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## KARMA AND REINCARNATION

The doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation have a remarkable psychological effect, once they are understood, on minds working under the influence of the crystallized dogmas and creeds of the last few centuries. These have lost the life-giving power which once vitalized them, and their spirit has to be translated into new conceptions of thought, the old truths into new language. Foreordination and predestination, election and damnation, and other medieval expressions of the laws of life as they were understood, represented truth to their authors, but no longer do so to minds which reason in terms of modern science and experience. The mis-translation of the Christian and Jewish Scriptures has added considerably to this difficulty.

In the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation the world returns once more to a recognition of the old truths of Eternal Justice and Immortal Being, which were, after all, what the ancient church dogmas and creeds sought to convey.

Detaching these ideas from the encrustations of theology and sacerdotal ecclesiasticism, they at once set a man free from the bondage of mental slavery and the fear of priestly condemnation which has done so much in every age to keep back the progress of the race.

"You shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free," is a remarkable statement of fact, which has been perverted into the practice that "you shall believe the creeds and they shall keep you in ignorance."

To do justice to the ancient formularies it must be evident to the thinking mind

that the language in which they are couched is the speech of metaphor, of symbol, of parable. When the creed declares that on the third day Christ "rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence He shall come at the last day to judge both the quick and the dead," we are given what was a representation of the beliefs of the time accorded to the knowledge of the period.

We know now that resurrection is not what it had come to be understood to be, but that it is re-embodiment, and that it occurs every time a child is born. This continual resurrection of the human race, so exquisitely and poetically described in the Ninetieth Psalm, which tells us that one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, is the mode and process of the evolution of the whole human family. Every generation fills its measure of effort, and its successes and failures are duly embodied in their succeeding lives on earth, in which "every man is rewarded according to his work." The parable of the talents is another expression of the same truth, forgotten since the Second Council of Constantinople, in A. D. 553.

"Thou turnest man to dust, and sayest, Return, ye children of men," sets forth the same law in unforgettable phrase. And in the Second Commandment, obscured by the translators, there is a beautiful illustration of the Eternal Mercy, the evanescent character of evil and the persistence of goodness.

"I, the Lord, am a zealous God, and visit the sins of the Fathers (spiritual

egoës or individualities) upon the children (human personalities) unto the third and fourth incarnation, but show mercy unto the thousandth (incarnation) of them that love me and keep my commandments."

The creed, in speaking of Christ rising from the dead, confuses the development of spiritual consciousness in the pneumatic or noetic or spiritual body, of which St. Paul speaks, with the rebirth into a new physical body which follows the post mortem period of rest in the heaven world. The physical body does not and cannot go to heaven, as St. Paul carefully declares. "Now this I say to you, flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." Yet the churches persist in asserting that it must, while obscuring the great truth that we must develop a spiritual body as the vehicle of a higher order of consciousness by a life of virtue and self-control. "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering or patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance or self-control; against such there is no law." The law, here, is that which St. Paul elsewhere designates, the law of Moses, the *lex talionis*, the law of cause and effect, or Karma. When a man lives the spiritual life and practices the virtues of the spirit he creates no new Karma, or, as St. Paul phrases it, he is no longer under the law.

The resurrection of the Christ is a spiritual mystery, taught in all the ancient religions in their mysteries, and formed the most sacred teaching in their temples. It was only made known to the elect, those who had prepared themselves for the highest life by the purest aspirations. Paul teaches it in his epistles, which were mystery letters sent to those who had been orally instructed. He strove, as he says, so that the Christ might be born in his pupils, and in one passage he expressed his fears that he himself might be a castaway. Those who had not attained to this "resurrection of life" were compelled to reincarnate again, and had thus such further opportunities as they required in repeated births on earth to attain that status. In each age or generation there are but few who attain to this "resurrection of life." "Many are called but few are chosen." "Narrow is the way

and straight the gate, and few there be that enter in thereat." Those who fail reincarnate again, and proceed in this evolution from the point where they left off in their last lives, losing nothing they had gained, and relieved of the burden of the memory of their past failures and misdoings, though strengthened in character by the efforts which they had made.

The instructions of the great teachers of religion, such as those of Jesus in the Gospels, of Buddha in his discourses, of Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, the Golden Verses of Pythagoras, the Divine Pymanter of Hermes, and numerous others, were intended for those who desired to enter upon this supreme effort to reach the Christ consciousness. For the rest, they were taught in parables and given such ethical advice as they were capable of adopting: "other heights in other lives," as Robert Browning puts it.

When a man reaches this state of the Christ or Nirvanic consciousness he has conquered death in the sense that there is no longer any break in the memories of his past. The grave can have no terrors for him because he now possesses a body which is "raised in power, immortal, spiritual." He does not need to incarnate again, but has, in the metaphor of the past, "ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of the Father." Had this been written in our democratic days another image than a throne and a king's son would have been chosen as a symbol of power; the Prime Minister in England or the Secretary of State in the United States having more authority than the son of any king to-day.

But to the people of the past the metaphor conveyed the idea of law and power and authority. In these days of scientific investigation we know that the great powers and laws of Nature are not lodged in persons, but exist in the cosmic being of things. Space, duration, motion, are a trinity which embrace all manifested nature. These are the foundation of all physical conceptions of the Divine life and will, which are metaphysical. All law that manifests phenomenally has a noumenal or spiritual or metaphysical basis, so that the laws of one plane of consciousness have their parallel on other planes

and on the physical plane. This was what Drummond was seeking to express in his "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." We know this by the inner knowledges the Greeks called *pistis*, which we translate faith, but this has nothing to do with believing. We either know, or we do not know.

The great Law which expresses itself in Motion on the physical plane of manifestation, appears as a law of causation on other planes. Every effect is the result of a cause and every cause has its due effect. This is true of our moral or immoral actions as well as of our physical ones, of our thoughts as well as of our bodily actions. We recognize this to some extent when we speak of Providence as the source of events. This law of Providence or of action and reaction, is called Karma in the East. It is spoken of as judgment in the New Testament, and Jesus said that not one jot or tittle of it could pass away till all be fulfilled. There has been a great misconception in the West about this immutable law, many thinking that a prayer or a ceremony could abrogate it, and that this was forgiveness or pardon. The evil-doer may be pardoned, but the result of his ill-doing goes on in spite of this. The divine principle in every man, his real self or Ego, is the agent of this law and leads every man to the destiny which he has himself prepared. There is no possible escape or evasion of the evil result of any action, but neither is there any possible failure to bring the good results of a wise or benevolent action to him who has performed it. The law, like the sun, shines alike on the just and the unjust. The results may not come to pass for a long time, but they will surely come, and at the time when it is wisest and best. The Infinite Wisdom is allied with the Infinite Power and the Infinite Love in this way. And "Love is the fulfilling of the Law."

Those who prefer to think of these three principles as Persons may do so, but should not forget that a Person, a Persona, is but a Mask. "God is a being without body, parts or passions," says the first article of the Church of England. "God is spirit," said Jesus to the woman at the well. St. John tells us that God is

love, and God is Light. These are impersonal conceptions, and we cannot materialize them without doing injury, as indeed we have done, to any social system that rests upon them.

The result of a true understanding of the law of Karma, the law of God working in a man's own mind and heart, to his own edification or destruction, as he himself wills by his own acts or efforts, is to set him free for ever from all the superstitions that grow up in religious systems, all the chicanery and falsehood of priests and priestcraft, all the formalism and deceit of ceremonial and ritualistic practice. But more and more it binds him to the highest ideals and purest morals of conduct and aspiration, for he soon learns that on every plane of his being the law judges him according to his acts and intentions, so that if he desires good for himself he must do good to all men, and if he would have the universe favour him, then he must ally himself with it and work for its truth and justice with all his heart and mind and soul and strength. The four worlds will then be his and, like Paul, he will be caught up to the third heaven and enter into the joy of his Lord and Master.

The doctrine of Karma is a doctrine of joy and gladness, as well as of peace and love. It is simple, also, and children have no difficulty in understanding it. It is written in their hearts and operates in their lives. It gives them self-reliance, for they soon learn that there is none other to fight for them than the divine power within. It gives them humility, for they learn, too, that they are servants of the infinite universe, and that their puny powers are as nothing unless they co-operate with the one Life of which they are a manifestation. They learn, also, that life means action and not sloth, and that only by self-devised and self-directed effort can they progress, and that to wait for the help of others is merely to stagnate and die. The principle of life involves growth, and without growth there is only death. Those who have striven to advance find themselves ahead of their fellows, and those who are behind in the race learn that they have only themselves to thank. Rigid justice

rules the world, and we have duly rendered to us whatever we have worked for of good or ill. Each life on earth gives us opportunity to rise to higher levels. We widen our circle of friends in every incarnation and we lose none of all that we have loved, till the whole earth is covered with our kindred and comrades. It is thus the great law of brotherhood.

The very evil that we may have wrought becomes a means of our strength and our benevolence, for we can only remove the effects of our ill-deeds by effort and strain, and we cannot bring our powers to bear on such work without good-will and understanding. The perfect wisdom thus revealed to every man in the course of his own self-redemption gradually lifts his consciousness to the highest levels of the Divine Selfhood.

Madam Blavatsky's definition of Karma, given in the glossary to "The Key to Theosophy," is not to be overlooked. It may, perhaps, be more intelligible to the reader familiar with Christian teaching after the foregoing. It is, at any rate, the doctrine which will, if anything can, transform the world.

Karma, she says, is "Physically, action; Metaphysically, the LAW OF RETRIBUTION; the Law of Cause and Effect or Ethical Causation. It is Nemesis only in the sense of bad Karma. It is the eleventh *Nidana* in the concatenation of causes and effects in orthodox Buddhism; yet it is the power that controls all things, the resultant of moral action, the metaphysical Samskara, or the moral effect of an act committed for the attainment of something which gratifies a personal desire. There is the Karma of merit and the Karma of demerit. Karma neither punishes nor rewards; it is simply *the one* Universal Law which guides unerringly and, so to say, blindly, all other laws productive of certain effects along the grooves of their respective causations. When Buddhism teaches that 'Karma is that moral Kernel (of any being) which alone survives death and continues in transmigration,' or reincarnation, it simply means that there remains nought after each personality, but the causes produced by it, causes which are undying, *i. e.*, which cannot be eliminated from the

Universe until replaced by their legitimate effects, and, so to speak, wiped out by them. And such causes, unless compensated during the life of the person who produced them with adequate effects, will follow the reincarnated Ego and reach it in its subsequent incarnations until a full harmony between effects and causes is fully re-established. No 'personality'—a mere bundle of material atoms and instinctual and mental characteristics—can, of course, continue as such in the world of pure spirit. Only that which is immortal in its very nature and divine in its essence, namely, the Ego, can exist forever. And as it is that Ego which chooses the personality it will inform after each Devachan, and which receives through these personalities the effects of the Karmis causes produced, it is, therefore, the Ego, that *Self*, which is the 'moral Kernel' referred to, and embodied Karma itself, that 'which alone survives death.'"

A. E. S. S.

## THE USE OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE

### II.

The materialist's world is a world of differences. He is suspicious of similarities. He likes to think of a universe that goes on and on, and never, if he can help it, of one that goes round and round. So when he sees that cycles, either in time or space, repeat themselves it irks him. He is committed to the idea that progress is from generation to generation, in which case it can only be of bodies. He is annoyed at a progress that is of souls and that demands of him that he imagine a pattern in the fabric of human events, as of a great stream of souls returning at intervals and taking up their work where they left off.

H. G. Wells is an on-and-on thinker. In that remarkable passage in "*The Outline of History*" where he dismisses reincarnation as the childish notion of primitive peoples he assures us that return is not the law of life. On-going is the law. He does not explain why the earth disobeys the law and returns once a day, or

the moon returns once a month, or the planets each in its year. Nor does he explain how the blood manages to return to the heart, nor breath, nor thoughts, nor cyclic disease, nor cyclic insanity, nor sleepiness, nor hunger, nor the rise and fall of races, nor the recrudescence of ideas, nor the rebirth of flowers, nor the cycle of water and cloud and rain. All these in defiance of his straight line of on-going. Perhaps by now Mr. Einstein has persuaded him that his straight line itself is a curve and must return.

So our workers, being round-and-round thinkers, with a sense of the importance of cycles, will have the advantage of knowing how to make one department of life work for another, one religion explain another, and one tendency in history throw light upon another, as one might piece out an obscure bit of a pattern by reference to its earlier and later appearances in the scheme.

It would be a useful thing to restore this process of analogy even in historical matters, and more useful still, if we could do it, to restore some measure of analogy to the examination of functions of life, of realms of being and of the relation of man to the life processes around him. Our encyclopaedists, however, will not use analogy, even in the simplest things. Mostly they are dull. Sometimes they cloud important issues. Here is the sort of thing I mean:

Professor Grant Showerman, an eminent and impressive American classicist, contributes to the eleventh edition of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, its article on Mithraism. Now, there is a curious underground struggle about Mithraism. The ninth edition of *Britannica* dismissed the whole subject with a column and received stinging reproof from J. M. Robertson and others of the rationalists, for its cavalier treatment of one of the most vital commentaries on early Christianity. In the new edition the editors have enlarged the article but throughout there is the same wariness that marks Cumont and the other writers on the subject. The indications are that somebody or other would rather you did not say too much about Mithraism or make too many deductions. It is in a sense the

*tendon Achilles* of modern Christianity and is heavily guarded. You can write about almost anything else and nothing much will happen to you, but when you discuss Mithraism the theological polemicists, particularly the Romans, are in the field at once.

Professor Showerman starts out, presumably, to give you all that scholarship has to say on the subject. He is very authoritative and the documentation of his article is precise and convincing. It is when he draws his conclusions that we wonder most whether he is merely stupid or under pressure. He tells us that the Mithraic religion held its gatherings in subterranean "temples," each of which was called a *mundus* or world; that the "temples" were differentiated from other temples in several things. They were long, rectangular rooms, never very large, and each had adjoining it two other rooms. One of these latter, he says, was a *pronaos* to the "temple" where the "worshippers" gathered, and one a kind of sacristy or room for the "priests." These "priests" of the "God Mithras" sat at the end of the temple towards the rising sun. Extending along the sides of the *mundus* and facing each other were two low benches or platforms, called *podia*. In the middle and between the *podia* was an open space for "ministrants." Above was a ceiling depicting the heavens.

The worshippers of Mithras, he would indicate, were not very steady in their religious ideas, because they admitted other religions to have merits of their own, and along the walls of the *mundus* they permitted statues of the divinities of other systems. Mithraism, he shows, was also remarkable for the fact that it did not admit women to its number although it did admit boys. The religion was carried throughout the Roman Empire by the legionaries and traces of its temples are to be found in Britain, Germany, France, Switzerland and out to the frontiers of the Eastern Empire. He notes also that men who belonged to other religions, also "worshipped" Mithras, and Rome herself so far forgot her ancient faith as to allow the worshippers of the Persian God to dig a "temple" under the Capitoline Hill. Constantine, himself a

Christian, encouraged the Oriental sect because it was warlike and suited to armies. Professor Showerman goes on to tell how wealthy the Mithraists were (neglecting, of course, to say how the early Christians looted their places of meeting), how charitable and how they were organized as a legal corporation under a kind of charter. They never built the great temples that might have been expected of them, but in one city—Ostia—they had five. He is puzzled that their clergy and officials were more like a committee and were laymen of sorts.

So he proceeds to a neat conclusion, missing the one vital point about it all, and darkening counsel with his iterations of the words "worshipper," "priest," "temple," "God" and the like. The vital point is that from every bit of evidence he offers Mithraism was not a religion at all but a Masonic brotherhood. Did nobody tell Professor Showerman, if he could not guess it for himself, that the *mundus* is nothing but a Masonic lodge, the symbol of the world, with its firmament of stars above? His vestibule of the temple, the universal ante-room for the brethren? His priests' room, the familiar "convenient room adjoining"? His *podia* along the sides, the seats for the brethren? His priests' dais, the Master's dais in the east? These men were not worshippers in a temple: they were brethren in a lodge and their priests were the masters and past-masters of it. Their limitation to male members was the old Masonic practice and the boy members are the "lewises," or Masons' sons of our own older Masonry. The Mithraists admitted all religions as modern Masons do and there is nothing more marvelous in a Roman senator being a Mithraist than there is in a member of the British Commons being a Craftsman. How the reincarnated Professor Showerman, who is now puzzled by Constantine's interest, will marvel a few hundred years from now at the anomaly of the Christian King Edward VII, being the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England, and encouraging the worship of the "God" Hiram.

I wonder if he has ever guessed that all such systems are carried by the officers of armies; that the military lodges are

the means whereby the modern Masonic brotherhood has been carried throughout the world. And surely there was somebody at hand to tell him that if a group had millions of dollars to spend it would not build a larger lodge room than would just hold the brethren.

What does it matter to-day whether we believe the Mithraists of a couple of thousand years ago were eclectic lodge brothers or rapt devotees of an Oriental cult? It does matter, and Theosophists are not, seemingly, the only people who think it matters.

The fact in itself is trivial, but its implications are not. Mithraism was not a rival of Christianity, but its child was. Manichaeism, the religion growing out of the Mithraic mystery, ran along several centuries into the Christian era, a tolerant and leavening force that was stamped out as organized Christianity waxed and became intolerant. The parallel is not between Mithraism and Christianity, but between Manichaeism and Christianity. Mithraism is the parent mystery.

And its parallel? The *parent mystery* of *Christianity*. What was that ritual of which Paul speaks when he reminds the Galatians that they have seen Christ crucified amongst them? Do exoteric religions always come thus out of a mystery? How long does a mystery lie germinating before its time to be given to the world as a religion? How is the seed carried? Who carries it? Was there ever a religion which was not first a mystery? Were those rationalists of a few years ago right when they said the episodes from Gethsemane to the Ascension are not a record of events at all but a description of the progress of a mystery drama? Might we not say, therefore, rather than that a Great One *did* this and that, that a Great One *does* this and that, and when the right season comes, the story of it emerges? Mithra *was* not. He *is*. In the *Vedas* he is Mitra; in the Zend books he is Vohumano—poised mind. In early Christian days he is Mani. He never came. He always comes.

A trifling adjustment. Yes, but fertile, and giving seed for further adjustments. Establishing cumulative proof that might go a long way to straighten out life for

us and for those to come after us. We might be wrong? That would be nothing new for the human race. We might also be right sometimes. That would be more nearly new. We would have to work hard to go further astray than some of the accredited pundits.

The task of readjusting Mithraism awaits some Theosophist. The rationalists of whom I spoke tried it a few years ago, but they had little of a constructive nature to offer, and, except for some forcible truth-telling about the facts, they accomplished nothing but to raise a storm. And Mithraism is only one of a thousand subjects that need us.

There is an old symbol of the lathe of the cycles that shapes the immortal body of man. It is a lathe that spins always, and, as far as we are concerned, must spin in empty air until we put something on it to be shaped. It partakes thus of the nature of all lathes. If we can learn to see our *Secret Doctrine*, our re-shaper, as itself a lathe whereon the things of the mind are re-shaped that they may be fit vehicles of the Spirit, we may be able to use it better. We have watched it spin; we have argued about it, and about who made it and why, and whether there was due authority for making it. Suppose now we stop looking at it and vaunting it, and use it as it was meant to be used, as a tool. Suppose we shape something.

(To be continued.)

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## ANCIENT AND MODERN PHYSICS

BY THOMAS WILLSON.

### II.

#### THE TWO KINDS OF PERCEPTION.

To the savage, matter appears in two forms—solid and liquid. As he advances a step he learns it has three forms—solid, liquid and gas. He cannot see the gas, but he knows it is there.

A little further on he learns that matter as he knows it is only a minute portion of the great universe of matter—the few chords that can be struck on the five strings of his senses, and limited to one octave or key.

Whether the particular matter he investigates has a solid, a liquid, or a gaseous form depends upon its rate of vibration. If it is a liquid, by raising its rate of vibration one third it becomes a gas; by reducing it one third it becomes a solid.

Each kind of matter has vibration only through one octave. It is known to us only by its vibration in that octave. Each kind of matter has a different octave—is set on a higher or lower key, so to speak, but all octaves of vibration are between the highest of hydrogen gas and the lowest of carbon.

In mechanical compounds, such as air or brass, the rate of vibration of the compound is the least common multiple of the two or more rates. In chemical compounds, such as water or alcohol, the rate is that of the highest, the others uniting in harmonic fractions.

All matter as we know it through our senses—prakriti, as it is called in the *Secret Doctrine* to distinguish it from non-sensual matter—is the vibration of an universal Something, we do not know what, through these different octaves. The elementary substances (so-called) are one and the same thing—this Something—in different keys and chords of vibration; keys that run into one another, producing all sorts of beautiful harmonies.

Taking any one of these elements, or any of their compounds, all we know of

it is limited strictly to its changes during vibration through one octave. What happens when the vibration goes above or below the octave has not yet been treated hypothetically.

While some elements are vibrating on higher and some on lower keys, we can consider them all as vibrating within one great octave, that octave of the universal Something which produces sensual matter, or prakriti.

But matter is not confined, we know, to this great octave, although our sensual knowledge of it is strictly confined to it.

How do we know it?

Knowledge comes to us in two ways, and there are two kinds of knowledge.

1. That which comes through our senses, by observation and experience. This includes reasoning from relation.

2. That which comes through intuition—or, as some writers inaccurately say, “through the formal laws of thought.”

All the observation and experience of the rising and the setting of the sun for a thousand centuries could only have confirmed the first natural belief that it revolved daily around the earth; nor by joining this experience with other experiences could any deduction have come from our reason that would have opposed it. Not our reason but our intuition said that the sun stood still and the earth revolved daily. The oldest books in existence tell us that this axial revolution of the earth was not only known in the very dawn of time but that it has been known to every race (except our own of European savages) from before the time thought was first transmitted by writing.

Ask the ablest living geographer or physicist to prove to you that the earth revolves daily and he will reply that it would be the job of his life. It can be done at great expense and great labor, but that is because we know the answer and can invent a way of showing it, not because there are any observations from which a deduction would naturally follow.

Nearly if not all our great discoveries have come to us through intuition and not from observation and experience. When we know the lines on which to work, when intuition has given us the

KEY, then the observation and experience men prize so highly, and the reason they worship so devoutly, will fill in the details. The knowledge that flows from observation and the reasoning from the facts it records, is never more than relatively true, it is always limited by the facts, and any addition to the facts requires the whole thing to be restated. We never know all the facts; seldom even the more important; and reason grasps only details.

Lamarck's theory of evolution, known to all Asiatic races from time immemorial, was the intuitional and absolute knowledge that comes to all men when they reach a certain stage of development. Reason could never have furnished it from the facts, as Cuvier proved in the great debate in the French Academy in 1842, when he knocked Lamarck out, for the time being, because “it did not conform to the facts, and did not follow from any relation of the facts.”

Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence, as an explanation of the origin of species, was from observation and experience. It was based on observed facts. But Darwin was an evolutionist—a disciple of Lamarck. He held the Key. He used the Key. The value of Darwin's work does not lie in his discovering that some bugs have been derived from other bugs and that the intermediate bugs have died off. Its overwhelming value to mankind was in showing that work on the theory of evolution was correct work and that the theory was true. When the intuition of man points out the way the reason of man can follow the path and macadam the road. It usually does and claims all the credit for itself as the original discoverer.

This knowledge through intuition is absolute and exact. It is not relatively true. It is absolutely and invariably true. No additional facts will ever modify it, or require a restatement.

When Sir William Hamilton based his Logic on the dictum that “All knowledge is relative, and only relatively true,” the proposition was self-evidently false. It was in itself a statement of absolute knowledge about a certain thing. It was in itself knowledge that was not relative.



All knowledge could not be relative if this knowledge was not. This knowledge could not be either absolute or relative without upsetting his whole proposition, for, if relative, then it was not always true; and if absolute, then it was never true.

Sir William did not know the distinction between the two kinds of knowledge, and what he meant to say was that "All knowledge obtained by observation and experience is relative, and only relatively true."

His knowledge of this relativity was not obtained by observation or from reason. It could not possibly have been obtained in that way. It came from intuition, and it was absolute and exact. A man may have absolute and exact knowledge and yet not be able to put it into words that exactly express it to another. Hamilton had this knowledge. But it was not clearly formulated even in his own mind. He had two separate and distinct meanings for the word "knowledge," without being conscious of it.

We have yet to coin a proper word to express what comes to us through intuition. The old English word "wisdom" originally did. The old verb "wis" was meant what a man knew without being told it, as "ken" meant knowledge by experience. Try and prove by reason that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, or that a part can never be greater than the whole, and your reason has an impossible task. "You must take them for axioms," it says. You must take them because you wis them, not because you know (ken) them.

Intuitional knowledge must not be confounded with the relative knowledge that flows through the reason: that "If the sum of two numbers is one and their difference is five," the numbers are minus two and plus three.

The point cannot be too strongly enforced that there is a distinction between the sources of what we know, and that while all we know through our sensations is only relatively true, that which we know from intuition is invariably and absolutely true. This is seen through a glass darkly, in theology, where intuition

is called inspiration and not differentiated from reason.

The false notion that we can only learn by observation and experience, that the concept can never transcend the observation, that we can only know what we can prove to our senses, has wrought incalculable injury to progress in philosophy.

Because our sensual knowledge of matter begins and ends with vibration in one octave it does not follow that this ends our knowledge of it. We may have intuitional knowledge, and this intuitional knowledge is as susceptible to reason as if we had obtained it by observation.

The knowledge that comes through intuition tells us of matter vibrating in another great octave just beyond our own, which Science has chosen to name the etheric octave, or plane. The instant our intuition reveals the cause of phenomena our reason drops in and tells us it is the chording vibration of the matter of the two planes—the physical and etheric—that produces all physical phenomena. It goes further and explains its variations.

This knowledge of another octave or plane of matter comes from the logical relations of matter and its physical phenomena; but there was nothing in the observation or experience of mankind that would have led us to infer from reason an etheric plane of matter. It was "revealed" truth. But the flash of revelation having once made the path apparent, the light of reason carries us through all the winding ways. Our knowledge of the ether is not guess-work or fancy, any more than our geometry is, because it is based on axioms our reason cannot prove. In both cases the basic axioms are obtained from intuition; the structural work from reason. Our knowledge of the ether may be as absolute and exact as our knowledge of prakriti, working on physical as we work on geometrical axioms.

The recognition of the two sources of knowledge, the work of the spirit within us and of the mind within us, is absolutely necessary to correctly comprehend the true significance of the results of modern science and to accept the ancient.

(To be continued.)

## OUR FIRST OBJECT AND ITS MAINTENANCE

BY HUGH R. GILLESPIE.

(Continued from March Issue.)

The T. S. is not possessed by any "vaulting ambition" to build a perfect social order in the midst of imperfect social conditions.

The T. S. is simply striving to lay a foundation for a future social structure; to "form a nucleus" for a future brotherhood in which distinctions of race, creed, sex, caste and colour shall not exist.

Again, the First Object does not say nor imply that it enforces in the Society a fraternal relationship. Nor does it suggest the existence even in the T. S. of a Brotherhood of man."

No. It simply pledges the members to endeavour to prepare for a condition of human society which is analogous to that which obtains in nature at large.

It does not even hint that in a Society composed of fallible human beings there will be found ideal relations.

Neither does it suggest that the T. S. is to be the much desired nucleus for the "Brotherhood of Humanity." Especially in view of the fact that every similar attempt in part has ended in failure.

In short, the First Object simply and clearly affirms the desire and intention of the T. S. to form a circle in which certain racial, religious, colour and class units may rub shoulders and learn to practice the virtues of brotherhood. To institute a League of Races and classes upon which the great superstructure of brotherhood may be reared in the future, and in which ideal conditions may be provided for the practice of ideal virtues.

This and no other is the meaning of our First Object if it be read clearly and in absence of any desire for personal benefit. Pure altruism, living and working for others, is the *raison d'être* of the First Object and, as the Master K. H. says: "He who thinks the task of working for others too hard had better not undertake it."

Closely related to the question of brotherhood are the race, caste, and color questions, and as exactly the same argu-

ments already adumbrated will apply, it will be needful for us to mention them and pass on to consider the question of "creed" in connection with the T.S.

This is the one point on which the public has a right to ask for an assurance that when he enters the T.S. he will be free to "study the so-called Occult sciences, based on the true knowledge of nature, instead of, as at present, on superstitious beliefs, based on blind faiths and authority." *Key to Theosophy*, p. 37.

That the Founders recognized this right is evidenced, not only by the precautions they took but also by the course of study they laid down.

Mere surface knowledge was not sufficient for them. Not for them was the slavish acceptance of the views of any so-called "leader," whosoever that "leader" might be, and in whatever section or direction he might "lead." In fact it was a Master who said that "one of the most valuable effects of Upsilon's (H.P.B.) mission is that it drives men to self-study and destroys in them blind servility for persons."

No. The Founders insisted on a serious study of Religion, Philosophy, and Science.

And the sole aim of this study, as H.P.B. says in the "Key," p. 31, is to show the common origin of man by demonstrating on 'logical,' philosophical, metaphysical, and even scientific grounds that:—

(a) All men have spiritually and physically the same origin, which is the fundamental teaching of Theosophy.

(b) As mankind is essentially of one and the same essence, and that essence is one—infinite, uncreate, and eternal, whether we call it God or Nature—nothing therefore, can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. "To fully realize this," she says, "does not require a new revelation. Let every man be a revelation unto himself." *Key*, p. 41.

No man is asked to accept in fact strong condemnation is expressed for the man who accepts without weighing, statements that come even from reputed Masters. Blind faith is condemned and

H.P.B. goes so far as to call unreasoning acceptance "intellectual suicide."

The ethical demand is put forcibly by the Maha Chohan when He says: "It is not the individual determined purpose of attaining for oneself Nirvana—which after all is only an exalted and glorious selfishness—but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour; to cause as many as we possibly can to benefit by it, which constitutes the true theosophist."

Much more might be said on this point, but it will be sufficiently obvious that ethics and morality are of more importance than creed or ritual, most of which are "superstitious beliefs based on blind faith and authority." Key, p. 37.

We admit, nay we assert the universality of the principles of religion, but we are opposed in the T.S. to any sectarian expression of those principles. We admit that there is a place for creed and ritual but unfalteringly assert that place is not in the T.S. Theosophy and the T.S. are in their very nature and constitution opposed to dogmatic theology and sectarianism in any form whatsoever. At the same time we affirm the "fundamental doctrines of all religions identical in their esoteric meaning." But only the "fundamentals"—not any one sectarian form, not any particular church sect, by whomsoever it may be sponsored or advocated. Before such can be even considered as justifying their existence, according to the Maha Chohan they must be "delivered from their deadweight of dogmatic interpretation, personal names, anthropomorphic conceptions and salaried priests." Strong words from a strong Being but no more so than the case warrants. And however presentable any set of doctrines may appear to any particular person or group, those persons stand convicted as traitors to the T.S. and the principles of theosophy, if in any way whatsoever they try to foist on the Society any credal or dogmatic form. No person, whatever his position, has the right to use the T.S. for the purpose of propagating his individual sectarian beliefs. On this point H.P.B. is absolutely uncompromising and there is nothing in

the history of our Founders that more clearly displays omniscience and prevision than the precautions they took and the warnings they uttered to prevent the T.S. becoming the prey of any sectarian body.

That attempts in that direction were anticipated by them is clearly shown by H.P.B. in the "Key," p. 241, where she points out that: "Every such attempt as the T.S. has hitherto ended in failure, because, sooner or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart. You must remember that all our members have been bred and born in some creed or religion . . . and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biased by some or all of these influences. If, then, they cannot be freed from such inherent bias, or at least taught to recognize it instantly and so avoid being led away by it, the result can only be that the Society will drift off into some sandbank of thought or other, and there remain a stranded carcass, to moulder and decay."

Some may suggest that in this, H.P.B. was only guarding against a remote contingency rather than displaying actual anticipation of future events. Close examination, however, shows that it was actual prevision, for in this very same passage she almost describes the dangers that have arisen (in the world) within the last few years; recognizes and practically states in so many words that the actions of the leaders are more to be feared than those of the rank and file.

In the "Conclusion" to the "Key to Theosophy," original edition, she says:—

"I do not refer to technical knowledge of the esoteric doctrine . . . I spoke of the great need which our successors in the guidance of the Society will have of unbiassed and clear judgment."

(To be concluded.)

"Nor at any time verily was I not, nor thou, nor verily shall we ever cease to be, hereafter. As the dweller in the body experienceth in the body childhood, youth, old age, so passeth he on to another body. . . ."—Bhagavad Gita.

# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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## OFFICIAL NOTES

A history of the Theosophical Movement is being published by E. P. Dutton & Co. for \$5. Subscribers to the magazine "Theosophy" may purchase this and the new thin paper edition of the Secret Doctrine for \$10.

\* \* \*

Only members in good standing are entitled to vote in the election of the General Executive. Secretaries and treasurers of lodges please note this and send in all dues at once for members who expect to cast their ballots, as none but those whose dues are actually paid in to headquarters can be counted.

\* \* \*

The semi-centennial edition of The Secret Doctrine, which is being issued by "The Theosophy Company," of Los Angeles, California, is a photographic reprint of the first edition, being word for word as Madame Blavatsky published it in 1888. Printed on Bible paper, the volume is not too bulky for convenient use and the price will be \$7.50.

\* \* \*

Five bound volumes of The Canadian Theosophist are now available and are excellent material for public libraries or

lodge libraries, as well as for private study. They cover the history of the Canadian National Society since its inception and illustrate the practical application of Theosophy in the affairs of the society generally. Price \$2 per volume. Title page and index for Volume V. may be had on application.

\* \* \*

"The Mahatma Letters" are still in eager demand and may be had from the Toronto acting Book Steward, Mr. George J. McMurtrie, 65 Hogarth Avenue, Toronto, post free, for \$6. "H. P. Blavatsky's Letters to A. P. Sinnett" are now on sale also, at \$5.75, post free, \$6. Other recent books are William Kingsland's "Rational Mysticism," \$4; "The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross," by A. E. Waite, \$7.50; "The Problem of Atlantis," by E. Lewis Spence, \$2.50; "The Masonic Initiation," by W. L. Wilmshurst, \$2.50.

\* \* \*

Mr. J. R. Aria, Recording Secretary at Adyar, has notified the National Societies that delegates attending the Jubilee Convention there at Christmas should, if they expect to engage accommodation, give early notice of their intention. There are limitations to the number of people who can be accommodated, and those who neglect to secure a shelter in advance may be compelled to sleep in the open. Mr. Aria desires that the names of those attending be sent to him through the general secretaries of the various National Societies.

\* \* \*

Members will kindly see that their ballots are either mailed direct to the General Secretary or handed to their local secretary in time to arrive in Toronto on or before June 1st, when the ballot closes.

## MRS. BESANT'S EXPECTED VISIT

The following letter has been received from Mrs. Besant by the General Secretary:

Dear Mr. Smythe,—If I go to America this year I shall hope to visit Toronto. But my movements are very uncertain, and depend on the conditions which may require me in one country or another.

With kind regards.

(Signed) ANNIE BESANT.  
Adyar, 20, 3, 25.

## FELLOWS AND FRIENDS

The Hong Kong Lodge of the T. S. has issued a 77-page pamphlet on "Reincarnation," being correspondence published in The South China Morning Post last November. Both sides of the debate are very fully covered. Mr. M. Manuk, president of the lodge, sets forth the teachings in excellent manner.

Dean Inge quotes with satisfaction the saying of an American that what struck him most in the great English universities was that "here are three thousand young men every one of whom would rather lose a game than play it unfairly." That is the Theosophical spirit in practical things and every day life that the Theosophical Society, from the top down, needs above everything else.

Rev. John Skinner, D.D., who died in March, was one of the great Biblical critics of his time and of the school of the late Professor A. B. Davidson. His Ezekiel in the Expositors' Bible, Kings in the Century Bible, and Isaiah in the Cambridge Bible series are valuable books, but his most notable work is Genesis in the International Critical Series, which is the standard work in English on the subject. Bible study among laymen is too frequently confined to reading the King James version or perhaps the Revised version, but no one can have any true conception of the Bible until he has studied a critical commentary such as that on Genesis by Dr. Skinner. Dr. Skinner was born in 1851.

William Loftus Hare has edited a volume of "Religions of the Empire," being a series of lectures given at a conference on some living religions within the Empire held at the Imperial Institute last September and October. They include an opening address by Sir Francis Young-husband, three addresses on Hinduism, seven on Islam, four on Buddhism, one each on Zoroastrianism, Jainism and Sikhism, two on Chinese religions, one each on the Brahma and Arya Samaj, two on Bahaism, one on primitive religions, four on New Zealand and African religions, and eight on psychology and sociology of religions, with others, mak-

ing forty-two in all. The volume contains about 520 pages and is priced at 16 shillings.

## THE GENERAL SECRETARY TO THE MEMBERS.

We are entering on the seventh year of our Theosophical activity as a national society in Canada, the thirty-fifth of my own work in the movement in the Dominion, and what in all human probability will be the last in which I will address you in the office in which you have done me the honour to place me. I have accepted the privilege and the responsibility with the gravest sense of my own inadequacy, and this has been deepened by the demands made upon my time by my private occupations, which give me less and less opportunity at present to do what I feel should be done for the Society. Mr. Roy Mitchell has undertaken the mechanical production of the magazine, and Miss Maud Crafter has given generously of her time to the clerical work of the office. But there is work enough for anyone who could devote time and enthusiasm for the great cause in Canada to occupy him wholly in organization and lecturing, and in this we have not done what we had hoped to do. We have relied on the local lodges, depending on the principle of local autonomy and the "self-devised and self-directed effort," which the masters tell us is the only means of evolution, to inspire them with unselfish ardour and determination to carry on public propaganda and to visit adjacent fields and sow the seed among strangers. In all this we have been disappointed. Whether the lodges have forgotten that only they learn who teach and only they grow who work, or whether the circumstances of the members make it impossible to carry on individual effort by the lodges, our territory is not being developed as it might.

The General Executive feels that a special endeavour must be made during the present year to place a lecturer in the field, to visit every lodge and such new territory as may be practicable. A fund for this purpose should be established, separate from the general fund from the dues of the members, which are no more

than is necessary to carry on the routine work of the Society. If we could have \$1,000 contributed outside our usual revenue for propaganda purposes, with the co-operation of the lodges, a great forward movement might be inaugurated in Canada.

The development of the individual student is, of course, of the highest importance. We have now a great and growing literature, ample for all our needs and for a generation to come. The Society in Canada has throughout its career held to the broadest tolerance and set up no barriers as to what any student should or should not read. This has not pleased every one, and the withdrawal of a large number testified to the fact that open discussion of the merits of this or that volume was not agreeable to them. There can be no progress in the search for truth without the keenest scrutiny and the most complete freedom of the critical faculty. Blind faith and acceptance of what is handed out by this or that authority without due exercise of the reason and the intuition is fatal to real development. The folly of the Galatians in this respect has been proverbial under the lash of St. Paul's satire. As Dr. Perowne has observed: "The impulsiveness of the Gaul led him to accept, without consideration, the latest dogma if only it was propounded loudly and in a tone of authority." We have no dogmas and no authorities, and every man has to create his own Theosophy. But he can only do so as he builds up character and observes all those laws of the moral and spiritual world which the experience of the ages has demonstrated to be indispensable. Whatever the man of the world may do, the professing Theosophist, of all men, must observe the strictest probity and purity for himself, however broad his tolerance and complacency about the conduct of others.

"Behold the Truth before you: A clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one's co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH, once we have placed

our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science depicts—these are the Golden Stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom."

Fraternally yours,  
ALBERT E. S. SMYTHE.

## OCCULT MASONRY THE LION'S PAW. BY MATTHEW GIBSON

Continuing now our examination of the tradition of that subtle body whose core is symbolized by the Tree of Life—in Masonry the acacia—there are certain other fundamental ideas that become necessary for an understanding of the ritual of the raising of the stricken builder.

First we must understand that all mystical systems demand, for their understanding, a complete reversal of the meanings we attach to the words life and death. We who think we are so fully alive, they say, are not really so, but are dead to all the great inner powers of the soul. We are the mystically dead and those we call dead are really the living. It was Philolaus, the Pythagorean, who said: "The ancient theologians and priests testify that the soul is united with the body for the sake of suffering punishment (or gaining experience) and that it is buried in the body as in a sepulchre."

If, then, it be the purpose of all true initiatory systems to lift the soul of the candidate out of the grave in which he thus lies dead—and to do it during his lifetime—we have our clue to that central doctrine of resurrection in the older systems, which is also the central symbol of Masonry.

It has been our habit in the external forms of religion to speak of resurrection as occurring after death, and so it must occur. But the mystical resurrection in the occult schools is described as occurring during life in the physical body, a triumph over physical obscurity, a ful-

filment of the mastery over this lower world which is the sole purpose of the entry into the lower world at all, and a mastery which must be achieved, according to the older philosophers, after many lives and ever and ever renewed contacts with the problems of earth.

Moreover, while we in our Western faiths are content to think of the soul as rising bodiless or formless, or, worse still, as managing in some way to revive the fleshly body, the ancients refused to believe either. They said there is a body of the soul that lies inside this gross physical one, a body of the resurrection, that can and must be electrified into life and set free of the physical. This is the body whose core is the Tree and whose energy flows along that tree-like framework.

The Greeks called it the *eidolon*, and they said that certain forces could convert it into the *augoeides*, or radiant shape. They called it also the *psyche*, the butterfly body—a name that survives in the fetishism of many savage people—and they said it came to birth in the cocoon of the psychical body. The Kabbalists, as we have seen, called it in its pre-natal form *kuch-ha-guf*, and when it had risen they called it *habal-de-garmin*. Inert it is *linga sarira* in the Hindu. Born it becomes *hiranyagarbha*, the golden egg. In its inert shape in the body or mummy the Egyptian called it the *ka*. In its risen form it was the *sahu*, the Body of the Name. In all systems it is an embryonic vesture, with the physical body for its womb, and the implications are that its development and birth are analogous in every regard to the development and birth of a physical foetus. That is why it is the one-begotten or immaculately born one. St. Paul calls it the body sown in corruption and reaped in incorruption, and in the fifteenth chapter of I. Corinthians he is very explicit about the difference between the two.

Unless our Masonic system is the accidental development of an ignorant trade guild and its parallels with the mysteries are mere coincidences, as some people are so vehemently certain they are, we will do well to remember, therefore, that when the initiator essays to bring about the

anastasis, or upstanding, he is lifting the physical body only in symbol of the lifting of a subtle inner body which would be the candidate's body of immortality if the lifting were a fact and not merely the foreshadowing of a fact.

That is, in all the mysteries the initiator is an *accoucheur* who undertakes by a peculiar process to draw from its sepulchre of the physical body an incorruptible body which is to be the immortal vehicle of the soul. The signs that the time has come are all complete; the temporary tomb is disturbed; the Tree of Life comes easily away in that first phenomenon of the mysteries called the *ekstasis*, or out-standing, and nothing remains but to enter the grave and free the postulant.

Who does it? There is an old doctrine, one whose misinterpretation has got us into even more trouble than have these doctrines of resurrection and of the one-begotten. It is the doctrine of the initiator or saviour.

Necessarily, of course, the work of freeing the stricken builder—or any candidate—from his mystical grave of flesh must come about by his own effort, by the operation of divine powers which he himself would rouse by long and strict adherence to a regimen of purification, by a moral work that would, as we saw early in these articles, free his mind from the dominion of the lower nature, by an intellectual work that would quicken mind to the perception of the secrets of nature and science and establish it under the control of the Ego himself. Finally, such a raising must be the reward of an endeavour to make operative in himself the forces of Nature.

One of these forces, we have seen, is that serpent-force, as it is called, that in all esoteric schools is depicted as rising out of the earth, passing through the legs into the body and lying coiled around the epigastric plexus, the *speirema*, or serpent-coil of Greek gnosticism, the *ophis* of the Ophite sects, the Naga or great serpent of Hindu and Buddhist, the dragon of the Chinese and the water-reptile of the Egyptians. It is the serpent we saw coiled up around the roots of the Tree of Life in the Irgalla story of the Akkadians. It is also, as we have seen,

the cabletow. This is the Demiurge, the earth-force, the God Without, or what Allen Upward calls The Strength Outside.

There is, however, and must be, a Strength Inside to meet this Strength Outside, a God Within, as it were, the power of the divine man. Pythagoras says of the Babylonian Magi that they called the magnetic currents of the earth serpents and that they possessed the power to direct them. The incorporeal fire of the inner man they called the Celestial Lion. These two, the ascending Serpent and the descending Lion, they said, generated by their meeting, the forces that freed the candidate.

Lest anybody fall into the mistake of thinking this is merely the animal fetichism of pagan peoples, and unworthy of attention, I should here remind him that in our own Old Testament there is a story of a Chosen People cured of their torments by the lifting up of a great serpent, and in our New Testament an assurance that the Lion of Judah will prevail to open up a seven-sealed book. No one of these fables need convince us, but the study of a series of them, a far wider series than I have room to enumerate here, should satisfy us that there is a mystery doctrine concealed somewhere in the imagery.

The Mithraic mysteries, so closely akin to Masonry, have among their symbolic figures one of special interest to us here—the figure of Kronos. He is a tall, majestic and forbidding figure. From his feet up he is wrapped round and round in the coils of a serpent, and he has a lion's head. He is the type of the master over time and space, the lord of cycles. He is the symbol of the full union of the Inner and Outer Strengths in man. More to our immediate purpose, he is the master in whom this union has been brought to pass. He is a man who, possessing the power which is the heritage of all candidates in the mysteries, stands ready to communicate it. He is the Initiator.

At a later time I shall go more fully into this function of the master, the peculiar power of lifting by his own inherent right, the power to raise from the dead, the power of communicating the Divine

Fire, of laying on hands, of making at sight. The right by which Jesus says, "I am the Way;" by which Gautama says, "Do all things in me and I will balance your account," and by which Krishna says, "Those who live in me come to me O Arjuna." It would seem that, having reached the highest point of which he is individually capable, the candidate can only rise into full spiritual being by the aid of another in whom that spiritual life is full and potent. The Vedantins call it *acharya bhimana*, or the lifting up by an *acharya* or teacher.

The Leontocephalous Kronos—the lion-headed or lion-cowled of so many rock-carvings—is the perfected Master, or Initiator, who becomes *accoucheur* for his younger brother about to be born. The moral tokens are offered and fail. The intellectual means is tried and proves a slip. It is then that the Master uses his power of communion, the power of the lion-initiator to lift the butterfly body out of its tomb of flesh.

The Burmese have a curious custom that offers us a hint here. When the members of a Burmese or Shan family return from a funeral the old men of the village bind a cord around the wrist of each person lest the butterfly—so they call it—be drawn out by the soul of the dead man. In Southern Celebes there is a similar custom to prevent the death of women in childbed. The Kerens and Kayans of Borneo have an identical practice during convalescence as if a physical disturbance would let the double out before its time.

There is none of the many "raisings from the dead" but will give light on this central episode in the mysteries, and the courageous student of Masonry will try to glean what he can from them. When Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead in Bethany He does what Horus did so many years before when he went to Beth-annu, the place of the Great Bird, and there raised his father, Asar (Greek, Osiris) from the dead. The Masonic student will find interest in the fact that the name Lazarus means, literally, "without help." And, as always happens, Lazarus, too, receives the aid of a brother more expert than the rest.