone known to the dreamer, yet the dream-entity will take it to be one with which it is perfectly familiar. It will have power to fly through the air and consider it quite natural. Whatever the situation that arises in the dream, it will react, prompted by desire or aversion, but without a genuine critical examination. It is obvious that the power of ratiocination is absent—nor can the dream-entity dispose of the memory records of the dreamer. It does not even try to recall something, but at times it "remembers" an event which is new to the dreamer. This complete lack of reflective consciousness is typical of the animal kingdom and we conclude that the dream-entity is devoid of powers which belong exclusively to the human state of consciousness.

Reasoning now from the known to the unknown we find first that there is no gradual transition between the animal and human consciousness and, therefore, that there must exist a separate human element which the animal does

not possess or which, at least, is not active in the animal. This element is the seat of ratiocination and all other mental powers not to be found in the kingdoms below that of man. It is known to Theosophists as Manas, the Thinker, and is the element which, when added to an animal, makes of the latter a human being. From these dreams it is clear that the theosophical division of the ensouling principle into "animal soul" and "human soul" is not based upon an arbitrary classification of characteristics, but upon the real existence of two entities, which, in waking life, are thoroughly interblended, while they separate during sleep.

Next we arrive through common dreams at a knowledge of the state of consciousness of an animal, or rather, to be more precise, of a mammal. As in such dreams we pass very quickly, and often without any apparent transition, from one subject to another, so we can now understand why animals forget so easily a subject, as soon as the reminding stimulus is removed. The memory of animals works only through association and their dreams do not differ, in essence, from our common dreams.

Another point we realize, from meditating on dreams, is that the dream state is merely one of *effects*. In that state we do not set up new causes, but experience only the effects of previous impressions made on the brain by our senses and organs. No active act of will occurs in dreams and we, therefore, conclude that the human *will* is absent together with manas, and that animals do not possess such a will.

Once we know one state of effects we can derive others by applying the law of Analogy and Correspondence. All that is needed is to substitute the dream-entity for the one which experiences the particular state under study. Of course, this method can only be applied where the nature of the conscious entity is suf-

ficiently known. Vice versa, it is also possible to know an entity from a knowledge of its state of consciousness.

C. PHENOMENA OF LIFE:

In the previous application we took as subjects for meditation facts which were, in a way, limited to a small area of human experience. These facts lead to a number of conclusions which were more or less remote from the original starting point, from which they radiated, so to say, in different directions. We will now proceed in a completely different manner, starting this time from a very great number of facts in order to reach to single conclusions. In other words, the method will be one of progressive generalization, a search for the quintessence of a certain group of facts. In this application we will meditate upon the various phenomena of Life, defining Life, provisionally, as that which has as characteristic marks: birth, growth, reproduction, decay and death. I say "provisionally," because a more correct and precise definition would necessitate a fuller understanding of the mystery of life, and that is exactly the aim of our meditation. Although this definition of Life is somewhat vague, yet it serves my present purpose, viz., to indicate what kind of phenomena will be meditated upon.

As the definition stands, the phenomena of life apparently are found only in the three higher kingdoms of Nature. If we were to drop from the definition the mark "reproduction" then it would be applicable to the mineral kingdom as well. Because minerals, too, are born, grow, decay and die, and through the facts of nuclear physics we now know that even the chemical elements are born, in order to die: some after an infinitesimal fraction of a second, while others have lives which last billions of years. Crystals are grown from formless matter, and minerals grow inside the earth by slow processes, probably of

an electrolytic nature. If we could only discover the act of reproduction among the minerals or the chemical elements, we would be forced to consider life a universal phenomenon, manifesting in all the four visible kingdoms. We know, at least, of one case of reproduction of its own "species" among the chemical molecules, viz., that of the virus of the tobacco mosaic disease. This virus is a single huge molecule which aggregates to form crystals, and which behaves, in the laboratory, like any other chemical substance, while in a tobacco plant it behaves like a parasitic living entity, reproducing itself at the expense of its host.

But is it necessary to find the faculty of reproduction among the members of the mineral kingdom, in order to be justified in considering them alive? Not every plant produces seeds to reproduce its species, and among the animals we know the mule to be devoid of that power. Nor is it correct to consider such a mark as a necessary characteristic of life, while it is only at rare intervals active in "living entities." The same we can say of the other enumerated marks: no one is an invariable concomitant at any time of living entities, not even that of growth, or more specific still, that of metabolism. Seeds may stay for years "dormant," yet be alive, in contradistinction with dead seeds, which, when sown, will not sprout.

Of course, there must be a difference between live and dead seeds, but is this difference an essential one or merely organic? If essential, then that factor, which is absent in dead seeds, must be present in all living entities, and would be a *principle of life*, e.g., the *prāna* (vital breath) of the Hindus. If organic, then a seed is dead whenever its structures is so much modified, as to prevent its functioning as an organized single entity. Which highly organized entities

like human beings, we observe very definite organic changes after death has set in and it is, therefore, very reasonable to assume that something similar has happened to the dead seed. On the other hand, all the many different living organisms are, of course, a manifestation of powers of organization, without which any organism would soon disintegrate.

We seem to have arrived again at that essential factor, the principle of Life, which is now defined as the power of organization, by which any organism maintains its peculiar structure with its functions and faculties. The question now is whether this principle is produced by the living form or if it is, somehow, independent of that form—perhaps its cause. Obviously, it must be independent of the form, as it manifests more intensely at the period of birth and adolescence of the growing entity than it does afterwards. Indeed, it could not be the power of maintaining a form, without being, at the same time, the power which shaped that form, inasmuch as there is no essential difference between the two functions.

Our first conclusion is that two factors determine the conditions of life and death of an organism, viz., the *principle of life*, and the *structural elements* which furnish the indispensable material for the former to work upon. Applying this conclusion to our two kinds of seeds we see that in the dead seed the structural elements are unsuitable for the life principle to manifest, while in the living seed the addition of moisture and warmth will modify sufficiently the structural elements to cause the life principle to come into action. The type of life activity which a certain entity will manifest depends then upon its organic condition, and reproduction is, therefore, only a possible but not a necessary phase of a life cycle. Similarly we must explain the different de-

degrees of life activity, i.e., whether it will result in plant, or animal, or human life.

This brings me to the second conclusion: If plant life is of a lower degree than animal life, then why not consider a still lower degree of manifestation of life and call it *mineral life*. In the mineral kingdom there are also organisms which are born, grow, decay and die—not to speak of the one certain case of reproduction, already known so far by science. Indeed, there is no lack of activity in what is vulgarly called dead matter and there, too, are powers at work which maintain the various mineral forms. Mineral life differs only in degree—not in essence—from that of plants, animals and men. Hence we have reached to the point where we recognize that life is manifesting in all the kingdoms of Nature; in other words, that LIFE is *omnipresent*, pervading SPACE as the power to form and maintain organisms, be they atoms or plants, animals or human beings, solar systems or galaxies.

Continuing our process of generalization we pass from the objective aspect of life to the subjective one. Intimately associated with life is consciousness, the faculty of being aware of something. Just as the objective manifestations of life are of a very great variety, so are the manifestations of consciousness. Many of the latter are found in the human as well as in the animal kingdom, while the most complex ones, no doubt, belong exclusively to the human kingdom. In the process of generalization complexities must be simplified and magnitudes must be eliminated; from the essence must be distilled the quintessence. Although we are best acquainted with the human consciousness, because being our own, yet this is too complex for our purpose. So what we have to do is to descend in the scale of consciousness, let the complexities, the irrelevant details go, in order to arrive

at the quintessence of consciousness. In first instance, then, we see that all consciousness is some kind of perception, whether through the senses or the mind, whether of some external or internal event, or of a memory record, it matters not. That other entities do have perceptions we know only by inference, either from their own statements (in the case of other human beings) or from their reactions to events also perceived by ourselves (in the case of both men and animals). At the same time we realize that the lower we go in the scale of animals, the more primitive a consciousness we find. Both the perceptions and the corresponding reactions become steadily simpler until, with the lowest of the protozoa, our power to watch their reactions becomes very limited. All we now can do is to apply some kind of stimulus and observe the effect upon the protozoon in question. After all, a perception is nothing else but the effect of an outside stimulus and this leads to the conclusion that, whenever an outside stimulus produces an effect upon something, that something *perceives* and is, therefore, *conscious* of the stimulus. Passing now to the plant kingdom we have here also certain kinds of perception with corresponding reactions as can be observed easily in many cases. The most impressive is, perhaps, the rapid folding-up of its leaves by the *Mimosa pudica* upon being touched. Normally plants react not so spectacularly and certainly much slower, but then, their lives depend upon a different time scale, so to say. In all cases, though, we have to assign to plants a certain degree of consciousness in accordance with the above definitions of perception and perceiver.

Finally we must also concede to the members of the mineral kingdom a kind of consciousness, because they, too, per-

(Continued on Page 140)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

This is a plea to those responsible for remitting members' dues to the General Secretary and it applies more particularly to the smaller lodges where it appears to be the practice to send them to me in dribblets. The clerical work at headquarters is unnecessarily augmented by this system, and I would appeal to all concerned to do their best to mitigate the extra work—not to mention postage—by carrying out their duties in a business like manner.

* * * *

By the same token I would remind members that the annual dues are payable in July of each year and should be sent or given to the treasurer of their lodge. The fee is small enough in all conscience and has not been raised since inception in spite of the increased cost of every commodity, which unfortunately is still climbing. If the Society is worth joining it is worth supporting, and I may add never was the need of funds more urgent than they are today in order to provide the wherewithal to carry on the necessary work we are engaged in.

* * * *

I have noticed an increased vitality in our lodges. Toronto is, of course as always, on its toes; Montreal now has a printed monthly bulletin and so has Hamilton and all have a good programme of lectures, etc. At the latter place when speaking there I have noticed that there is always a sprinkling of strangers which evinces an outside public interest which is all to the good. By this means we are helping to spread the good work, and although our membership is small it constitutes the yeast that is leavening theosophical interest abroad. Nor must we forget we are well into the last quarter before the

coming of the expected visitation in 1975 and it behooves us, one and all to gird up our loins for the great event.

* * * *

No doubt you will have read in our last month's issue how we are steadily making friends amongst theosophists outside the Section, and to this I would add that I have received many letters to the same effect all especially lauding our attitude in regard to the exposition of the teachings of the Founders. This is very heartening, as for too long Canada has been under obloquy because of her refusal to exploit psychism and be led astray by excessive devotion to personalities, etc. Personally I have been appalled when visiting other centres to find the casual conversation centred around personal experiences in previous incarnations in the most casual and matter of fact way. I do not wish to stick out my neck but to all such I would suggest they read *One World at a Time* by Bernard Hamilton, a book I read years ago when I was tempted to indulge in such things. It certainly stabilized me and I am very thankful for having read it.

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I regret to report the death of a well-known member of Toronto Lodge, Mr. John Christian Van Eeden, who passed away on Oct. 26. Mr. Van Eeden, who joined the Society some time prior to the formation of the National Society in Canada, was born in Holland and he liked to keep in touch with the activities of the Society there through the medium of the National magazine *Theosophia*. For some years he acted as International Correspondent in Canada with Theosophical members in other lands. He was an earnest student and his well-stocked library contained many philosophical books, particularly of the Vedanta.

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Letters intended for publication should be restricted to not more than five hundred words.

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Our sincere sympathy is extended to his four sons and to other members of the family.

A Theosophical funeral service was held at the Toronto Crematorium on Thursday, October 29.

E. L. T.

GENERAL EXECUTIVE

The Quarterly Meeting of the General Executive took place at the Guild of All Arts, Scarborough on Sunday, October 4. Professor Ernest Wood being in the city was invited to be present and was welcomed by the Chairman. The members present were: Miss M. Hindsley, Mr. Dudley Barr, Mr. Charles Hale, Mr. George Kinman and the General Secre-

tary. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. Col. Thomson read the Financial Report which was adopted. Mr. Barr, Editor of the magazine reported progress and read a letter he had received from a group of students in the United States which showed the trend of outside views on that publication. It being of general interest he was requested to publish it in the magazine. The question of Autonomy of Lodges was again to the fore and as requested at the last meeting Mr. Barr read his report on the matter. Before discussion the Chairman suggested he read a letter he had received from the President, Mr. Sri Ram to whom he had written on the subject. A discussion then took place and finally the consensus was that the opinions of the members not present should be obtained and for that purpose copies of Mr. Barr's report should be sent them and their replies brought forward at the next meeting before publication of the final decision on the matter. The meeting then proceeded to vote on various questions emanating from Adyar which have to be brought before the General Council at Benares in December. Mr. Barr brought forward an "Alternative Programme for the T.S." sent him by Mr. Redfern, England for consideration by the Executive. This was held in abeyance for the time being. Other routine matters were dealt with and the next meeting arranged for January 10, 1954. The meeting then closed.

E. L. T.

MEDITATION

I have read with the greatest interest a small book sent to me for review entitled *Meditation* written by Adelaide Gardner, and am anxious to bring it to the notice of those who want a sound practical study of that subject. I am often asked what books I would recommend for such a purpose and in view of

the many that have been published, it is a difficult matter to decide, but here is one that I can unhesitatingly advocate for beginners or advanced students. It begins with an historical survey, followed by the various methods and then suggests progressive stages and finally, suggestions and simple forms of concentration for personal use. I have no hesitation in recommending this book to all, both for individual use and group practises. It is published by the Theosophical Publishing House, 68 Great Russell St., London, W.C.1 England, at the price of five shillings.

E. L. T.

OFFICE NOTES

It was suggested recently that the magazine carry more articles dealing with the practical application of theosophic truth to the day-by-day, life problems of men and women. We would be delighted to receive such articles and hope that some of our readers will act on the suggestion. The article on 'Technical Assistance' which appears this month is not Theosophically 'slanted', but it does deal with practical problems of human brotherhood.

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The November *Atlantic* contains a portion of condensed version of *Russian Assignment*, a book by Vice Admiral Leslie G. Stevens, USN (Ret.) relating to the author's years of service in Russia. Reincarnation is suggested (although the author does not use the word) in one of the episodes. Admiral Stevens told a Russian acquaintance of the well-known experience of the Misses Moberly and Jourdain, two English school teachers on a trip to Versailles. The two ladies suddenly and simultaneously seemed to move backward in time to the days before the French Revolution. The *Petite Trianon* was thronged with persons in pre-revolutionary costumes and the grounds

were dotted with long-vanished landmarks. The two ladies wrote a very interesting book on their experiences and this is often quoted from in talks on reincarnation. His Russian friend then told of an experience which had happened to him. Once he went to a small Swedish city and as soon as he entered it he was aware that he had been there before. Walking down a street he said to himself that when he turned the next corner, he would see a tower, and the picture of the tower, with its turrets and windows, came before his mind's eye. When he turned the corner there was the tower complete in all the details which he had foreseen. Perhaps such experiences are due to memories carried forward out of past lives.

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On July 1, 1953, the Canada Fair Employment Practices Act came into effect. Its purpose is to prevent and eliminate practices of discrimination in employment and in trade union membership because of race, national origin, colour, or religion. Here are some of the main provisions: Employers are not to discriminate against any person in regard to employment because of his race, colour, religion or national origin, and are not to use any employment agency which practices discrimination. Employers are not to use any advertising matter or application forms which express directly or indirectly any limitations, specification or preference based upon any of such distinctions—nor may labour unions exclude anyone from membership because of race, colour, religion or national origin. Penalties are provided for any infraction of the Act. Similar legislation was passed in the United States a few years ago. Perhaps these are some of the outward and visible signs that humanity will some day become a Universal Brotherhood without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE— DOES IT CONCERN US?

BY COLIN W. BELL

*Director of The International Quaker
Centre, Geneva, Switzerland*

During the last few decades we have seen two apparently paradoxical tendencies at work in world society. On the one hand is the rise of nationalism, re-surgent in some places, and in others coming to birth in new national communities. On the other hand, we are conscious of a growing sense, in individuals and in nations, of man's social responsibility to other men. The chronic social ills which afflict the majority of mankind cannot be ignored or forgotten by any of us. The news of great national disasters (e.g., the floods in Italy, around the North Sea, and in Japan in recent years) stirs us in a more personal way and compels us, as persons and as communities, to come quickly to the aid of unknown men, women and children.

These changes are all part of the world social revolution which is taking place. It seems to me that there are, in fact, three interlocking phases of this revolution. There is, first, the rise of the *Havenots* against the *Haves*. The centuries-old dominance of the rest of the world by the white Western nations is drawing to a close. Moralities have changed. We are apt to forget that in the relatively recent past the business of empire building was considered as right, proper and moral—and considered so with complete sincerity. Today the colonial problem is reduced, for the majority of people, to the question of the "unscrambling" of empire and the search for new forms of relationship with the inhabitants of colonial territories. The problem is still very real and those who, largely through ignorance, are loud in proposing oversimplified remedies do a great disservice to its resolution.

The second phase of world revolution, and one which is not so clearly seen, is the struggle of the masses of the *Have-not* peoples against the evils inherent in their own societies. The most reprehensible feature of colonialism has not been, in my opinion, the material exploitation of backward peoples and the resources of their lands. Rather do I feel that the saddest features of colonialism lie in the delay which has been caused to the social and political maturing of underdeveloped peoples, in the moral degradation which has occurred among the whites themselves as they clung to their ideas of race superiority and failed to treat the colonial peoples as at least potential equals; and in the escapist opportunity afforded to the colonial peoples to ascribe *all* their social and economic ills to the presence of the foreign ruler. Today many nations are facing squarely their own inherent virtues and vices for the first time. Within a generation the "legacy of colonialism" cry will have no meaning. The second phase, then, of the world revolution is and will be the revolt of the masses in underdeveloped areas against greed, self-seeking, corruption and social injustice practised by their own rulers or power groups, or inherent in their own pattern of society.

I have already referred to the third phase, namely the heightened conscience of the *Haves* in this world. The rich nations are beginning to take a less selfish and more socially responsible view of their wealth, and out of this as yet embryonic tendency are emerging some pilot projects expressing man's greater sense of responsibility for his fellow. An example in a national setting is the

Socialist experiment in Britain; wider applications are seen in Marshall Aid, the U. S. Point Four Programme, the Colombo Plan; and more universal still are the efforts of the UN Specialized Agencies and the UN Technical Assistance Programmes.

What can Christian People and organizations do to further this healthy, if belated, phase of the world revolution, especially as regards action through the United Nations? I would like to suggest the following:

(1) We should become knowledgeable about the work of the UN Specialized Agencies and Technical Assistance, inform others and arouse their enthusiasm for this constructive, long-term activity by UN to create conditions which will ultimately "take away the occasion of war."

(2) We must face honestly the fact that so far these activities are puny and starved of funds. We must not salve our consciences with these token efforts. It is not widely known that the projects of UNICEF, WHO, Technical Assistance, and the other agencies, are now actually in a state of contraction owing to lack of funds. Their future will be precarious if public opinion in many countries does not give a clear mandate to national governments to make larger and more regular financial contributions.

(3) We must lay stress on the fact that the motivation of all concerned with Technical Assistance must be pure and disinterested. Those who give must not do mainly from political motives; those who receive must demonstrate a similar integrity; and the administrators and technicians in the programme must be sensitive persons with a strong social concern. Technical competence without motivation may do more harm than good.

(4) We must recognize ourselves and make it clear to others that Techni-

cal Assistance which leads to industrialization and economic development will create in underdeveloped areas profound changes in social structure, the breakdown of traditional standards and values, the introduction of new values, and strains and conflicts of all sorts. Therefore, the West must be ready with *Spiritual Assistance* based not on a sense of superiority but rather the reverse. We *know* how hard it is for the rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, and we must examine our failings in all candour, to enable the developing nations to avoid the social evils which are the product of our machine age and which we do not know how to control.

(5) We must fight the tendency to accept "Cold War" conditions for a long time to come. It might be possible for the *Haves* to live in a state of uneasy, fearful stalemate with all schemes of social and economic progress held up. For the *Havenots* this stalemate is intolerable, and indeed, they will not wait.

(6) In many parts of the world the gap in the standards of life between the *Have* and *Havenot* nations is widening. Christians must face this fact. Is it morally sound, politically feasible, or economically necessary for the *Haves* to accept voluntary controls on their material progress, or even a calculated lowering of standards in order to narrow the gap?

People in underdeveloped areas are interested in what goes on behind the Iron Curtain, not so much on account of the ideological implications as because they believe that a vast (albeit ruthless) system of Technical Assistance and economic development is in operation. We of the Christian West cannot meet this salutary challenge by merely reiterating our deep conviction that Man does not live by bread alone—and then providing no bread, either physical or spiritual.—*World's Monthly*, Geneva.

MEDITATION

(Continued from Page 134)

ceive—being not only aware of each other through the effects of gravitation, but also through chemical affinities.

We can now state that, as a result of the foregoing meditation, we realize that just as life is omnipresent, so the entire Cosmos is conscious. The power of perception is of a universal nature in manifested space and, therefore, no entity which is perceptible is devoid of consciousness. Here the expression "perceptible" is used in its broadest possible sense, of course, and in that sense the process is always reversible and by it the entity, which is perceived, "perceives" in its turn.

We have, so far, reached to two conclusions, while meditating on the phenomena of life, viz., one of an objective nature and the other of a subjective one. It follows that our task is not yet finished. A third factor, which serves as a link between life and consciousness, must exist, as otherwise the mutual interaction, which is seen between the two, would be inexplicable. In order to find this third factor we should consider the other two in their simplest expression. Consciousness then reduces to *knowledge*, pure and simple, while life becomes *motion with a purpose*. Now, motion with a purpose is *intelligent* motion indeed, and this implies the application of knowledge. At once we have discovered that the missing factor must be *intelligence*, i. e., the power to acquire knowledge and apply it skilfully. The expression "skilfully" must not be taken too literally. This may be right for the highest kingdoms, but in our process of generalization even qualifying terms must be generalized frequently, and in this present case the word "skilfully" means "in such a manner as to promote the interests of the entity."

Inasmuch as we have derived this third factor directly from the other two, without utilizing the phenomena of life, it will be convenient to check the results by going back to some specific cases. Of course, that intelligence manifests in the human and animal kingdoms will not be denied by anybody, I suppose. Even its manifestations in the plant kingdom is not difficult to observe: the very subtle means which many plants use to promote the propagation of their species indicate the presence of an intelligent power. This power must be an individual one, because often the means used conflict with the interests of other plants, or even, in some cases, with the interests of men and animals. This fact of conflicting interests disproves at once the hypothesis which derives the intelligence of the kingdoms below man from a single supreme Deity.

Our real problem is to demonstrate the existence of intelligence in the lowest, the mineral kingdom. That its members have a kind of perception—hence knowledge—we already found out while reasoning about the factor of consciousness. Our problem reduces, therefore, to proving that this knowledge is applied in such a manner as to further the interests of the particular entity under consideration. It appears convenient to investigate first whether the members of the mineral kingdom have really interests of their own, and in the affirmative case to find the nature of these interests. Again we have to contemplate Nature in toto, but this time extending our gaze far into the past. Because, if Nature has definite tendencies, these will show up when comparing its manifestations at different epochs. A study of evolution teaches us that Nature tends to the formation of complex organizations from simpler ones. This tendency is obviously an expression of the Unity which exists on the plane of

Spirit. There Unity means Oneness of consciousness; in other words, participation in the sum total of the accumulated knowledge. Similarly, on our material plane, an organization offers a certain benefit to its individual members. The latter profit from the powers and experience, i.e., knowledge of the whole. However, as powers are nothing else but the application of knowledge, it appears that the purpose of existence is the acquisition of knowledge, and this then is the final aim and interest of all entities, as well as organizations of entities.

The only thing left to prove is that the members of the mineral kingdom utilize their knowledge to increase their experiences, i.e., to acquire further knowledge. We have before noticed the tendency in the mineral kingdom to form organizations. This starts already with the so-called "elementary" particles of physics, which unite into nuclei and complete atoms, while the latter, in their turn, combine to form molecules. These again tend to aggregate into larger groups, forming liquids and solids, crystals and complex minerals, rocks and ores. It does not matter that all these forms disintegrate again, after some more or less prolonged time. Certain lessons are learnt, no doubt, as no effort is ever lost; this, at least, we know from our own experiences, and also from the ease by which the present forms of life are reproduced again and again. Whenever, for example, a molecule of water is formed from the union of two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen, there must be postulated a power in each of these atoms by which the partners are selected and the "association" is made. Knowledge is needed for selecting the proper partners, and this knowledge, as it now appears, is put in the service of the interests of all the parties concerned—an association wherein each member will advance a little further in knowledge

and power. With each combination new qualities appear and these, again, permit further associations to be formed. Intelligence, as a universal factor, becomes an established reality to him who is able to meditate in the manner described.

III. CONCLUSION

By reasoning from the known to the unknown we have established certain facts about such fundamental concepts as Spirit, Mind, Life, Consciousness, and Intelligence. We have derived details as well as generals by that process, and have obtained thereby a knowledge about some very important subjects, especially so for the student of Theosophy. The applications which have been chosen are accessible to practically every student and are of general interest. They illustrate also some of the difficulties encountered in meditating, and the way to solve them. Of course, I do not expect that all the reasoning steps can be followed equally well by everybody, nor was that my aim. My object was, principally, to show how much could be achieved by this process of reasoning and how deeply one can penetrate by it into the realm of the unknown, in particular the realm of Occult Metaphysics, which is inaccessible by other means.

How far any student will be successful in his meditations will depend to a great extent upon the knowledge at his command and upon his power of perceiving with his spiritual eye the hidden causes of the known facts. While, on the one hand, spiritual vision is required for correct and precise reasoning from the known to the unknown, on the other hand, one's spiritual powers are strengthened and increased by it. No wonder, then, that it is part of that mysterious occult process, known as the Elixir of Life.

H. P. B. ON THE SECRET DOCTRINE

. . . it [*The Secret Doctrine*] is neither a philosophical system nor the Doctrine, called secret or esoteric, but only a record of a few of its facts and a *witness* to it. It has never claimed to be the full exposition of the system (it advocates) in its totality; (a) because as the writer does not boast of being a great Initiate, she could, therefore, never have undertaken such a gigantic task; and (b) because had she been one, she would have divulged still less. It has never been contemplated to make of the sacred truths an integral system for the ribaldry and sneers of a profane and iconoclastic public. The work does not pretend to set up a series of explanations, complete in all their details, of the mysteries of Being; nor does it seek to win for itself the name of a distinct system of thought—like the works of Messrs. Herbert Spencer, Schopenhauer or Comte. On the contrary, the *Secret Doctrine* merely asserts that a system, known as the WISDOM RELIGION, the work of generations of adepts and seers, the sacred heirloom of pre-historic times—actually exists, though hitherto preserved in the greatest secrecy by the present Initiates; and it points to various corroborations of its existence to this very day, to be found in ancient and modern works. Giving a few fragments only, it there shows how these explain the religious dogmas of the present day, and how they might serve Western religions, philosophies and science, as sign-posts along the untrodden paths of discovery. The work is essentially fragmentary, giving statements of sundry facts taught in the esoteric schools—kept, so far, secret—by which the ancient symbolism of various nations is interpreted. It does not even give the *keys* to it, but merely opens a few of the

hitherto secret drawers. No *new* philosophy is set up in the *Secret Doctrine*. Only the hidden meaning of some of the religious allegories of antiquity is given, light being thrown on these by the esoteric sciences, and the common source is pointed out, whence all the world-religions and philosophies have sprung. Its chief attempt is to show, that however divergent the respective doctrines and systems of old may *seem* on their external or objective side, the agreement between all becomes perfect, so soon as the esoteric or *inner* side of these beliefs and their symbology are examined and a careful comparison made. It is also maintained that its doctrines and sciences, which form an integral cycle of universal cosmic facts and metaphysical axioms and truths, represent a complete and unbroken system; and that he who is brave and persevering enough, ready to crush the *animal* in himself, and forgetting the human *self*, sacrifices it to his Higher Ego, can always find his way to become initiated into these mysteries. This is all the *Secret Doctrine* claims. Are not a few facts and self-evident truths, found in these volumes—all the literary defects of the exposition notwithstanding,—truths *already proved practically to some*, better than the most ingenious “working” hypotheses, liable to be upset any day, than the *unexplainable* mysteries of religious dogmas, or the most seemingly profound philosophical speculations? Can the grandest among these speculations be really profound, when from their *Alpha* to their *Omega* they are limited and conditioned by their author’s *brain-mind*, hence dwarfed and crippled on that Procrustean bed, cut down to fit limited sensuous perceptions which will not allow the intellect to go beyond their enchanted

circle? No "philosopher" who views the spiritual realm as a mere figment of superstition, and regards man's mental perceptions as simply the result of the organization of the brain, can ever be worthy of that name.

Lucifer, Feb. 15th, 1891.—*The Theosophical Movement*, May 1937.

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CLAIRVOYANCE AND MORALITY

"A true theosophist must put in practice the loftiest moral ideal."

The Key to Theosophy.

That which dissociates moral and intellectual aspirations from occult development, and seeks to cultivate them separately, will not achieve moral progress, since the *inner* nature is not transmuted; but this method will produce a veritable debauch of phrases invoking these aspirations. For, instead of penetrating by means of the appropriate practice into the inner regions of the soul, these aspirations swirl, so to say, perpetually on the surface of the mind. Their presence there will produce a kind of psychic intoxication, sometimes rousing in the occultist thoughts so much above his own mental and moral standard, that he may come to regard himself as a saint, while at the same time performing the most despicable actions. Indeed, during such times the conduct shows a moral retrogression very noticeable when compared with the conduct before this occult development. For this latter *increases and intensifies* all the temptations, as every occultist will admit. An increase of active morality is, therefore, required if we would avoid this most dangerous lack of balance.

We know that the higher regions of the invisible worlds are those in which

"consciousness" manifests itself principally in the most intense awareness of moral beauty.

Since this is so, the cultivation of the non-moral clairvoyance could only attain results in the lower regions of the astral world. The higher astral and the devachanic worlds would remain entirely closed to it. Just as a man who is colour-blind, though not completely blind, is shut out from the world of colours on this earth, because of some defect in the physical organ of sight, so the organ of clairvoyant sight, when developed according to certain methods, will be blind to the moral outlines of subtle worlds, *and will thus be cut off from all their truly spiritual content. The field of their experience will be limited to the lower regions of the astral plane.*

And it is these lower visions, *more frequently experienced because of their affinity to elements in the vehicles of the investigator not yet purified*, that will be presented as the most sublime images of the higher worlds. For such a clairvoyant is deprived of the high morality which is the force leading our bodies by affinity towards truly spiritual Beings. Deprived of the standard of comparison that these provide, he will be the victim of all the illusions of a world that is the veritable motherland of illusion, for human errors are but the faint reflection of these. Since the sense of responsibility, which is essentially moral in origin, will equally fail him, he will have no scruple in sharing his illusions with all, in making known his misleading experiences — the less since the forces, whose sport he is, push him irresistibly to this. Are they not in truth the adversaries of the divine scheme of evolution, the servants and sowers of error and immorality the world over?

Eugene Levy.

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