

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR
THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, AUGUST 1, 1899.

NO. 1.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

ACTIVITIES.

NOTICE.

Attention is called to the change of editorship commencing with the current issue.

OTWAY CUFFE,
Editor.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

A vacancy having been caused by the retirement of Monsieur Courmes from the Executive Committee of the Section, in consequence of the approaching formation of a French Section, Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden was elected by the Convention to fill the vacancy, and he has accepted the nomination.

FINANCE.

The Executive Committee will shortly issue to the members of the Section a statement dealing with this question.

OTWAY CUFFE.

BRANCHES DISSOLVED.

The Ananta Branch, Paris, has been dissolved, two new Branches having been formed in its place.

The Leeds Branch has been dissolved, a Centre having been formed in its place.

NEW BRANCH.

June 30th, 1899. Charter issued this day to Paul Gillard, Mme. Sanalle, Mme. Weise, Mdlle. C. Blanck, Mme. Gillard, Jules Escaude, Mme. de Backer, Mme. A. Brunnarius, Mdlle. Claire Forth and Mdlle. J. Tuerdianski, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Paris, to be known as the "Disciple" Branch.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received up to July 20th: Comte de Gramont, £4; B. Old, £1; Middlesbrough Branch, by B. Hudson, £1 5s.; Miss Bowring (monthly), £1; Madame Weise, £2; Herbert Bradley, £2; Mrs. Heymanson, 15s.; Dr. Simmons, 10s.; L. Deinhard, 5s.; Mrs. Palairet, 5s.; Miss Carr, 7s. 6d.; E. S., 5s.; J. Littler, 5s.; Miss Claxton, 2s. 6d.; Miss Howes, 3s.; T. Jackson (monthly), 3s.; H. de C. Matthews, £1. Total, £15 6s.

Section Reference Library.

This Library is closed during the month of August.

The following books have been received during the month, and are now acknowledged with thanks: *Dendérah, description générale du Grand Temple de cette ville*, par Auguste Mariette-Bey, Paris and Cairo, 1875, 5 vols.; *L'Idée Théosophique*, 1898; *Śrī Bhagavad Gītā*, with *Ramanuja's Commentary*, trs. into English by A. Govindāchārya, Madras, 1898; *Shiva Purana* with Sanskrit Commentary, Bombay, 1884; *The Bhagavata-Purana* (Sanskrit text) with the Commentary of Sridharaswamim, together with the *Bhagavata Mahatmya*, Bombay, 1860; *Indian Idylls*, from the Sanskrit of the *Mahābhārata*, Sir Edwin Arnold, M.A., 3rd ed., London, 1893; *Texts and Studies Series: Clement of Alexandria's Biblical Text*, P. Mordaunt Barnard, M.A., Cambridge, 1899; *Braid on Hypnotism, Neurohypnology, or the Rationale of Nervous Sleep*, James Braid, ed. A. E. Waite, Redway, London, 1899; *Russian Occult Sects, taken from the Review Viestnik Eoropi*; *Invisible Helpers*, C. W. Leadbeater; *The Evolution of Life and Form*, Annie Besant, Benares and London, 1899.

A. J. WILLSON, *Librarian.*

Theosophical Lending Library.

This library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: one month, 1s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W.

LILIAN LLOYD, *Librarian.*

Lotus Circle.

The Lotus Circle will not meet during August.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings discontinued during August.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings at the Commercial Hotel, Westgate, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at 39, Park Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Classes on alternate Tuesdays for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Meetings on Sunday mornings, at 11 a.m.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings suspended till further notice.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at Holton's Hotel, Glassford Street, on Sundays, at 11.30 a.m.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: August 6th, *Theosophy*, Louisa Shaw; August 13th, *The Protestant Reformation*, Hodgson Smith; August 20th, *Theosophy and Socialism*, Christopher Corbett; August 27th, *The Riddle of Pythagoras*, Miss Pope. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 8 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings by arrangement. For information apply to H. E. Nichol, 56, Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m.,

for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, as above.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 36, Hawthorne Mount, Chapel Allerton. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 9, Winstanley Terrace, Headingley, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. For information as to meetings, etc., apply to the Corresponding Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. There will be no lectures during August.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings discontinued during August.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. On alternate Thursdays, study of *The Devachanic Plane*.

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PARIS. Meetings at 21, rue Tronchet (office of *La Revue Théosophique Française*), on the first Sunday in each month, at 3 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings discontinued till further notice.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings discontinued during August.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meeting at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

Blavatsky Lodge.

Members have during the last month listened to three lectures by Mrs. Besant, and to one by Mr. Sinnett. On July 22nd, when, owing to illness, Mr. Moore was unable to speak on "The Pendu-

lum," Mrs. Besant took his place and talked to the Lodge about "Dharma," treating that difficult subject so clearly that it would have been almost impossible not to understand and to carry away many lessons from it. On June 29th, Mr. Sinnett gave his most interesting lecture on "Astronomy, Occult and Physical," and made it still more interesting with the help of various carefully drawn and coloured diagrams. On July 6th, Mrs. Besant began her series of three lectures on "The Place of the Emotions in Human Evolution." Mrs. Besant began by telling her hearers that just because her subject was the emotions she must avoid treating it emotionally, and explained that she hoped to be able to shew how the emotions may be governed and trained, so that, beginning at an earlier stage with desire, a man may gradually control and purify it till he "change desire into union." Mrs. Besant said that in her first lecture she would give general principles, in the second would show the application of those principles, and finally she would hold up the ideal, so as to supply the motive-power which would be needed in the application to every-day life of the principles which she had laid down.

S. M. S.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION DXXIII.

J. C. B.—It is said that in Devachan there is no sorrow or longing, but nevertheless the existence there is not eternal. Now, what then with those whose time to stay there has expired, and who see themselves compelled to get down and go out once more, thus to leave the pleasant surroundings, and to change them for a coarser world? They must feel despair, or at least dissatisfaction, and what about the disposition of those who miss them? Or must it be conceived that the getting out is a kind of pleasure for them, rather in the way of some one who is rising from table after his dinner and feels no desire to stay any longer, or who has heard a fine concert or attended any other pleasure of more or less high character, and is therefore blasé, and happy to find some hard work for his renewal?

C. W. L.—This question displays quite a comic misconception of all the conditions of the life of the heaven-world—in fact, we owe a debt of gratitude to the querent for lightening the grave columns of THE VĀHAN to this extent.

Of course nobody ever gets *blasé* in Devachan, and nobody ever feels himself "compelled to get down and go out." Nor does any one ever know that he is about to exchange his blissful surroundings for those of a coarser world. It would be quite impossible that he should know, unless he were so highly developed as to be able to carry his consciousness clear through into his causal body, and in that case he would know the whole scheme of evolution, and gladly co-operate in it.

Nor is it possible for any one in the heaven-world to "miss" another, for he will have his friends always around him whenever he wishes

for them, quite irrespective of whether they are in or out of incarnation. The whole of a man's life on that plane is simply a prolonged experience of all the highest happiness of which he is capable, and when the forces which are acting to produce this condition gradually wear themselves out, the man sinks gently, blissfully into unconsciousness without being in any way aware of what is happening to him, or what lies before him.

I fear it must be sorrowfully admitted that at present the questioner is not within measurable distance of any comprehension of the state of the facts. One can but recommend him to read over again with the closest attention the sixth of our Theosophical manuals, and the chapters on Devachan in Mrs. Besant's and Mr. Sinnett's works, and try to gain from that study some conception of the glorious realities of that plane. The slightest glimpse of the truth of the matter will far more than repay him for the trouble.

A. A. W.—I think a little refinement on J. C. B's rather irreverent comparison of the getting up from dinner might really help us. It is true that after a heavy, old-fashioned English dinner one does desire heartily to change the subject, and the atmosphere; but it is not so with a really good French dinner; such a one as the cook comes up in his white cap to be congratulated on after it is over, beaming on the guests as they upon him. In such case you feel simply, in the very French phrase, "restored"; you came in tired and faint, and you rise from table fit to go anywhere and do anything, at your very best for work or play; you don't want to *forget* it either; it remains as an artistic pleasure in your mind, like our friend's fine concert, all through the rest of the day. Something of this kind we might fairly admit for Devachan: though protesting against the curious deduction that a man must be *blasé* when and because he has just received some "pleasure of high character"!

Perhaps the best way to clear up the matter is to say that the question represents rather the feeling of the personality in *kāmaloka* than that of the soul in Devachan. The entity which cares only for the pleasant surroundings, and would feel simply "a despair at changing them for a coarser world," cannot, in truth, be anywhere but in *kāmaloka*; and, more, it must be what we call "earth-bound" there. In such case the astral body, which must disintegrate when the soul passes into Devachan, must have been strong enough forcibly to hold it back, as we are told is sometimes the case on the higher levels. The querist forgets that the soul enters Devachan only by virtue of the love of something quite outside of itself. The pleasant surroundings of the "summer-land," or of the heaven of the lower class of Christians, are a very different thing to the bliss of Devachan. There are, of course, different degrees, as Mr. Leadbeater has described to us.

In the undeveloped ego which attains a faint semi-consciousness for a moment on that level by

virtue of some first stirring of love for wife or child, there may possibly be also some equally semi-conscious reluctance to leave this faint sense of bliss when the time comes. But from the moment full consciousness is attained things are quite otherwise. The physical body and the astral capacity of enjoyment through it are not merely forgotten but clean gone—destroyed; the only happiness possible to the devachanee is the Beatific Vision of the souls loved or the God worshipped upon earth, or the planning of some good to be worked out on earth hereafter. I think it is not too much to say that the main object of the devachanic life is that the spirit may gain strength to live its life separate from that of its successive bodies, quite careless of its surroundings, pleasant or otherwise, on the lower planes, even of Devachan itself. I think (under correction) that there is no set time of bliss to expire, as the question puts it; that in that higher world the fire of the divine self-sacrificing Love, freed from the obstructions of the physical plane, burns away the weaknesses of the soul one by one, until it stands recreated—a soldier worthy the Master's guidance; ready once more to take its share in the great conflict betwixt the dead and the living. Its new descent into incarnation is—*can* be—no reluctant leaving of a happy life, but the solemn, yet joyous devotion of the young warrior who, his training ended, comes forth confident in himself and his Leader to take his place in the ranks of the heroes who are on the Lord's side in the one fight that is worth living—or dying for; the spirit of George, the "golden youth" in *Götz von Berlichingen*. "Holy Saint George, make me big and strong—give me a horse, armour and lance—and then, let the dragon come!"

QUESTION DXXIV.

T. B.—*What modifications in the atmosphere of Mars and Mercury respectively would be needed to render them habitable by human beings like ourselves?*

A. P. S.—It is easier to imagine the conditions that would adapt Mercury to the needs of organisms like our own than to suggest the methods which would accomplish the same results in the case of Mars. Where the only problem is to temper excessive heat the object in view would clearly be secured by means of an atmospheric envelope sufficiently dense to support masses of cloud, from the upper surfaces of which the surplus heat would be reflected off into space. Conversely, at the first glance it might be supposed that where the available heat is insufficient, we need only imagine an atmosphere refined enough to allow of its free passage to the planet's surface. Unfortunately, however, such an atmosphere would equally allow of its free escape, and the result would be a climate like that of our own highest mountain tops. On the other hand such considerations would assume the atmosphere in question to be composed of the same gases as our own. If we allow ourselves to invent a new gas we could

imagine one with physical properties calculated to allow heat vibrations to pass in, but not to pass out with the same freedom. I should be reluctant to suppose that the chemical elements on the various planets of our solar system differ to any great extent—and especially as we see vegetation following the course of the seasons on Mars and associated apparently with irrigation, there is strong presumptive evidence of a growth cycle there, in which oxygen and carbonic acid play the same part as with us. But without supposing that the atmosphere of Mars consists of elements altogether differing from those of our own atmosphere, it is open to us to imagine that the elements of which that atmosphere is composed are present on the different planets in very different proportions. Say for instance that argon and helium, which enter to a very minute extent into the composition of the Earth's atmosphere, play a large and important part in the composition of the Martian envelope. That might entirely alter the physical properties of the atmosphere in question, without impairing its qualities from the point of view of plants and animals.

QUESTION DXXV.

H. S. G.—*What is the kârmic cause of the vast number of premature deaths that occur in infancy and childhood?*

A. P. S.—I do not see the necessity for supposing any kârmic cause to be in operation at all, except, of course, in so far as there must be a cause behind any occurrence, so that in a mathematical sense there is karma at work if a cat sneezes, just as, mathematically, you move the earth if you throw a stone. Ignoring these refinements, however, there is practically no karma at work as regards the entities concerned when children die in infancy. There is karma at work as far as the parents are concerned no doubt, but from the point of view of the incarnating entity the premature death is a very insignificant circumstance. If we treat it as an accident of nature, it is at least one that admits of a very easy readjustment.

In our first enthusiasm for the idea that justly directed cause and effect are invariably linked throughout nature, we often fail to make adequate allowance for the accidents of nature, a phrase which might (or might not) be inapplicable if nature is regarded from the Nirvânic standpoint, but is certainly highly applicable within the limits of ordinary thinking. Human free-will, even under the limitations that circumscribe it, is continually giving rise to results that are practically outside the kârmic programme of the persons concerned. As continually, those programmes are readjusted by the agencies of the great law. But this is only saying in other words that at any given moment there are multitudes of irregularities in most people's kârmic account with Nature, products of accident which have not yet been readjusted. It may be that such readjustment will only be possible in another life. What we may be sure of is

that in the long run perfect justice will be asserted. And it should be remembered that what are called accidents in ordinary life—being run over or coming in for some unexpected slice of good luck—are probably not accidents of nature at all. They are almost assuredly kârmic, but the suffering that may ensue, for example, from the misconduct of some one loved, might be outside the original kârmic programme of the sufferer, and thus an accident that would need ultimate readjustment.

A. A. W.—I have very lately spoken of this question from the side of the “waiting egos,” as the phrase goes. There is, however, another side—that of the parents. It is easy, of course, to lay down, as a “moralist” would, that in all cases they must have done something to incur this penalty from karma—and leave it there; but for my part I don’t feel quite easy in doing this. Not only the death, but also the life of a child may be a very effective kârmic penalty; and without the insight of a Buddha no one can prove that it is not so. I fancy many of these premature deaths are simply “failures of Nature”—cases in which outside circumstances have so far interfered as to make the body unsuitable for its purpose. Then, of course, others are simply not wanted as vehicles for a soul at all; and, failing to be ensouled, die out. I take it that the Lords of Birth are not to be considered as interfering with human actions *beyond* the securing of the due vehicles actually needed for the souls under their charge. But when one considers the vast “slaughter of the innocents” due to national karma and not to individual karma at all—for example, the actually countable thousands of infants yearly starved to death in London or Manchester by the conditions under which their mothers have to get their living—children as distinctly slain by the nation as if the police had been ordered to pick them up and put them into the “lethal chamber” like the dogs and cats—why, I am inclined to ask another and more serious question than H. S. G.’s: “What is the kârmic *penalty* of the vast number of premature deaths that occur in infancy and childhood?”

QUESTION DXXVI.

X.—*Do the senses of hearing and sound belong to the activities of mind, and those of touch, taste and smell to the kâmic body? There does not seem much of the kâmic nature in the pleasure given by form and sound unassociated with the grosser senses.*

A. P. S.—Is not the clue to this problem to be found in the idea that, after all, the senses are merely avenues of perception—nothing in themselves but machinery for producing perceptions? It is in the conscious being that the perception is evoked. The kâmic body can have no consciousness in itself (of the kind which we are thinking of when we talk, as waking human beings, of consciousness) unless it is animated by the ego.

Much confusion of thought has, it seems to me, sprung from the assignment of different classes of feelings, desires, or emotions, to different vehicles of the ego. The coarsest desires of the flesh would not be developed in any “kâmic body” unless there were latent attributes in the ego, which in physical manifestation gave rise to those desires. They are not present to the consciousness of the ego on higher planes, because there they have no scope for manifestation, because there the ego has no fulcrum to lean upon which can subserve that manifestation.

The states of perception represented by the two higher senses are clearly compatible with the surroundings of the mental plane, while it is less likely that the states of perception represented by the three lower senses would be called into activity in a centre of consciousness merely for the time being animating a mental body; but consciousness in any of its aspects is an attribute of the real spiritual entity, not of any of the organisms in which from time to time he may be functioning. It has been frequently explained that on the mental plane one faculty of perception supersedes all the faculties which we call senses down here, but in superseding it must embrace and include them. Thus I should be disinclined to regard any of the senses as the appanage exclusively of the kâmic body. The problem brings us to the confines of many others far higher in importance than itself. My position—that any state of consciousness developed in physical life must be traceable to characteristics of the ego—is the only justification for all the pains taken on the upward path to ennoble and dignify the desires. If we could shake them off (those which are ignoble), by merely getting rid of the kâmic body, there would be no reason why we should take the trouble to go through life after life of effort and suffering in the struggle to become perfect. Nature is evidently of opinion that a man can only be considered perfect when he is perfect *in incarnation*, with both kâmic and physical bodies to give expression to all that is in him.

B. K.—All the separated or differentiated senses belong to the astral or kâmic body and not to the mental.

The characteristic mode of perception belonging to the mental body is that all is perceived on that plane by a single unitary act which includes, as partial moments, all that we know as the separated modes of sense perception on the physical and astral planes, and gives one in addition, in a manner peculiar to itself, knowledge—more or less complete and perfect according to the development of the power—of all that can be known about the object on which the attention is focussed, regarded as separate from the knower or perceiver. But though the power of mental perception includes all varieties of sense perception, it must be remembered that there are no special senses, or sense organs, in the mental

body, and that perception takes place by one single undivided act.

Pleasure and pain belong purely to the kāmīc body, and only combine with the mental perceptions by association and contact. For in its own pure nature mental perception brings to consciousness knowledge quite apart and free from any question of pain and pleasure.

QUESTION DXXVII.

I. G.—In the answer to Question DIII., endorsement is given to Anna Kingsford's vision of the writing of the gospels. Is not the internal evidence of those documents strongly opposed to the notion of their having been deliberately fabricated by a conclave of grave and learned occultists? Would such a body have put forth the barbarous Greek of Mark, or the imbecile references to prophecy in Matthew, to say nothing of the numberless touches which seem to show the natural and inert growth of legend, as well as those which seem expressly put in one gospel to counteract some supposed error, or to supply some supposed defect, in another? Would such a body have written four narratives at all?

G. R. S. M.—In answer to Question DIII., regarding the value of the visions of the late Dr. Anna Kingsford, C. W. L. wrote: "In various cases she saw historical facts with remarkable clearness, that is to say, she was often able to read the records accurately. Her vision of the circumstances under which what are called the gospels were really written, for example, reproduces the true scene with considerable fidelity."

In "*Clothed with the Sun*" (London: 1889), the following is a report of what Mrs. Kingsford spoke in trance on November 6th, 1881 (p. 127, *seqq.*):

"I am looking at the inside of the Serapeum at Alexandria. The temple is connected with a library which, as I see it, is still there, neither dispersed nor burnt, but filled with manuscripts—mostly rolls upon sticks. I see a council of many men sitting at a table in the room of the library, and I see a number of names, as Cleopatra, Marcus Antonius, and others. This is called the *second* library of Alexandria, the former having been destroyed under Julius Cæsar. The nucleus of this one was the gift of Antony to Cleopatra, who added to it and improved it immensely, till it contained all the existing literature of the world; and—why, they are deliberately concocting Christianity out of the books there! and so far as I can see, the gospels are little better than Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (historically, I mean)—so deliberately are they making up the new religion by replanting the old on the Jewish system.

"Write down these names and the dates which are specially shown me. Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, and Ambrosius, A.D. 390, B.C. 286. This last is the date at which the library was first of all got together. A.D. 390 is the date of the chief destruction of the documents out of which the new religion was made. If they could be recovered,

we should have absolute proof of its concoction from Hindū, Persian, and other originals—the interpretations, extracts and alterations proving this. They show, too, that the name first adopted for the typical man was more like Kṛiṣṇa, and that Jesus was a later choice, adopted at Jewish suggestion, in order to suit a Jewish hero. The system was long under formation, and it took all that time to perfect. Every detail of the gospel history is invented, the number of the apostles, and all the rest. Nothing is historical in the sense supposed. . . .

"The great loss, then, is not that of the first, but that of the second library of Alexandria. The Serapeum was destroyed by Christians in order to prevent the human origin of their religion from being ascertained. The object was to have it believed that all centred in one particular actual person, and was not collected and compiled from a multiplicity of sources.

"All the conversations on the gospels were fabricated by the aid of various books, in order to illustrate and enforce particular sources."

We have now the main outline of the statement made by Mrs. Kingsford before us and can at once see how complex a matter we have to sort out into simpler elements, arrange in order of time and classify in importance of content. And before going further let me say that I am desired by my colleague, C. W. L., to state that he was by no means referring to this mass of detail, but to the main idea that the place of composition of the present four canonical gospels was Alexandria, and that they were the outcome of an assembly gathered together there. This was all he had retained in his memory since reading "*Clothed with the Sun*," when it first came out. He would certainly not have made so general a statement had he had the above passages before him. The destruction of the Serapeum in 389 was an event far removed in time from the compilation of the four canonical gospels, and it is necessary to make this observation because some careless readers of the passage have jumped to the conclusion that Mrs. Kingsford declares that the gospels were fabricated in 390 or so! The historical details of this act of vandalism—the destruction of the Serapeum—are well-known, and it is satisfactory for the scientific student of psychism to note the general accuracy of the historical outline given by Mrs. Kingsford, taken in conjunction with the deliberate statement of Mr. Maitland in the footnote (p. 127): "It was wholly independent of any knowledge or prepossession of either of us—the subject being quite new to us." On the other hand a number of statements with regard to the gospel compilation seem to me to throw the factors in the problem out of balance by unduly exaggerating some of the elements and minimising others. But our initial difficulty is to know what Mrs. Kingsford really saw, for her own account of what she saw seems to be very confused, and to be the unconnected description of a series of pictures occurring to her, for the most part, out of their natural time order. The "council of many men" seems to be either the historical scene of a late council of the time of

Theophilus, or else a symbolical picture suggesting the idea of the many writers who had striven to exploit the ancient scriptures of the nations, copies of which existed in the great library, for the benefit of the new movement. This idea at once suggested to the seeress, it would seem, the most important documents of popular Christianity (the four gospels), and so she confused the "council of many men" with the very much smaller assembly of elders which met in the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 117-138), two good centuries and a half before, and not in the Serapeum, according to the investigations of some of our trained colleagues.

But to return to the text of our question, so far were these men from being a "conclave of grave and learned occultists," that they did not even belong to the inner circles of the Christian gnosis. They were for the most part, it is said, grave and worthy elders of the various small "churches" of the district. But the whole subject is so delicate that one fears to set down any general assertion for fear of inevitable misunderstanding. The time is yet too early, in my opinion, to treat of the genesis of the gospels according to the occult tradition. It requires the preliminary clearing of the ground by the necessary discipline of a study of the existing documents and of the environment of the period. Until that discipline has been gone through there is very great danger of people construing every general statement according to their existing prejudices (pro- or anti-Christian as the case may be).

This preliminary work requires years of study, and until it has been done by some pioneer of Theosophy the time is too early to state the content of the occult tradition in detail without great danger of total misconceptions.

In bringing the present answer to a conclusion, while admitting that the question for the most part is very well taken, I would suggest to J. G. that the writing of "barbarous Greek" does not necessarily militate against a man's being a "learned occultist."

C. W. L.—As the writer of the answer DIII., I should like to say a few words in reply to this further question. I believe that Mrs. Kingsford was right in stating that the gospels were written at Alexandria, and written by an assembly of men gathered expressly for that purpose; but I do not consider that she was accurate in assigning the Serapeum as the theatre of their labours, nor could I endorse the whole of the somewhat confused detail given above.

The gospels were undoubtedly deliberately fabricated, though not by occultists. As is remarked at the beginning of one of the few which survive, "many undertook to set in order these things," and not four only, but many more than four versions were compiled by different scribes in that upper room at Alexandria. Among those who tried their hands at enlarging the original documents, were some who were quite capable of writing barbarous Greek and making imbecile

references to prophecy; and since they tried to incorporate legends, what more natural than that traces of these should remain?

Some day, perhaps, it may be desirable that the whole story of the origin of the Christian documents should be given to the world, but I quite agree with the remark in the previous answer that that time has not come yet. Meantime, perhaps, these few words will make the position somewhat clearer to the questioner.

QUESTION DXXVIII.

M. E. G.—Will A. A. W. kindly explain more fully the words used in answer to Question DXX., "the blind elemental within us becoming an actual tempter to actions, which are good for it, but not for us."

A. A. W.—I cannot do better in answer to M. E. G.'s request than refer him to a short paper by Mr. B. Keightley in *Lucifer* (Vol. xvii. p. 53), which is what I had in my mind as I wrote. He will find there that the elemental essence of the desire-body requires for its development *sensation*—the more energetic and the more frequently recurring the better. What that sensation may be is quite indifferent for its purpose; pleasant or painful, right or wrong, are ideas entirely beyond its reach. When it happens (as it does more or less with us all) that it contrives to persuade a part of the manas to leave its own development to help it to gain more and stronger sensations, there results (as I say) an actual tempter—the very thing symbolised in the ancient myth of the snake in Paradise. For it is the business of manas to transcend the knowledge of good and evil, as the desire-body feels them; it is as true for the mind now as when Genesis was written, that "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And as, day by day, we suffer our mind to be more inextricably entangled in the meshes of the lower nature which must die with the body, vainly dreaming we can take the pleasure of the body and yet keep the life of the soul, there comes once more the tempter's mocking voice, "Yea—hath God said . . .?" and we, like Eve, look upon the sense-world and see that it is delightful to the eye and good to the taste, and . . . we all do it!

QUESTION DXXIX.

M. F. M.—On page 18 of *Manual VI.*, Mr. Leadbeater mentions elemental essence as something "quite distinct" from the "mere matter of the plane." Monadic essence he does not speak of. I had thought elemental essence was the matter of the plane, and monadic essence the informing principle, as it were—that the latter clothed itself in the former, and bore the same relation to it as the individuality does to the personality; that the elemental essence was the result of the first outpouring of the Logos, and the monadic essence that of the second. Is not this correct?

B.K.—The term "monadic essence" has been already defined in the VĀHAN, but it may be well to repeat the explanation in other words, and try to make clear the distinction between the two

terms "monadic essence" and "elemental essence."

First, then, the "monadic essence" of any plane is the second outpouring or second Life Wave (*i.e.*, the out-poured Life of the Second Logos), *clothed in the atomic matter of the plane in question.* To elaborate: (*a*) the second Life Wave denotes the whole outpouring of life from the Second Logos irrespective of the kind or kinds of matter in which it may be clothed; (*b*) when this second Life Wave is clothed in the atomic matter of any plane and not in any of the other (molecular) conditions of the matter of that plane, it is called the monadic essence *of that plane.* It should further be remembered that, in its descent from the Logos, the second Life Wave clothes itself only in the atomic matter of the planes above that on which we may be tracing its further differentiation. Thus, to take the monadic essence of the physical plane as an example, this physical plane monadic essence will have as its outermost garment the atomic matter only of the physical plane; within that its next sheath will be the atomic matter of the astral plane, but it will not have in its sheathing any of the various molecular combinations of the astral atoms which constitute the various sub-planes of the astral. Further, the next inner sheath of the monadic essence will be composed of the highest order of matter belonging to the uppermost of the four lower subdivisions of the mânasic plane (since this mânasic plane embraces two distinct evolutionary kingdoms). Then as its next sheath it will have atoms of the highest of the three arûpa mânasic levels, then atoms of the buddhic plane, and so on.

So far, then, for the meaning and use of the term "monadic essence;" now let us take up the other term, *viz.*, "elemental essence." Its use and meaning are simple. When a portion of the monadic essence of any plane clothes itself in the molecular matter of that plane, in addition to its permanent sheath of the atomic matter, it is *then called* "elemental essence" of such and such a kind. Thus, to put this in the form of a definition: "elemental essence" is "monadic essence" sheathed in a further outer coating of molecular matter.

To deal now specifically with some of the subsidiary points mentioned in the question, on the basis of the above definitions and explanations:

1. "Elemental essence" is thus not the matter of the plane, but involves another and higher life, *viz.*, the life of the Second Logos poured forth as the second Life Wave, since it consists of monadic essence sheathed in the molecular matter of the plane, and we thus have—

Elemental essence = monadic essence + sheathing of molecular matter of the plane = second Life Wave + atomic matter of plane in question and all planes above it + molecular sheathing.

2. Both monadic essence and elemental essence belong to the second Life Wave poured forth by the Second Logos, *not* to the first Life Wave which proceeds from the Third Logos.

C. W. L.—The questioner should study his Manuals more carefully. If he will read again pp. 74-79 of *Manual VI.*, and p. 56 of *Manual V.*, he will find a statement of the subject which, if he had understood it, would have rendered his query unnecessary. Elemental essence *is* monadic essence at a certain stage of its descent into matter. Just as the name "mineral monad" or "mineral essence" is applied to that part of the monadic outpouring from the Second Logos which happens to be manifesting through the mineral kingdom, so is the name "elemental essence" applied to that part of the same outpouring which is as yet at an earlier stage of evolution and is manifesting through the elemental kingdoms on the astral or mental planes. The distinction between the essence and the matter of a plane is drawn in *Manual V.*, pp. 14, 15.

QUESTION DXXX.

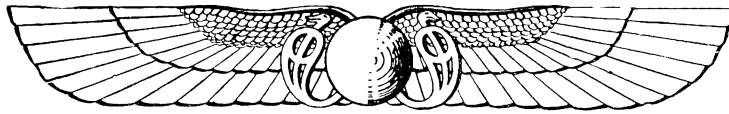
S. A. N.—*As we do not remember our former lives, does it follow we shall not remember this life in succeeding ones? and if we meet our loved ones, will it be as if newly acquainted?*

A. A. W.—The querist must remember how long a time is spent with our beloved on the higher planes, and how short the earth life is, a mere brief dream in our true, waking life. Even if we met here and did not recognise each other at all, it would not be for long that the separation lasted; but it would be a peculiar karma which brought this penalty—some treachery to our love in the previous life most likely. When two who are thus truly akin meet, although they may not know each other, they instantly feel the kindred, the "true love at first sight," and this is of far more consequence than remembering names. The Japanese phrase wherein the lovers take each other "for two lives and for three," is a ludicrous under-statement of the truth for a couple who truly love. Whom God hath joined together man *cannot* put asunder—never fear!

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to English-reading members. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1899.

NO. 2.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

FORMATION OF THE FRENCH SECTION.

THE following is a copy of a notice received from the President-Founder, intimating that a Charter has been granted for a Section in France.

The Society is to be congratulated upon the formation of a French Section, the eighth on our lists. The following official documents will explain themselves:

LONDON, 11th July, 1899.

THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER,
Adyar, Madras.

DEAR SIR,

Herewith I have the honour to transmit for your favourable consideration the demand of seven of the Branches in France belonging to the European Section—to be formed into a new body to be entitled “The French Section,” and I trust you may see fit to grant the Charter as requested.

I have the honour to be,
Yours fraternally,
(*Sd.*) OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

P.S.—Since the application was signed by the French Branches the “Ananta” Branch has dissolved and two Branches have been created in its place, *i.e.*, “Union Branche,” and “Disciple Branche.” There are, therefore, eight Branches in all now.

TO COLONEL H. S. OLCOTT,
President-Founder of the Theosophical Society.

The undersigned, Commandant D. A. Courmes, Senior French Member of the Society, and Member of the Executive Committee of the European

Section, has the honour to present to you the following request:

The first seven French Branches of the Theosophical Society, being desirous of organising themselves into a French Section, hereby apply to the President-Founder for a Charter for the same.

They bind themselves to conform to the constitution of the Theosophical Society, and have pleasure in offering to the President the expression of their respect, devotion and affection.

Their esteemed brother, Doctor Th. Pascal, President of the “Lotus Bleu” Branch, of Toulon, has been unanimously chosen as General Secretary of the future Section, and has kindly accepted the responsibilities thus offered him.

The Presidents and Secretaries of the above-mentioned seven Branches, and Commandant Courmes, have signed, in testimony of their concurrence, the present request:

D. A. COURMES,

Director of the Revue Théosophique Française.
21, Rue Tronchet, Paris.

Presidents.	Secretaries.	Branch.
Paul Gillard - - -	G. Renard - -	Ananta.
Villiers G. Thomassin - -	T. Thomassin - -	Le Sentier.
Mrs. T. M. Terrell - -	Ch. Pahon - -	Nice.
Dr. Th. Pascal - - -	Jane G. Ruyer - -	Toulon.
A. Perrier - - -	G. Mounier - -	Grenoble.
Marie Charousset - -	Jeannette Sevez - -	Lyons.
A. Fabre - - -	C. Lasne - -	Marseilles.

The above request, having the concurrence of the European Section and meeting with my hearty approval, is hereby granted, and the Recording Secretary will forward to Commandant Courmes, for transmission to Dr. Th. Pascal and his associates a Charter in the usual form, for the formation of the French Section of the Theosophical Society.

H. S. OLCOTT, P.T.S.

In compliance with the foregoing Executive Notice the undersigned issues the following

Charter and declares the French Section constitutionally formed and registered:

CHARTER OF THE FRENCH SECTION.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.
FOUNDED MDCCCLXXV.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE,
ADYAR, August, 1899.

I, the undersigned President-Founder of the Theosophical Society, by virtue of the authority vested in me, do hereby authorise the Fellows of the Theosophical Society in the Republic of France to organise under the provisions of the Society's Constitution and Rules, a body to be known as the French Section of the Theosophical Society.

In testimony whereof, I have signed this Charter and affixed the Society's seal at Adyar on the day above written.

H. S. OLCOTT,
President.

By the President,
W. A. ENGLISH,
Recording Secretary.

PRESIDENT-FOUNDER'S FUND.

Notice has been received from the President-Founder that for the moment he has abandoned his South African Tour, and instead has decided to come to Europe in the early spring of next year.

It is therefore proposed to pay in all moneys subscribed for Colonel Olcott's South African Tour to "The President's Propaganda Tours' Fund," and thus make them available for the expenses of any Presidential Propaganda Tour.

Anyone who has subscribed to the South African Tour and desires the money returned is requested kindly to write to me, otherwise it will be paid in to the "President's Propaganda Tours' Fund."

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

LETTER FROM THE INDIAN SECTION.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
BENARES,
August 3rd, 1899.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

I rejoice to hear of the brilliant success of the European Section's Convention held in July last, and am exceedingly thankful to all our brothers of the West for the kind and sympathetic message they have sent us.

We are also very grateful to our dear Brother Keightley for the loving manner in which he conveyed our greetings and goodwill to you all, and it is a matter of no small delight to us that his words awakened a ready response in the hearts of all present at the Convention.

I have no doubt that such exchange of greetings goes a great way towards cementing the hearts of the two Sections together; still, I cannot help wishing that some time hence one of the Indian blood may be able to represent the Indian Section in the London Convention, and prove to you the reality of the brotherhood which the Theosophical Society has established.

With cordial good wishes,

I am, yours sincerely and gratefully,

UPENDRANATH BASU,
Hon. Gen. Secretary, Indian Section.

LETTER FROM THE AUSTRALASIAN SECTION.

To the General Secretary, European Section.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

In accordance with a resolution passed by the Fifth Annual Convention of the Australasian Section held at Melbourne, Victoria, I have much pleasure in sending to your Section our hearty greetings and good wishes for the success of your work.

Yours fraternally,
T. H. MARTYN,
Acting General Secretary.

"VÂHAN" REQUIRED.

The General Secretary of the Indian Section desires to obtain THE VÂHAN, Vol. II., No. 12, for the Section. As this number is not available at Headquarters, if any member has a copy which can be spared it will be received with thanks and forwarded to Benares.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

Mrs. Besant's Lectures.

Mrs. Besant will deliver a course of three lectures on Sunday evenings in September, at 7 o'clock, in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Restaurant. The subjects are as follows:

September 3rd, "Why and how we dream";
September 10th, "The Meaning of Dreams";
September 17th, "Eastern and Western Science."

Tickets, price 2s. and 1s., can be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., or at St. James's Restaurant. As the free accommodation is very limited, free admission will be by tickets, to be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to August 20th: T. Jackson (monthly), 3s.; Miss I. M. Johnson, £10; Miss Fountaine, 15s.; Miss

Cust, £1; H. E. Nichol, £5; H. S. Green, £1; J. W. Cock, 5s.; Miss F. Wilson, £1; W. J. Vincent, £3 3s.; Miss Bradley, 16s.; F. Brooks, 2s. 6d.; J. Ablett, 15s.; Mrs. Charles Hinde, £2; Miss Bowring (monthly), £1; Mr. and Mrs. Dawson, 3s.; B. P. Matthews, 5s. Total: £27 7s. 6d.

Section Reference Library.

The Library is open to members of the Society on week-days (except Thursday) from 2 to 10 p.m., and on Sundays from 3.30 to 10 p.m.

A. J. WILLSON, *Librarian*.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: one month, 1s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W.

LILIAN LLOYD, *Librarian*.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on alternate Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings at the Commercial Hotel, Westgate, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at 39, Park Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Classes on alternate Tuesdays for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on the first Friday in each month, at 8 p.m., and by appointment.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at Holton's Hotel, Glassford Street, on Sundays, at 11.30 a.m.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: September 3rd, *Sacrifice*; September 10th, *My Brother's Keeper*, B. Hudson; September 17th,

Effort and Effect, E. J. Dunn; September 24th, *Evolution of Consciousness*, W. H. Thomas. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 8 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings by arrangement. For information apply to H. E. Nichol, 56, Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 36, Hawthorne Mount, Chapel Allerton. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 9, Winstanley Terrace, Headingley, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. For information as to meetings, etc., apply to the Corresponding Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19, Avenue Road, N.W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: September 7th, *Some Obscure Problems in Karma*, Mrs. Besant; September 14th, *The Worlds we Live in*, Mrs. Besant; September 21st, *The Pendulum*, M. U. Moore; September 28th, *A short Study of Animal Cells*, Mrs. Betts.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: September 5th, *The Influence of the Beautiful in the Spiritual Life*, Miss Weeks; September 12th, *Hedonism*, H. F. Adams; September 19th, *A Mohammedan Mystic of the Sixteenth Century*, Hon. Otway Cuffe; September 26th, P. Tovey. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: September 11th, *Indian Ideals*, B. Keightley; 18th, "*The Ancient Wisdom*"; September 25th, *Self-Control*, Alan Leo.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road,

Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m.: September 7th and 21st, *The Evolution of Man*; September 14th and 28th, "*Four Great Religions*."

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PARIS. Meetings at 21, rue Tronchet (office of *La Revue Théosophique Française*), on the first Sunday in each month, at 3 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.: September 8th and 22nd.

ROME LODGE. Meetings discontinued till further notice.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at the Oxford Temperance Hotel, St. James' Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meeting at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

The South-Western Federation.

The Fourth Annual Convention of the South-Western Federation was held at Exeter, July 21st and 22nd, Mrs. Besant presiding.

Bournemouth, Bristol, Bath and Exeter were represented.

On account of Mrs. Cooper-Oakley's intended lecturing tour on the Continent, Dr. Nunn of Bournemouth was elected President for the coming year. Dr. Nunn proposed a vote of sympathy with the late Secretary of the Federation, Miss Ethel Hastings, and of thanks for her former work, which she was compelled to relinquish on account of ill-health. This was seconded by Miss Stanley, and passed unanimously. Mr. Bellairs, of Bournemouth, was elected Secretary of the Federation for the ensuing year.

Miss Wheaton gave an interesting account of the Exeter Centre during the past year, saying that though there are few members at present, a good many people in Exeter are interested in Theosophy.

Dr. Nunn followed with a report of the Bournemouth Branch. Five new members have joined during the past year, making up the number to fourteen.

Miss Stanley gave an account of the Bristol Lodge, and Mr. Hill a *résumé* of the work done by the Bath Centre during the past year.

Mrs. Besant gave a public lecture on "The After Death Life" on the evening of the 21st, and held a meeting for questions and answers the following day.

On both occasions the attendance was good, and the audiences were evidently much interested.

West London Branch.

The regular weekly meetings of this Branch, held at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Friday evenings, at 8.15 p.m., recommence on September 15th. A syllabus of lectures for the autumn quarter is in course of preparation, and will be distributed shortly amongst members and friends. Any who do not receive, but desire copies, can obtain them from the Secretary at the above address. The meetings are quite open to all interested in Theosophy.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION I.

Q.—To what extent is it reasonable to regard The Secret Doctrine as "*inspired*"?

(The following, from the "Watch-Tower" notes in the August number of *The Theosophical Review*, is reprinted in reply.—ED.)

A. B.—The attempt made by some ill-instructed Theosophists to set up this truly wonderful and splendid book as an inspired revelation dictated by the revered Masters, accurate in every detail, and free from any error, is ill-judged and mischievous. It contains an extraordinary number of occult truths, learned by H. P. B. from her great Teachers, and we can never be too grateful to her for the selfless and laborious efforts she made to present these truths accurately to the world. The more one learns, the more one wonders at the vast range of her knowledge, the clearness of her insight, and the strength of her grasp of profound and obscure truths. But she often, in her humility, buttresses her own true statements with a mass of rubbish from inferior writers, picked up haphazard; on minor points she often speaks hastily and carelessly; and further, she confuses her teachings with excessive digressions. But as to these, even, we may remember her own saying: "It is only hoped that the desire to do so [to justify the Ancient Wisdom], which has led the writer to be constantly bringing ancient and modern evidence as a corroboration of the archaic and quite unhistoric Past, will not bring on her the accusation of having sorely jumbled up, without order or method, the various and widely-separated periods of history and tradition." (ii. 841.)

And here is her own judgment on her great work: "No true Theosophist, from the most ignorant up to the most learned, ought to claim infallibility for anything he may say or write upon occult matters. The chief point is to admit that, in many a way, in the classification of either cosmic or human principles, in addition to mistakes in the order of evolution, and especially on metaphysical questions, those of us who pretend to teach others more ignorant than ourselves—are all liable to err. Thus mistakes have been made in *Isis Unveiled*, in *Esoteric Buddhism*, in *Man*, in *Magic Black and White*, etc., and more than one

mistake is likely to be found in the present work. This cannot be helped. For a large or even a small work on such abstruse subjects to be entirely exempt from error and blunder, it would have to be written from its first to its last page by a great Adept, if not by an Avatāra. Then only should we say: 'This is verily a work without sin or blemish in it.' But so long as the artist is imperfect, how can his work be perfect?" (ii. 676, 677.) Such is H. P. B.'s own opinion of her book. Greatest, strongest and humblest is she of the teachers sent to our age.

QUESTION 2.

W. B.—Is the practice of asceticism of any assistance in the progress of a student of occultism?

C. W. L.—The answer to this question depends entirely upon the meaning attached by the querent to the word asceticism. If it is to be taken as signifying what some people have called "the mortification of the flesh"—the doing of something unpleasant merely because it is unpleasant, and without reference to any ulterior result which it is expected to produce (such as, for example, the wearing of a hair shirt)—I should myself consider it as absolutely useless to the student of occultism. Such an action belongs to the same general category as those of the lower-class faker who lies on a bed of spikes, or holds up his arm until it becomes dry and stiff like wood; and while no doubt it tends to the development of will-power, it is certainly not advantageous to the general progress of the individual. The possession of a sound mind in a sound body is the condition desirable for the occultist, and the exercise of his own common-sense will soon show him whether any particular practice does or does not tend to promote that condition.

On the other hand, if our questioner takes asceticism to mean living a clean and simple life, abstaining from things which make the body impure, such as alcohol, meat, or tobacco—then assuredly not only is it helpful to progress, but it is a necessary prerequisite to any kind of attempt at occult progress whatsoever. If a man is still so entirely under the dominion of the lower desires that he is not even ready to give up his bad habits and live a clean, pure life, he is not yet sufficiently in earnest to make it worth while to consider his chances of progress. But surely this living of a decent life is a matter of course to every right-feeling man when he has once been brought face to face with the facts of existence, and so the word asceticism can scarcely be applied to such a life.

There is a third possibility. Our querent may be using the word asceticism, as so many people do, in the sense of chastity or celibacy. Certainly in this sense also it is desirable for occult progress; but this again would be a matter of course for anyone who was at all in earnest. Every student who really means business takes himself in hand with regard to all these minor and

outer matters, and makes his physical life as pure and clean as he knows how, before he even thinks of presenting himself as an aspirant for anything that can really be dignified by the name of occult progress at all.

QUESTION 3.

S. A. N.—How can we help those who have left us? Is prayer to God for them of any use? and does thinking of them and sorrowing for them do them good or harm?

A. A. W.—It is hard to say, and yet it must be said—sorrowing over our departed friends, selfishly thinking of our loss instead of rejoicing in their gain, wishing them back in what we inconsistently call "this vale of tears" and the like, does harm, often serious harm. In old times all knew this; there is hardly a mythology or folk-lore which has not its representative of the "river of tears"—the obstacle which the poor soul finds it hardest of all to pass, on its way to rest. Heathen or Christian, it is the same; it is only of late that Protestant Christians have come to think and speak (as the querist does) of the state after death as "the unknown," and to reject all the old wisdom as imagination. In their desire to purify their religion they have plucked up much wheat with the tares, and find the natural result in the blank darkness of their "enlightenment" where the despised "heathen" goes bravely and joyously to dwell with the gods. We do not ask you not to think of your dead; only to remember that by your thoughts you may help them on their way, or by your thoughts you may draw them back and keep them from their rest. Choose which you will do; if you love them more than yourself, then let your effort be to put heart and courage into them to go forward and not look back to earth. If it helps you to put this in the shape of prayer to God for them, you may do so. Do not, however, think of your prayer as "interceding" for them, or the like. Whatever Power it may be whom your prayers reach, of one thing you may be sure—that It loves your beloved better, and desires more earnestly to help him than even you do. That is hard for a Christian to believe. That all talk of Atonement, of the blood of Jesus and the like is mere blasphemy against the Infinite Love which embraces the departing soul—that "it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive"—far less to pray for, the tender consideration, flooding away all dream or thought of "pardon" in the immeasurable bliss of love and light to which our beloved is moving as fast as his earthly nature will permit him and our prayers and good wishes help him—such is the faith Theosophy has to offer for the consolation of the mourner.

O. C.—This problem of helping others is beset with difficulty whether we think of it with reference to those who are still with us or as regards

those whom we speak of as "having left us." We make the problem all the more difficult with regard to these latter, if, in spite of our Theosophical studies, we persist in regarding the casting off of the physical body as creating a barrier between individuals such as did not previously exist, and thereby rendering them less capable than before of mutually helping each other. Surely the reverse of this must be more nearly the case. How is it that we ever do really help? Not in the thousand and one things which we ever seek to do for those who are dear to us; all this is merely the altogether inadequate attempt on our part to express in action a force coming from within—the force of love. This force, pouring down from above, brings about results on all the planes below it, but the higher the plane on which it acts the more direct is its action and the more does its expression tend to approach the reality. When, therefore, the physical body has been struck away the power of helping remains unaffected thereby, while, it may well be, the response is the more complete owing to the removal of one veil.

In proportion as the "personality" is eliminated, so does the power of helping increase, and as the sense that "I" am the actor and the doer disappears, so does the channel for the outpouring of this Buddhic force become more perfect.

The fact that we are no longer on the physical plane able to perform actions for the helping of one who "has left us" should not for a moment be allowed to make us think that we are poorer in our powers of helping.

In thinking on these problems the more we try to regard them from the Life as distinguished from the Form side the less liable shall we be to conclude that our Theosophical conceptions rob us of anything which seemed vital to us in our less instructed days. The question of prayer addressed to God is a good example of this; our Theosophical studies may have given us much clear intellectual understanding of the vast ranges of being covered by this one word God, may have taught us to distinguish between different aspects of prayer, but however crude the intellectual idea, however vague the notion of prayer, yet if the self-surrendering love which seeks to serve and think only is present, the lower is offered up to the higher and becomes a channel for the forces of that higher. Even when the help is definitely sought on behalf of some special individual there does not seem in this anything antagonistic to Theosophical ideas. It is true that there are greater ones whose one task is the helping of the race, but all links are necessary in the chain, and it may be that we are given the opportunity of serving as that particular link, which thus becomes a privilege placed in our way by the hand of karma.

Thinking, if it is wishing to recall; sorrowing, if it means clinging to and holding; these, having their origin in ignorance and selfishness, hamper the progress of the beloved one and do injury.

Just as by the unselfish sacrifice of a personal sorrow we may convert it into a power to aid, so by its selfish indulgence we can erect barriers to impede.

Those who can observe have told us that they who are passing away from things physical can be, and are, so injured by the selfish sorrowing of those on earth; in that lies the assurance that it is within our power to help, unless we are deluded when we assert that Love is greater than Hate and that the end of all is Good.

QUESTION 4.

S. A. N.—Can we hope to meet after death those we have loved here, if on different planes and of different faiths? For instance, one who, though trusting in God, yet believed in total extinction, and another who was either a Christian or Theosophist; and do we meet in Devachan, or where we first go after death, or have we to wait till we return to earth?

We are often separated here from those we love; are we to judge in this from the known to the unknown?

*A. A. W.—Much has been published by Theosophical writers on these subjects. Three of the Theosophic Manuals—Mrs. Besant's *Death and After*, and Mr. Leadbeater's *Astral Plane and Devachanic Plane*—are devoted to them, not to speak of larger and more expensive works. Briefly, in kâmaloka, the state to which we pass on leaving the body, those of similar feelings and desires do meet. It is not the words of a creed which make a division; it is rather that *there*, where thoughts are actual facts, there will naturally tend to arise a state of things something like that depicted in Mrs. Kingsford's visions—that those who look for the Christian heaven will make it for themselves and share it with those to whom it is attractive—that such will naturally drift together, as it were, and the more easily if drawn by previous love. The circumstances which often make a separation on the physical plane do not exist on the astral; there, like draws to like by necessity. In the higher state of Devachan our thought is so much more complete a power that it surrounds us with our beloved, even with those who are still in physical life. We have no sense whatever that we have left them—they are there with us, and far more completely one with us than they ever could be on earth, with no confusing veil of flesh and blood between. Nor can any thought of earthly trouble intervene to mar the deep pleasure—all that is left behind with the body. As the name signifies, it is the place of complete, perfect bliss. If we need more than friends for our bliss, that is there also; the Master we have revered—the Jesus we have loved—the noble works of devotion, of charity we would have done had our powers equalled our desires—the supreme beauty, of which we have had faint glimpses in our earth-life—all this in the joy of our Lord!*

Do not say that this is Illusion! It is Truth—

far truer, far more solid and substantial than anything on earth. Say not that it is not eternal, for it will last as long as ever the Soul desires it—until there comes something which (we know not how) is better still. Of *that*, who shall speak?

QUESTION 5.

H. A. W.—In *The Growth of the Soul* (p. 265) and in *The Ancient Wisdom* (p. 418) we are told that seven Root Race periods make one World period; seven World periods make one round; seven rounds make one Manvantara; seven Manvantaras make one Scheme of Evolution; seven Schemes of Evolution (more or less contemporaneous) make up the active period of one solar system. The length of time given in *The Secret Doctrine* (vol. ii., p. 69, O. E.) for a full Manvantara is 308,448,000 years. Each round then should equal 43,200,000 years, to which must be added a twilight of 864,000 years. Each world period would thus consist (in round numbers) of a little over six million years; yet we are told that man attained his full physical development in the middle of the third Root Race of the Fourth Round eighteen million years ago. (S. D., vol. ii., p. 312, O. E.) Either, therefore, the period of a Round must equal a Manvantara, or the Manvantara must be longer than the time allowed, or the length of time physical man has been on this earth in the Fourth Round must be shorter than that given. Which is it?

A. P. S.—It has been repeatedly admitted that all the figures given in exoteric modern literature about the duration of Manvantaras, Yugas, and so on (and those in *The Secret Doctrine* appear merely to have been gathered from such sources) are wildly wrong. It is absolute waste of time to build any speculation upon them. From the beginning of those efforts to teach on the part of the Masters which gave rise to modern Theosophical literature, it was plainly declared that nothing could be given out which related to figures. Even when once making inquiry as to the significance of the number 7 I was told in effect: "I might give you an answer which would sound like one, but it would not be the real answer, which I must not give, so it is best to attempt none." As for the familiar tables of Yuga and Manvantara durations I was explicitly told that they were entirely misleading.

We have from time to time got hold of isolated facts bearing on the history of evolution. The statement that the fifth race was founded about a million years ago appears to be authentic. Also I think some of our "investigators" have made out that from the event that is sometimes spoken of as the differentiation of sex in the third root race to now eighteen millions of years have elapsed. But these data will not help us at all to guess even at the duration of Rounds, etc. Periods on the other planets of the chain may be quite unlike corresponding periods here—longer or shorter—we do not know. At present, moreover, it might

be good practical sense to admit that we do not care.

QUESTION 6.

A. F. P.—Is there any good use to which ordinary untrained clairvoyants can put their powers?

C. W. L.—Most assuredly. The possession of clairvoyant power is a very great privilege and a very great advantage, and, if properly and sensibly used, it may be a blessing and a help to its fortunate holder, just as surely as if it is misused it may often be a hindrance and a curse. The principal dangers attendant upon it arise from pride, ignorance, or impurity; and if these be avoided, as they easily may be, nothing but good can come from it.

Pride is the first great danger. The possession of a faculty which, though it is the heritage of the whole human race, is as yet manifested only very occasionally, often causes the ignorant clairvoyant to feel himself (or still more frequently, herself) exalted above his fellows, chosen by the Almighty for some mission of world-wide importance, dowered with a discernment that can never err, selected under angelic guidance to be the founder of a new dispensation, and so on. And be it remembered that there are always plenty of sportive and mischievous entities on the other side of the veil who are ready and even anxious to foster all such delusions, to reflect and embody all such thoughts, and to fill whatever rôle of archangel or spirit-guide may happen to be suggested to them. Unfortunately, it is so fatally easy to persuade the average man that he really is a very fine fellow at bottom, and quite worthy to be the recipient of a special revelation, even though his friends have through blindness or prejudice somehow failed hitherto to appreciate him.

Then another danger—perhaps the greatest of all, because it is the mother of all others—is ignorance. If the clairvoyant knows anything of the history of his subject, if he at all understands the conditions of these other planes into which his vision is penetrating, he cannot of course suppose himself the only person who was ever so highly favoured, nor can he feel with self-complacent certainty that it is impossible for him to be mistaken. But when he is, as so many are, in the densest ignorance as to history, conditions, and everything else, he is liable in the first place to make all kinds of mistakes as to what he sees, and secondly, to be the easy prey of all sorts of designing and deceptive entities from the astral plane. He has no criterion by which to judge what he sees or thinks he sees, no test to apply to his visions or communications, and so he has no sense of relative proportion or the fitness of things, and he magnifies a copybook maxim into a fragment of divine wisdom, a platitude of the most ordinary type into an angelic message. Then, again, for want of common knowledge on scientific subjects he will often utterly misunderstand what his

faculties enable him to perceive, and he will in consequence gravely promulgate the grossest absurdities.

A third danger is that of impurity. The man who is pure in thought and life, pure in intention and free from the taint of selfishness, is by that very fact guarded from the influence of undesirable entities from other planes. There is in him nothing upon which they can play; he is no fit medium for them. On the other hand all good influences naturally surround such a man, and hasten to use him as a channel through which they may act, and thus a still further barrier is erected about him against all which is mean, and low, and evil. The man of impure life or motive, on the contrary, inevitably attracts to himself all that is worst in the invisible world which so closely surrounds us; he responds readily to it, while it will be hardly possible for the forces of good to make any impression upon him.

But a clairvoyant who will bear in mind all these dangers and strive to avoid them, who will take the trouble to study the history and the *rationale* of clairvoyance, who will see to it that his heart is humble and his motives are pure—such a man may assuredly learn very much from these powers of which he finds himself in possession, and may make them of the greatest use to him in the work which he has to do.

Having first taken good heed to the training of his own character, let him observe and note down carefully any visions which come to him; let him patiently endeavour to disentangle the core of truth in them from the various accretions and exaggerations which are sure at first to be almost inextricably confused with them; let him in every possible way test and check them and endeavour to ascertain which of them are reliable, and in what way these reliable ones differ from others which have proved less trustworthy—and he will very soon find himself evolving order out of chaos, and learning to distinguish what he can trust and what he must for the present put aside as incomprehensible.

He will probably find in course of time that he gets impressions, whether by direct sight or only by feeling, in reference to the various people with whom he comes into contact. Once more the careful noting down of every such impression as soon as it occurs, and the impartial testing and checking of it as opportunity offers, will soon show our friend how far these feelings or visions are to be relied on; and as soon as he finds that they are correct and dependable he has made a very great advance, for he is in possession of a power which enables him to be of far more use to those among whom his work lies than he could be if he knew only as much about them as can be seen by the ordinary eye.

If, for example, his sight includes the auras of those around him, he can judge from what it shows him how best to deal with them, how to bring out their latent good qualities, how to strengthen their weaknesses, how to repress what is undesirable in their characters.

Again, his power may often enable him to observe something of the processes of nature, to see something of the working of the non-human evolutions which surround us, and thus to acquire very much most valuable knowledge on all kinds of recondite subjects. If he happens to be personally acquainted with some clairvoyant who has been put under regular training, he has, of course, a great advantage, in that he can without difficulty get his visions examined and tested by one upon whom he can rely.

Generally speaking, then, the course to be recommended to the untrained clairvoyant is that of exceeding patience and much watchfulness; but with this hope ever before his eyes, that assuredly if he makes good use of the talent entrusted to him, it cannot but attract the favourable notice of those who are ever watching for instruments that can be employed in the great work of evolution, and that when the right time comes, he will receive the training which he so earnestly desires, and will thus be enabled definitely to become one of those who help the world.

QUESTION 7.

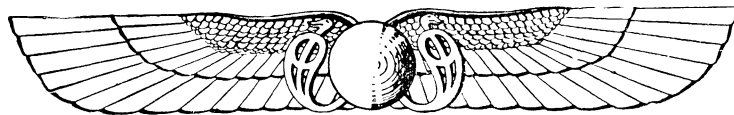
E. R.—Can any interpretation be suggested of the myth of Medusa's head, which turned all who looked at it into stone? Was it a metal disc or other object used for hypnotic purposes?

I. H.—I would suggest that Medusa's head might typify occult knowledge. Medusa is conquered by Perseus, the Divine Principle; her head becomes one of the weapons of Athene, the goddess of Wisdom, and is employed to destroy the evil sea monster, the enemy of Andromeda, who is the human soul.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to English-reading members. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 4, Langham Place, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, OCTOBER 1, 1899.

NO. 3.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

The Reading Room will not be available for use until Saturday, October 7th.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

REMOVAL OF SECTIONAL OFFICES.

On September 14th, Mrs. Besant told me that she had received an offer for the purchase of the lease of 19, Avenue Road, and that the would-be purchaser was anxious to complete the transfer at once, and to have possession at quarter-day. As Mrs. Besant was leaving for India, delay was impossible, and I therefore thought it best to facilitate the transfer, desired by all of us, by vacating at once our rooms in Avenue Road. We have secured very suitable permanent premises in Old Burlington Street, No. 27, but cannot enter into possession until Christmas, and I have therefore secured a temporary habitation on the second floor of 4, Langham Place, where I have rented two good rooms.

The work of the Section therefore will be carried on at that address from the present until further notice.

One room will be used as an office and the other will be a Reading Room for members.

As our occupation of these premises is merely temporary, it has been decided to warehouse the Reference Library, but the books belonging to the Lending Library will be placed in the Reading Room and arrangements have been made whereby members will be allowed to use this Library for reference purposes without charge. Magazines will also be found in this room.

The Reading Room will be open to members daily, Sundays excepted, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. On Sundays it will be open from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. The work of the Section will be carried on as usual at 4, Langham Place, and as it is of the utmost importance that it should in no way suffer in consequence of the changes that are taking place, it is hoped that those who have so kindly given their services in the past at Avenue Road will make it a point to continue to do so at our new address.

CHANGE OF TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS.

A new telegraphic address has been registered for the Theosophical Society, *viz.*, "Theosophy, London." The old registered address, "Blavatsky, London," will in future be used only by the Eastern School.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to September 20th: B. Hubo (omitted from a previous issue), £1; T. Jackson (monthly), 3s.; E. Outhwaite, 10s.; G. Tubbs, £10; Mrs. Charles Hind, 15s.; Mrs. Evans, £10 10s.; Mrs. Butler, £1 1s.; Hodgson Smith, £5; Miss Grover, 10s.; A. Slee, 2s. 6d.; Miss Shaw, £5; Miss Bowring, £1; W. H. Bean, 5s.; Mrs. Meyerstein, 5s.; Mrs. Nettleton, £1; G. Coates, £1 1s.; Mrs. Hallam, £1; Mrs. Garnet, £5; C. J. Barker, £1; Mrs. Godber, 5s.; J. S. McConechy, £1; W. Kingsland, £5; Miss Woodhead, 10s.; Miss B. M. Young, £1 1s.; Mrs. Cox, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Pearson, 5s.; Miss F. Smith, 5s.; Mrs. Wilkinson, £3; W. Comery, 5s.; A. Haddock, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Atkinson, 5s.; E. Stracey, £3 3s.; Mrs. Kemp-Welch, £1; Miss Richards, 10s.; Miss F. Clough, 5s.; P. Piddian, £1 1s.; W. Froud, £1; Mrs. Besant, £10; T. B. Bolton, £1 1s.; Manchester Lodge, £2; Miss Grant, 5s.; E. M. Thomas, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. Hipp, 5s.; A. Moutrie, 10s.; Mrs. Moutrie, 10s.; Mr. and Mrs. Dawson, 4s.; Miss H. Farra, 5s.; J. T. Perry, 10s.; Mrs. Abel, 10s.; Anon., £1; A. F., 10s.; B. P. Matthews, 5s.; W. B. F., 2s.; Miss Bradlaugh, 2s. 6d.; O. Lowe, 3s. Total: £82 10s.

Section Reference Library.

The books forming this Library are temporarily warehoused until the new Sectional premises, 27, Old Burlington Street, are available. In the meantime a Reading Room is open for the use of members at 4, Langham Place, W.

The following books have been received and are acknowledged with thanks: *The Story of the Great War, some Lessons from the Mahābhārata*, Annie Besant, Benares, 1899; *Dharma*, Annie Besant, Theosophical Publishing Society, 1899; *Bostan* (the Garden), Persian, Saadi; *Anwar-i-Suheli*, Persian; *Burtau-i-Hikmat* (Bouquet of Wisdom), Persian; *Plato and the other Companions of Sokrates*, George Grote, F.R.S., 3 vols., second edition, London, 1867; *Hindu Theism: A Defence and Exposition*, Sitanath Pattvabhushau, Calcutta, 1898; *Nachricht von des Verüchtigten Cagliostro Aufenthalte in Mitam im Jahre 1779*, Berlin, 1787; *Scrutinium Chymicum per oculos et intellectui*, Michaelis Majeri, Francofurti, 1687; *Texte u. Untersuchungen*, N. F., III. 3-4: *Christusbilder untersuchungen zur Christlichen Legende*, Ernst von Dobschütz, II., Leipzig, 1899; N. F., IV. 2: *Text Kritik der vier Evangelien*, D. Bernhard Weiss, Leipzig, 1899; *La Survie, sa Réalité, sa Manifestation, sa Philosophie*, Preface de Camille Flammarion, Paris, 1897; *Un Cas de Dématerialisation partielle du corps d'un Médium*, M. A. Aksakow, Paris, 1896; *The Cathedral Builders, the Story of a Great Masonic Guild*, Leader Scott, London, 1899; *An Introduction to Theosophy*, H. Arthur Wilson, 1899; *The Alleged Haunting of B. House*, edited by A. Goodrich-Freer (Miss X.) and John, Marquis of Bute, London, Redway, 1899; *Crata Repoa, oder Einweihungen in der alten geheimen Gesellschaft der Egyptischen Priester*, 1785; *Der Teufel in Wien, Eine nächtliche Fantasie*, Von Salzmann, Wien, 1783; *Neues Taschenbuch für Freymaurer auf das Jahr 1801*, Rostock; *Aurea Catena Homerii: Eine Beschreibung von dem Ursprung der Natur und natürlichen Dinge*, Jena, 1757; *Das neueste Gespräch in dem Reiche derer Lebendigen, zwischen dem Herrenhulischen Herrn Grafen von Winzendorff und einem Freymaurer*, Frankfort u. Leipzig, 1741; *Ueber die Alten und Neuen Mysterien*, Berlin, 1782; *Tractatus Posthumus sive Ulysses*, Fraternitate Rosæ Crucis, Frankfurt, 1624; *Egypt Exploration Fund Publications*, 1892-98.

ANNIE J. WILLSON, *Librarian*.

Theosophical Lending Library.

Subscribers to the Library are requested to note that the Library offices have been removed to temporary premises at 4, Langham Place, W. (next door to the offices of the Theosophical Publishing Society and two doors from Queen's Hall). Books can be exchanged on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, between the hours of 2.30 and 6 p.m.

LILIAN LLOYD, *Librarian*.

"Secret Doctrine" Correspondence Class.

Until further notice all communications respecting this class should be sent to Miss Lloyd, 4, Langham Place, W.

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley.

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley has left England and will remain for some time on the Continent to assist in Theosophical work there. Her address is now 31, Via Lombardia, Rome, Italy.

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays, at 4, Langham Place, W.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on alternate Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings at the Commercial Hotel, Westgate, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at the Queen's Hotel, on alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 3rd, 17th, and 31st. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m. for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*: Oct. 8th and 22nd. On Oct. 6th Mr. Mead will give a lecture at the Hannah More Hall, Park Street, entitled *Round the Cradle of Christendom*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.; Oct. 24th, *Renunciation*, G. L. Simpson. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m., Oct. 13th and 27th, and by appointment.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at Holton's Hotel, Glassford Street, on Sundays, at 11.30 a.m.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings at 12, Wartenau, on Thursdays at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Vegetarian Restaurant, 6, Alsterthor, on Wednesdays: Oct. 11th, *Reincarnation, its Necessity and Reality*, B. Hubo. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Oct. 1st, *God, Man and the Devil*, Miss

Shaw; Oct. 8th, *Realisable and Unrealisable Ideals*, Hodgson Smith; Oct. 15th, *Illusion and Reality*, Miss Ward; Oct. 22nd, *Into a Larger Room*, Mrs. Bell; Oct. 29th, *Reincarnation*, C. N. Goode. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 8 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings by arrangement. For information apply to H. E. Nichol, 56, Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 10, Eldon Terrace, and on Fridays at 6, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton, for the study of Plato. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 9, Winstanley Terrace, Headingley, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. For information as to meetings, etc., apply to the Corresponding Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hanover Square, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Oct. 5th, *Apollonius of Tyana, I.*, G. R. S. Mead; Oct. 12th, *The Natural Law of Spiritual Evolution*, W. Kingsland; Oct. 19th, Annual Business Meeting (for members only); Oct. 26th, *The Vedas as regarded by the orthodox Hindu*, J. C. Chatterji.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: Sep. 11th, *Hindu Morals and Ideals*, B. Keightley; Sep. 25th, *Self-Control*, Alan Leo. On Sep. 18th, class for study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: Oct. 6th, *Psychic Powers among Savage Tribes*, Mrs. Hooper; Oct. 13th, *Chemical Parallels*, G. Dyne; Oct. 20th, *Persian Mysticism*, J. M. Watkins; Oct. 27th, *The Vedas as regarded by the orthodox Hindu*, J. C. Chatterji.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m.

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at the Oxford Temperance Hotel, St. James' Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meeting at the Vegetarisches Speischaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

Blavatsky Lodge.

After a month's pause, the Lodge re-opened on September 7th, when its members had the great privilege of hearing a lecture by Mrs. Besant on the difficult subject of Karma. The title chosen by Mrs. Besant was "Some obscure Problems in Karma," and many were the dark places in the minds of her hearers which she illuminated ere she had finished speaking. Among many other points touched upon Mrs. Besant laid great stress upon the distinction between evitable and inevitable actions, and explained very fully how a man may prepare himself by a series of thoughts in one direction, through, perhaps, one or more lives, for a special act, which he only refrains from doing long before from lack of opportunity. When the opportunity finally comes the man is swept away; and thus it comes about that a man who is really advanced may, under stress of circumstances, be guilty of an action utterly incongruous with the rest of his character. He had made the action inevitable by his thought long previously, so that when the right moment arrives and the "barrier of circumstances breaks down, he performs an action, which may even be a crime, of which he could not have believed himself capable." But lest a partial grasp of the theory should lead to laxity on our part in judging our own actions, Mrs. Besant was careful to point out that an action may always be prevented where there is time to think; it is only when it is done without any opportunity for thought that it is inevitable.

Mrs. Besant raised so many interesting and important points in the course of this lecture that in response to a suggestion from Mr. Mead she promised to take up a few of them on the following Thursday instead of the subject which was put down for her. This she did, on September 14th; and in this her last lecture in the Hall at 19, Avenue Road, as on countless former occa-

sions, she gave to all her hearers sufficient teaching to live by during the long months of her absence. For indeed, it is never teaching that we have lacked, but only the will and the determination to put it into practice.

On Thursday evening, September 21st, the published syllabus was suspended, and a very full meeting was held, at which members bade farewell to the old Lodge. Speeches were made by Mr. Mead, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, Mr. Cuffe, and Mrs. Besant, and the key-note of each of them was one of confidence that the change will mean only renewed work and greater effort, and that in taking leave of the old quarters, we only cast off a body which has become worn out, and which therefore cramps the growing life within. Mrs. Besant formally closed the Lodge, as she had opened it nine years ago, and in a most impressive and beautiful speech dwelt upon the gratitude which we all owe to H. P. B., after whom the Lodge is named, and upon the fact that though far away from us over here her life is still bound up with the life and work of the Society which she helped to found. In conclusion, Mrs. Besant reminded us that whatever may be the outer changes, the life and energy which have been the cause of every tie still go with us, and will ever increase and deepen as we make ourselves more perfect channels for their working.

The lectures of the Blavatsky Lodge during the next month will be held in the lecture-room of the Zoological Society, 3, Hanover Square, W., at the end of which time it is hoped that a permanent room may be found.

S. MAUD SHARPE,
Hon. Sec.

North of England Federation.

The twenty-second meeting of the North of England Federation was held at Harrogate on July 28th, under the presidency of Mrs. Besant. There was a very large attendance of delegates and members from Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, Baildon, Sheffield, Hull, York, Harrogate and Middlesbrough. The proceedings commenced with discussions on "The State of the Theosophical Society" and "The Influence of Theosophy on Modern Thought." The former subject was introduced by Mr. Hodgson Smith, and the latter by Mr. W. H. Thomas. At the conclusion of the afternoon session the members, on the invitation of the Harrogate Lodge, took tea together in the Arcade Rooms. On re-assembling Mrs. Besant delivered a very earnest and practical address on "Problems of Duty." In connection with the Federation meetings Mrs. Besant lectured on July 28th to the members at the Harrogate Lodge Room on "The Relation of Emotion to Morality." Two public lectures were also delivered by Mrs. Besant in the Town Hall, Harrogate, on Sunday, July 30th. The subjects were, "Man and his Destiny" and "The Higher Stages of Growth." It is expected that

the November Federation meeting will be presided over by Countess Wachtmeister.

W. H. THOMAS,
Secretary.

Hamburg Branch.

Regular meetings are held by the Branch, particulars of which will be found in the Lecture List. On Aug. 25th, Mrs. Leo delivered a much-appreciated lecture on "Devotion." On Sept. 13th a public meeting was held, at which a translation of a lecture by Mrs. Besant, "Theosophy and Christianity," was read, and Mr. Hubo afterwards opened a discussion on the subject and gave explanations of certain difficulties.

Italian Lending Libraries.

Sojourners in Italy this winter may find it convenient to know that there is a selection of Theosophical literature in the following lending libraries: Nice, Galignani's; Bordighera, The Public Library; San Remo, The Book Club; and at Florence at Vieusseux's.

Athene Branch, Bradford.

The annual meeting of this Branch was held on Wednesday, Sept. 13th.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President and Treasurer, Mr. H. Saville; Secretary, Miss R. H. Atkins; Auditor, Mr. G. Bligh.

R. H. ATKINS,
Secretary.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 8.

T. P.—What special course of diet and regimen may be recommended as most favourable to the building up of a healthy astral body in one who is actively engaged in business affairs?

A. P. S.—About nothing which touches Theosophy do opinions differ more widely than on this subject. Putting out of the question all thoughts concerning excess in gluttony or drunkenness—people liable to err in that way do not come within the scope of our deliberations—my belief is that no course of diet has any effect or bearing on the constitution of the astral body one way or the other, nor on the development of psychic faculties. People actively engaged in business will be wise to eat and drink whatever promotes their physical health, and for the rest to feel sure that if their minds are nourished on healthy food, if they have lofty purposes in view and an intelligent understanding of the evolution to which they belong, a healthy astral body and higher vehicles

still, will undoubtedly be theirs in due course of time, though not necessarily in the current life.

Closely related to this question another follows in reference to smoking. My view, based on a tolerably long experience, is that tobacco, in reasonable quantity, has no bad effect on the physical vehicle of man, while to me the notion that it can have any effect whatever on higher vehicles, appears the acme of absurdity. But as for smoking considered in the light of a habit—and one says the same of any other habit—the sound doctrine was, I think, expressed once by a friend in my hearing who said: “If I found I had a habit that I could not give up, I would give it up next day!”

K. B.—If it were possible to give T. P. a cut-and-dried answer applicable to the case of all “actively engaged in business affairs” how joyfully would that answer be welcomed. But it is as difficult to prescribe a regimen for the astral dyspeptic as for the physical. There is nothing intrinsically virtuous in abstaining from meat or wine, neither is there anything intrinsically wrong in partaking of them. Broadly speaking, the more simple and refined the food with which we repair the waste of our bodies, the fewer coarse influences shall we have to withstand and eliminate. But we of the West have been placed by kârmic necessity in a climate where more heat-giving food is required to maintain a condition of active efficiency than is the case with those born in countries where the direct action of the sun vivifies and warms. It would be difficult to get comfortably through an English winter clad in the light muslins of India, and it is equally difficult to satisfy our hunger with a diet of rice and clarified butter. T. P. will find, as all those who have entered seriously on the struggle towards the higher life have found before him, that he is himself the best judge in such matters. Circumstances and surroundings differ in each individual case. Much harm has been done by over-zealous beginners running away with the idea that the ordinary fare of an English household is to be avoided at any cost; and the cost has frequently been the estrangement of the student from the family circle, the setting up of constant petty irritations and difficulties over meals and the branding of the budding Theosophist as a “crank,” thus stopping for the time being the action of those harmonious currents which might have attracted and swept onwards some other members of the family.

In many cases the real self-sacrifice would be the eating of an un-appetising beef-steak to avoid giving trouble or attracting attention. And it is self-sacrifice which is the cause of all true growth, whether astral or spiritual.

Did not a Divine Teacher tell his disciples when the same question disturbed and puzzled them 2000 years ago that it is not what enters, but what comes out of his mouth which defiles a man?

W. H. T.—If the building of a “healthy astral

body” were mainly a question of diet and regimen the aspirant would have a comparatively light task before him, but it is surely the regulation of the desire nature by the mind that is of first and most vital importance. When this is accomplished the demand for the coarser constituents of food ceases and only those parts are assimilated which are congenial to the requirements of the physical body. The kind of food necessary for the healthy working of the physical body would naturally depend upon its constitution, so that food suitable for one person would be injurious to the health of another. It is, I think, impossible to construct a Theosophical *menu* that would suit all constitutions, but each person from a knowledge of the peculiarities of his own digestive organism should choose just those foods which he finds from experience keep his body in a healthy state, avoiding, of course, those which his reason and conscience tell him should be avoided. Between a healthy body and a healthy mind “the astral” must perforce be healthy too. The following precept from the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* might also be kept in mind: “Verily Yoga is not for him who eateth too much nor who abstaineth to excess, nor who is addicted to too much sleep, or even to wakefulness. The Yoga that is pain destroying is for him who is regulated in eating and amusement, regulated in performing actions, regulated in sleeping and waking.”

C. W. L.—This question has so often been answered, both implicitly and explicitly, in Theosophical literature, that it seems strange that any student should need to ask it now. A reference to any of the more elementary works, such as *The Ancient Wisdom* or *Man and His Bodies*, would have saved our querent the trouble of writing. It has frequently been explained that the astral body is acted upon directly by the desires and passions which a man allows to take hold of his nature, and indirectly by the condition of the mental and physical bodies which are so closely related to it. Of these two influences that of the mental body is much the more powerful, and the thoughts in which a man habitually indulges affect his astral body almost as much as they do that with which they are more closely connected.

The influence of the physical body, however, is also very great and by no means to be neglected by any one who is at all in earnest in his desire for progress; and this is evidently the part of the work that the questioner has specially in mind. The rules are simple enough, and have been frequently stated. All that is necessary is to keep the body pure and clean, uncontaminated by anything that coarsens or degrades it, as, for example, alcohol, meat, opium, haschish or tobacco would do.

Even so modest a demand as this is sometimes considered too great by men who are not yet prepared to throw themselves whole-heartedly into the life which occultism prescribes; but we are writing here only for students who mean business, and consequently do not hesitate to check their physical desires when they find them delaying

their advance. That all these things have that effect in various degrees cannot be doubted by anyone who has ever seen astral bodies sufficiently clearly to compare one with another. Nor does the knowledge that this is so depend upon the unsupported statements of modern clairvoyants; the ancient teaching has always enjoined abstinence at any rate from meat and alcohol, and Zoroastrianism forbids tobacco also. But, indeed, when once the cleaner life is suggested, it needs no arguments to recommend it; its advantages are so obvious that it appeals at once to the student's common-sense.

These undeniable facts must not, however, discourage those few (and they are *very* few) who, with the best will in the world, find after repeated and prolonged trials that their physical bodies cannot be kept in reasonable health without the use of some of these pernicious stimulants. Such persons are the victims of a very undesirable heredity; but the position in which they find themselves is after all kârmic, and there is nothing to be done but make the best of an unfortunate situation, and minimize the inevitable evil as far as possible. Such a man, doing the best that is within his power, and yielding only when he is absolutely compelled to do so, will assuredly find himself in his next incarnation furnished with a more useful and creditable physical body, in which he will be able to make outward purity of vehicle correspond with inward purity of spirit.

QUESTION 9.

C. S. P.—*What is the explanation of "the sign of the prophet Jonas" in the following passage from Matthew?*

"38. Then certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

"39. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.

"40. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Matthew xii.

G. R. S. M.—The word *σημεῖον*, translated by "sign" in the Authorised Version, means a "marvellous happening" and also a "symbol" or "figure." If we have here an authentic Saying of the Christ, we are to understand that the leaders of the orthodox Jews demanded from the Master a "sign," that is to say, a marvellous work or phenomenon. The Master, however, though he performed many marvellous deeds for others, refused to gratify their curiosity and submit to a "test"; nevertheless he answered them "darkly," if they could receive it. You know, he said, the story of Jonah, how Jonah was three days and three nights in the monster's belly, so is it with the "Son of Man." That should be

"sign" enough for you, if you can understand your own Scripture.

Now Jonah himself (ii. 2). calls the belly of the sea monster, the "belly of Hades." Moreover, Hades was called "Leviathan" by some of the Gnostic Schools (see the Diagram of the so-called Ophites in Origen's *Against Celsus*). The "Son of Man" was also the technical Gnostic term for the perfect man or Christ, who has to pass three days and three nights in Hades, the Unseen World, before coming forth into the Light.

An interesting point is the play on the word "sign." It is used in one sense by the Jewish doctors and in another by the Master. I do not know whether any Hebrew word would convey the double meaning; if not, it is evidence that this Saying was originally written in Greek.

QUESTION 10.

S. A. N.—*Surely we must admit that in this life it is a fact that through self-sacrifice we do interfere with the justice of karma. If a spendthrift gets his debts paid for him, is not that portion of his karma removed?*

Again, where karma comes in the form of suffering caused to us by others—are these others not fulfilling Law by causing the suffering, and yet incurring karma for themselves? It is like "it must needs be that offences come, but woe to him by whom they come."

A. A. W.—The distinction the querist misses is that though in the supposed case we do interfere with the *action* of karma, we do not (in his words) interfere with its *justice*. If you pay your spendthrift's debts, then of two things one—either his debt to karma has been already exhausted, and you are the kârmic agent to remove the infliction—no more; or else it has not, in which case you take away the means by which he was paying it, and the Lords of Karma will have to find a new infliction to replace that you have prematurely removed. You have not, in this last case, paid his debt to karma, only that to his creditors, which is quite another thing, don't you see? And don't fancy you have helped him to cheat karma; the debt must be paid—here or hereafter. You have done a kind action and will have your kârmic reward for that; but he stands just where he was—you have done nothing for him.

Similarly, we may put your second case even more forcibly. You may cause a man suffering, and thereby do him good—all the good possible to him—get his evil karma fully cleared away, and yet have no reward—rather incur a heavy, evil karma of your own. You meant to hurt him and did hurt him, and that is all you are concerned with. You were the agent of karma for his good, but karma did not *make* you hurt him. If you had not done it you would have saved your soul, and karma would not have failed in its purpose by your default—it would have been done some other way, that is all. I don't see any puzzlement about all this—it seems to me quite clear, and quite just.

S. M. S.—Almost the whole of the difficulty which now seems to be arising with regard to karma is due, I think, to the fact that we take our own knowledge too much for granted. We think we know far more of this mighty and infinite law than we really do; we are sometimes apt to think we have pierced into its heart when we have barely touched the fringe of its outermost garment. It is here that the danger of a little knowledge comes in; quite naturally we do not realise our ignorance, and can hardly help imposing our own limitations upon the great conceptions and laws that we seek to understand. Where ignorance is complete there is satisfaction; where knowledge is perfect there is satisfaction too; but anywhere between these two extremes there must be struggle and effort and frustration and the sense of limitation. It could not be otherwise.

The slow-crawling and over-burdened snail, having climbed laboriously over a wall and toiled across a garden, on meeting some other obstacle may imagine, perhaps, that it has reached the limit of the universe, and is content. We are not quite so easily satisfied, but we do somewhat resemble the snail. After much seeking we find at last a theory which seems for the time to solve every problem and to bring us peace. We grasp at it, we rejoice in it, and hold it as our most precious treasure. After a while doubts begin to creep in, we find ourselves beginning to wonder and question; our peace for the time has gone.

If we were wise we should take this as a hopeful sign, as an indication of a slightly clearer recognition of limitations—one of the most necessary qualifications for the bestowal of further knowledge. And after all, even in the snail the instinct for roaming presently re-awakes, and it finds itself compelled to begin its toilsome journey again.

There are very, very few among us who are able to answer queries as to the detailed working of karma, if, indeed, there are any. What we have been given is a clue as to its general working, information more than sufficient to enable us to guide and control our individual lives. And for this inestimable boon we never can be too grateful. In the light of this knowledge it ought at least to be clear that if karma be the expression of Law, of the Divine Will—the last expression, as we see it in its working here—then it must be utterly impossible to talk of any interference with its justice. What *seems to us* to be injustice in its working, or interference on our part, is a very different thing, and when we have climbed our next wall, of whose existence we may not even at present be conscious, we shall see our error, at least to a small extent.

But one seems to discern beneath this apparent cavilling at karma, a fear lest in the general scheme of things there be no room for what we commonly call self-sacrifice. We each of us, however small be our experience, *know* that any such fear is groundless, that the instinct which leads us to sacrifice our own interests for those of another is the noblest and the nearest the divine of any that

we have or ever can have. Moreover, the unseen and permanent results of such sacrifice will far outweigh any so-called “bad karma” which may accrue from mistaken method, either to the person who makes the sacrifice or to him for whom the sacrifice is made.

Let us have the faith and the courage to trust our highest instincts in the face of opposition, in the face even of ridicule, which is the weapon before which so many of us go down, confident that whatever qualities appear to us now to be beautiful or noble or glorious are but as shadows, and are not to be compared with the beauty that will be revealed as the Self that is in each of us gradually unfolds.

QUESTION II.

M. P.—As a worker in the cause of vegetarianism I am constantly confronted with the statement that the Buddha ate meat and even died through eating it; what is the real interpretation of the passage which is supposed to convey this extraordinary idea?

J. C. C.—This question has already appeared in THE VĀHAN and was answered by C. W. L., but I should like also to say a few words on it. Although I can bring the questioner no nearer to the solution of the puzzle, I may be able to help him a little.

The word in the *Mahā-Parinirvāṇa-Sūtra* (of the Pāli canon) which is translated by most of the European scholars by “dried boar’s flesh,” is “Sūkara-maddava.” Now I fail absolutely to see how Sūkara-maddava can mean “dried boar’s flesh.” No doubt the first part of the word “Sūkara” means “boar.” But “maddava,” which is in all likelihood derived from the Sanskrit “mārdava,” does *not*, as far as I know, mean flesh, much less “dried flesh.” I shall be very glad if some one can show me an application of “maddava” in the sense of “dried flesh” in Pāli literature. “Mārdava,” and therefore its Pāli form “maddava,” can only mean, at least to my mind until the case is proved otherwise, mildness, softness, gentleness, and so on.

The word Sūkara we must remember means also a kind of plant.

Then there are words beginning with Sūkara, such as Sūkara-krānta (a plant used for medicinal purposes), Sūkara-kanda and so on—words which apparently have nothing to do with a boar.

Considering all this I am inclined to think that Sūkara-maddava probably means a kind of plant. That it does not mean “dried boar’s flesh” is almost certain, for, I repeat, I have never heard even of the “maddava” used in the sense of flesh, fresh or dried.

Apart from all this, there is another side to the question. The word occurs in a passage which must have struck every one who has read it as most mysterious, if nothing else. For we read that when Buddha arrived at the house of Chunda, whose guest He was, He said to him:

“O Chunda, what you have prepared of Sūkara-maddava, with that serve me; whatever else

you have prepared of soft and hard food, with that serve this body of Bhikṣhus.”

Then when Chunda gave Him some of his mysterious “Sūkara-maddava” the Lord again spoke to him, saying :

“O Chunda, whatever you have left of Sūkara-maddava bury that in a hole. I do not see, O Chunda, anyone besides the Tathāgata, either in the world of Gods, Māra or Brahman, or among the people in the world of Shramaṇa, Brāhmaṇa, Gods and men, by whom this (Sūkara-maddava) when eaten can become thoroughly assimilated.” (*Dīgha Nikāya*, vol. ii. *Mahā-Parinibbāna-Sutta*, pp. 159-160. King of Siam’s Ed.)

Now, if Sūkara-maddava be nothing more than “dried boar’s flesh,” as our scholars in the Occident would have us believe, what is the meaning of this statement of the Buddha, and why should Chunda bury the remaining food in a hole? There must be some underlying meaning in it, although we do not know what that meaning is.

Even if we were to admit that “dried boar’s flesh” was really the meaning of “Sūkara-maddava,” yet the above passage with the context would be enough, I believe, to show that there is in all likelihood an allegorical and mystical meaning of the puzzling term. But as no one has yet succeeded in proving that it does mean “boar’s flesh” we can safely say that the idea is based on a misunderstanding and consequent mis-translation.

QUESTION 12.

X.—*What re-awakens the desire for rebirth in the soul in Devachan? Do the thought images which surround it, when it passes into Devachan, gradually grow fainter and finally disappear?*

B. K.—Just as there is the great pulsation of the One Life—the out-breathing and in-breathing of the universe, so also is there an ebb and flow, an out-breathing and an in-drawing of every separated life into which the One Life becomes differentiated. In each case this forthgoing and withdrawing of life starts from whatever may be, at the particular stage of evolution in question, its (relatively) permanent centre. Thus in the case of the evolving group-soul of the animal kingdom, it is the group-soul which constitutes the relatively permanent centre from which is put forth the life which ensouls a given physical animal form, and into which that life is again drawn back when the time comes for that physical form to break up. In man it is the causal body which forms this permanent centre, and it is this same universal law of out-breathing and in-breathing which determines the putting forth of the life of the ego into incarnation and its withdrawal in due course of time. The awakening of the desire for rebirth is the aspect in the consciousness of the ego which this universal law assumes, and while in the earlier human stages the putting forth of the life of the ego into incarnation is an instinctive, barely conscious process effected by the impulse of the great

law rather than by any conscious desire or choice on the part of the individual, this state of things changes more and more as evolution proceeds and self-determination is evolved, until, while still being guided by the one Law—since man’s inmost essence is that Law—the conscious desire and choice of the individual acquire an ever greater importance in determining in detail its working out.

As the life ebbs back into the ego from the mental body the vividness of consciousness in that body naturally lessens, and, *pari passu*, the thought forms, which its activity had held in manifestation, gradually fade out and disappear, as, indeed, was indicated in one of the earlier letters of the Master K. H., which the student will find in *The Occult World*.

QUESTION 13.

C. E. G.—*Is Anupādaka the same as the Sanskrit term Anutpādaka?*

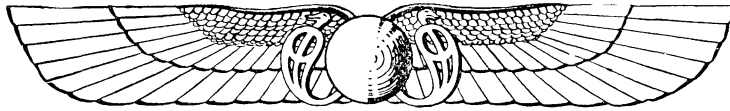
J. C. C.—The word *Anupādaka*, which Madame Blavatsky uses in her *Secret Doctrine*, and is also used by Mrs. Besant in her *Evolution of Life and Form* as the name of the second Tattva, is of exceedingly doubtful origin. The word is Sanskrit, that is to say, it is meant to be Sanskrit and not a Pāli form, as may at first appear, of *Anutpādaka*, which in Pāli will be *Anuppādaka*. As far as I can make out *Anupādaka* is not to be found in any of the known books in *pure* Sanskrit, *i.e.*, the Pāṇinian and Vaidik Sanskrit of the standard books. In all likelihood it is to be found in books written and circulated in Nepāl and the surrounding countries. It is there that we find a rich literature, Hindu and Buddhistic, in which there are words which are of a puzzling nature. We may take *Anupādhisheṣha*, for example. This word, used in the so-called Northern Buddhist books, written in Sanskrit, really corresponds to *Anupādīsisa* of the Southern or Pāli canon. Therefore, we cannot derive *Anupādhisheṣha* from the root *dhā*, but we must trace it to *dā*, accounting for the anomaly as best we can.

As the literature of Nepāl and the neighbouring regions is still almost unknown as to its details and extent, no one can reasonably declare that H. P. B. coined the word, or that it is to be found nowhere in Oriental Philosophy. For the present all we can say is that in all likelihood *Anupādaka* is a different word from *Anutpādaka* or *Anūtpādaka*, having probably nothing to do with either.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to English-reading members. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 4, Langham Place, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1, 1899.

NO. 4.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

APPEAL OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

In response to the appeal for promises of donations issued by the Executive Committee in September, up to October 20th the total sum of £579 has been promised annually by 243 members.

The total promised may be considered as satisfactory, and the Executive Committee beg to tender their thanks to those who have so kindly and generously responded.

It is manifest, however, that donations in addition to those specifically promised will be necessary if an adequate income is to be provided. It is therefore to be hoped that this fact will be borne in mind and possibly many of those members who have not cared definitely to promise any sum will see their way to contribute from time to time.

As it may be interesting to the members to see how this total of £579 is made up, a list of contributors up to October 20th, under initials, is added.

With regard to the payment of the sums promised, while it is hoped that members will suit their own convenience as to the date of payment, making one payment or several, as they prefer, nevertheless, the earlier the amounts can be paid in the current year the better, in view of the extra strain on the finances owing to the removal and settling into new premises.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

E. A., 10s.; J. A., £5; J. A., 5s.; J. R. A., £3; M. A., £1 1s.; R. H. A., £1 5s.; W. A. A., £1; I. F. B., 5s.; M. A. B., £2 2s.; W. H. B., £1 1s.; E. B., 5s.; E. H. B., 10s.; J. B., 15s.; F. L. B., £1; E. A. B., £12; H. B., £2; M. C. B., £5; I. B., £5; K. B., £1; A. G. B., £2; C. J. B., £1; A. B., £10; F. J. B., 15s.; K. B., 15s.; T.

B. B., £3 3s.; E. B., 2s. 6d.; H. B., £2; G. C. B., £1 1s.; M. B., 16s.; M. C., 10s.; L. E. C., £1; J. D. C., £6 6s.; A. C., £2 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. C., £1 10s.; J. W. C., 5s.; S. C., £2; C. C., £5; R. C., £25; E. J. C., £1 1s.; A. C., £1; F. C., 5s.; G. C., £1 1s.; W. C., 5s.; M. E. L. C., 2s. 6d.; O. C., £12; W. D., 5s.; E. P. D., 10s.; W. B. D., £1; K. and H. D., £2 2s.; A. D., 7s.; C. D., £2 2s.; E. D., £2; M. S. D., £2 2s.; E. J. D., 15s.; J. D., 5s.; E. E., 10s.; C. A. E., £10 10s.; H. F., 5s.; E. P. F., £2 10s.; A. F. F., £1 10s.; E. E. F., 5s.; E. F., 10s.; W. E. F., £1; W. H. G., 15s.; E. J. G., £1 1s.; S. E. G., £1; Mr. and Mrs. G., £1; E. G., £1; M. C. G., £1 1s.; S. G., £3 3s.; E. M. G., £1; H. S. G., £3; W. M. G., 5s.; M. E. G., £1; N. G., £5 5s.; S. E. G., 2s. 6d.; J. G., 5s.; M. A. L. G., 5s.; M. G., 10s.; M. H., £1 1s.; E. H., 10s.; M. H., £1; A. H., £1 1s.; E. M. H., £2 15s.; A. and C. H., 5s.; A. T. H., £1; I. H., £5; Hampstead Lodge, £10 10s.; H. B. H., 2s. 6d.; E. H., £1; S. H., 5s.; J. H., 10s.; F. A. H., 10s. 6d.; M. R. H., 5s.; E. and E. H., £1; R. A. H., £1; V. M. J. H., £2 2s.; M. H., £1 1s.; F. H., 10s.; A. H., 5s.; J. E. H., £5; F. J. H., 10s.; C. B. J., £6; T. J., £2 2s.; T. D. J., 10s.; L. J., 5s.; L. S. J., 10s.; A. E. J., 5s.; T. J., 15s.; F. J. J., £1; M. S. J., 10s. 6d.; C. W. J., 10s.; F. K., £20; E. H. K., £1 1s.; C. S. K., 10s.; A. K., £1 1s.; K. K., £2 2s.; H. M. K., 5s.; M. K.-W., £1; W. K., £5; B. K., £10; A. L., £2; M. H. L., £5; W. B. L. and E. C. L., £10 10s.; N. L., £1; W. J. L., £20; M. L., £2; J. L., £3; O. L., 3s.; A. McD., £5; A. A. M., 5s.; M. E. McL., 10s.; H. de C. M., £2; A. A. McM., 5s.; E. de M. M., £1 1s.; C. F. de M. M., £1 1s.; A. M., 12s.; E. M. M., £4; J. M., 6s.; G. R. S. M., £2 2s.; L. M. M., £2 2s.; G. M., 5s.; R. C. M., £3 3s.; H. M., £1 1s.; E. M., £1; J. S. McC., £1; A. E. M., 5s.; E. M., £1 1s.; C. M., £12; M. M., 10s.; C. M., 5s.; G. H. M., £5 5s.; A. G. M., 10s.; A. M., 10s.; B. P. M., £3; M. A. N., £1 1s.; P. W. G. N., £2 2s.; M. A. N., 10s.; Mr. and

Mrs. N., £5; E. N., £1; B. O., £1; I. C. O., £1; E. O., 10s.; E. O., 5s.; A. A. de P., £2 2s.; A. P., 10s.; E. P., £1; C. L. P., £10; F. S. P. T., £2; T. P., £1 1s.; C. L. P., £1 1s.; A. C. P., £24; D. J. P., £5; C. E. P., 5s.; J. T. P., 10s.; P. P., £1 1s.; B. L., 14s.; J. Q., £1; A. J. V. R., £3 3s.; H. R., £1; C. R., £1 10s.; M. R., £1; F. M. M. R., £1; H. S., £2 2s.; K. S., £1 1s.; G. S., £5; J. C. S., £1 1s.; G. L. S., 10s.; W. S. E., £2; T. O. S., £1; A. M. S., £1 1s.; W. S., 5s.; H. M. S., £1 1s.; A. H. S., £1 1s.; M. S., 12s.; A. F. S., £1; W. H. S., £1 1s.; F. W. S., £1; A. S., 15s.; L. S., £5; A. S., 2s. 6d.; H. S., £5; F. S., 5s.; M. A. C. T., £1; M. E. T., 10s. 6d.; E. T., £4; A. T., 10s.; I. T., £4; P. T., £2 2s.; A. E. T., £1 1s.; V. T., £30; W. H. T., £5; E. M. T., 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. T., £10; W. V., £12 12s.; A. W., 10s.; E. W., £2 2s.; A. H. W., £3 3s.; H. S. W., 10s.; H. W., £2 2s.; R. W., 5s.; E. W., £2; M. E. W., 10s.; C. B. W., 10s.; A. W., £1; L. W., £1; L. W., £2; F. E. W., £1; H. S. W., 10s.; W. C. W., 5s.; W. G. W., 5s.; M. A. W., £1 1s.; E. W., £30; M. W., £1; A. B. W., 10s.; B. M. Y., £1 1s.
Total £579 8s.

CHANGE OF TREASURERSHIP.

Mr. Herbert Burrows having notified that owing to pressure of other work he is reluctantly compelled to resign his post as Treasurer to the Section, it became necessary for the Executive Committee to appoint a treasurer to succeed him.

The following Resolutions have been passed by the Executive Committee, and are published for information:

Resolution I.

“Mr. Herbert Burrows having tendered his resignation of the post of Treasurer of the European Section, it is hereby resolved that his resignation be accepted as from October 31st next, and that Captain W. B. Lauder be appointed Treasurer from that date.”

Resolution II.

“Resolved that the thanks of the Committee be tendered to Mr. Herbert Burrows for having performed the duties of Treasurer since May 1st, 1898.”

While losing Mr. Burrows in an official capacity it is a source of satisfaction to know that we can still reckon on having the benefit of his counsel and advice in all matters relating to the well-being of the Section or the progress of the work.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS.

The new Telegraphic address of the European Section is now “Theosoph, London.” The attention of readers is particularly called to the fact that the word is *not* “Theosophy.” This was

proposed, but could not be registered owing to another registered address resembling it too closely.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

LETTER FROM THE FRENCH SECTION.

The following is a translation of a letter received by me from Dr. Pascal, the General Secretary of the French Section. The subscriptions which had been paid to the European Section by members of the new Section, for the current year, were remitted to the French Section.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

116, RUE ST. DOMINIQUE, PARIS.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of the sum of £14 17s. 6d., the amount of the subscriptions (2s. 6d.) sent in May, 1899, by the French members to the European Section, and remitted by it to its young sister, the French Section, in order to aid its first steps.

I am the interpreter of all the members of our Section in asking THE VÂHAN to transmit to our brothers on the other side of the Channel, for their affectionate attention, the expression of our gratitude and our fraternal sentiments.

TH. PASCAL,
General Secretary of the French Section.

LETTER FROM THE DUTCH SECTION.

The following letter has been received by me from the General Secretary of the Dutch Section.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

In consequence of a resolution passed at our Third Annual Convention, I have much pleasure in conveying to you our hearty thanks for the kind wishes you send us in regard to our work.

May the mutual good feeling that exists between the Sections grow and be further strengthened. We can never enough appreciate the expression of love and harmony of our fellow workers.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Fraternally yours,
W. B. FRICKE,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to October 20th: T. J., 3s.; S. E. G., 2s. 6d.; B. P. M., 10s.; M. A. W., £1 1s.; S. B., £1; M. W., £1; C. M., £12; F. W. S., £1; E. M., £1 1s.; F. C., £1; A. E. M., 5s.; E. A. B., £1; Mrs. and Miss R., £3 3s.; W. H. T., £5; K. E. B., 15s.; O. C., £6; T. W. W., 5s.; D. P., £5; K.,

£1; J. D., 5s.; M. A. N., 10s.; G. M., £5. 5s.; A. H., £1; A. T. H., £1; C. A. E., £300; J. B., £10; E. O., 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. D., 5s.; H. B., £1; J. P., 14s. 3d.; F. J. B., 15s.; A. C., £1; A. S., 15s.; M. M., 10s. Total: £364 9s. 9d.

In future all donations will be acknowledged under initials.

Section Reference Library.

The Reading Room at 4, Langham Place is open on week-days from 2 to 9 p.m., except on Thursdays when it closes at 7.30 p.m. On Sundays it is open from 3.30 to 9 p.m. Attention is called to the change of time.

The following books have been received, and are now acknowledged with thanks: *The Great Law, A Study of Religious Origins and of the Unity Underlying Them*, W. Williamson, London, 1899; *Demon Possession and Allied Themes, being an inductive Study of Phenomena of our own Times*, the Rev. J. L. Nevins, D.D., London, 1897; *Texte und Untersuchungen: Das Sogenannte Religions-gespräch am Hof der Sasaniden*, herausgegeben von Eduard Bratke, *Drei wenig-beachtete Cyprianische Schriften und die "Acta Pauli,"* D. Adolf Harnack.

A. J. WILLSON, Librarian.

New Centre.

A centre has been formed at Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, the Secretary of which is Mr. Alfred Moutrie, Woronora, Leigh-on-Sea.

Theosophical Lending Library.

Subscribers to the Library are requested to note that the Library offices are now in temporary premises, at 4, Langham Place, W. (next door to the offices of the Theosophical Publishing Society and two doors from Queen's Hall). Books can be exchanged on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, between the hours of 2.30 and 6 p.m.

This library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: one month, 1s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 4, Langham Place, W.

LILIAN LLOYD, Librarian.

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays, at 4, Langham Place, W.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on alternate Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings at the Commercial Hotel, Westgate, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at the Queen's Hotel, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: Nov. 21st, *Karma and Justice*, W. E. McFarlane. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m., and by appointment.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at Holton's Hotel, Glassford Street, on Sundays, at 11.30 a.m.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings at 12, Wartenau, on Thursdays at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Vegetarian Restaurant, 6, Alsterthor, on Wednesdays. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Nov. 5th, *War*, Hodgson Smith; Nov. 12th, *Death and Onwards*, Countess Wachtmeister; Nov. 19th, *One Life or Many*, Miss Shaw; Nov. 26th, *Theosophy*, by members. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings by arrangement. For information apply to H. E. Nichol, 56, Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 10, Eldon Terrace, and on Fridays at 6, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton, for the study of Plato. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 9, Winstanley Terrace, Headingley, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. For information as to meetings, etc., apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meet-

ings every Sunday at 7.15 p.m., at the Battersea Free Library: Nov. 5th, *Some Aspects of the Problem of Pain*, Hon. O. Cuffe; Nov. 12th, *Shall we Reform Social Abuses?* Mrs. Hooper; Nov. 19th, *The Incarnations of God*, F. Horne; Nov. 26th, *Humanitarianism in the Light of Theosophy*, Mrs. Mallet. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hanover Square, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Nov. 2nd, *Apollonius of Tyana, II.*, G. R. S. Mead; Nov. 9th, *Karma, the Extent and Limitations of our Knowledge*, A. P. Sinnett; Nov. 16th, *The Use and Development of the Astral Body*, C. W. Leadbeater; Nov. 23rd, *The Pendulum*, M. U. Moore; Nov. 30th, *Romance in Plant Life*, Miss Pope.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: Nov. 6th, *Man and His Bodies*, R. King; Nov. 20th, *The Five Gates and the Narrow Way*, Alan Leo; Nov. 13th and 27th, *The Ancient Wisdom*.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: Nov. 3rd, *The Pendulum*, M. U. Moore; Nov. 10th, *Some Aspects of the Problem of Pain*, Hon. Otway Cuffe; Nov. 17th, *Nineteen Hundred Years Ago and Now*, G. R. S. Mead; Nov. 24th, *The Theosophy of Tolstoi*, Miss E. Mallet.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m.

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 6 p.m., at 31, Via Lombardia.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at the Oxford Temperance Hotel, St. James' Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meeting at the Vegetarisches Speischaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The Vice-President of the Lodge, Mr. G. R. S. Mead, kindly consented to open its series of lectures at the Zoological Society's Hall, Hanover Square, on September 28th, with the subject "Religion and Religions," and members testified to their interest in it, and to their loyalty to the old Lodge in its new quarters, by assembling in force. The following week Mr. Mead again lectured, this time on "Apollonius of Tyana." On this important subject Mr. Mead has been able to gather much information, and his lecture proved of exceeding interest. On October 12th Mr. Kingsland spoke to a nearly full hall, taking for his title "The Natural Law of Spiritual Evolution," and on October 19th the Lodge held its annual business meeting. The number of members who attended fully justified the decision of the Council to fix this meeting for a Thursday, instead of, as heretofore, on another day of the week. There was an attendance of nearly seventy, and a good deal of necessary business was carried through.

The membership of the Lodge now amounts to 250, and the number of those who joined during the year was, up till the end of September, thirty-eight. Mr. Cuffe, who had for long been the Treasurer, found it necessary, owing to his more onerous work of General Secretary of the Section, to give the post of Treasurer of the Lodge into other hands, and on Thursday, Mr. H. de C. Matthews was unanimously elected in his place, while a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Cuffe for his faithful services in the past.

The lectures during November will continue to be held in the Hall of the Zoological Society, 3, Hanover Square, W.

Members are particularly requested to note that the address of the Secretary is 4, Langham Place, W., and *not* 3, Hanover Square.

S. M. S.

North of England Federation.

The quarterly meeting of the above will be held at Harrogate on Saturday, November 11th, under the presidency of Countess Wachtmeister. All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend; the programme of proceedings can be obtained from the undersigned. Countess Wachtmeister will also visit the northern towns for the purpose of giving public lectures, holding drawing-room meetings, and endeavouring generally to arouse public interest in the work of the Society.

W. H. THOMAS, *Hon. Sec.*

Rome Lodge.

A nice flat has been taken for the Rome Lodge, at 7, Via Lombardia, which will be inhabited, after November 1st, by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, Mrs. Lloyd, and Miss Carr. Miss Carr is to take charge of the Library when Mrs. Lloyd leaves for India. There are now forty-seven members of the Lodge, and with the new accommodation and arrangements there will doubtless be an increase in the membership.

All details for lectures and classes must necessarily wait until the removal has taken place, and the Lodge is established in its new quarters. A syllabus of lectures is included in the future plan of work.

Brussels.

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, on her way to Rome, visited Brussels, staying there for several days. On September 23rd she gave a lecture on "Theosophy in the Christian Era," and devoted, at the desire of some members, the following four days to lectures on *The Secret Doctrine*. The meetings were held in the rooms of the Branche Centrale Belge, 43, Rue du Pepin, the members of both the Brussels Branches attending. Mrs. Cooper-Oakley also received a number of enquirers and visitors.

L. E. C.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 4.
(Continued.)

S. A. N.—*Can we hope to meet after death those we have loved here if on different planes, and of different faiths? Say one who, though trusting in God, yet believed in total extinction, and another who was either a Christian or a Theosophist; and do we meet in devachan, or where we first go to after death, or have we to wait till we return to earth?*

We are often separated here from those we love; are we to judge in this from the known to the unknown?

A. P. S.—This question is not put now for the first time, but it is extremely important that Theosophical students should correctly apprehend the answer. At the first glance people are apt to think the teaching of occult knowledge comfortless in this respect, as compared with the assurances blithely offered sometimes by—one is tempted to say religious ignorance, to make the antithesis complete, but let us rather put it, by the uninstructed imagination of commonplace religious teachers. Content to suppose that he has already reached the culmination of all possible earthly evolution, the ordinary religious man assumes that after death friends will resume their progress together under happier conditions, and the rest he leaves involved in a golden mist of uncertainty. The hypothesis, however, ignores many difficulties. Not to speak of those entangled with the necessity of future incarnations, the ordinary assumption entirely overlooks the trouble that may arise in heaven when A. B., for instance, requires for his happiness the love and companionship of C. D., while C. D., quite indifferent to A. B., imperatively requires the love and companionship of E. F. to make heaven a sphere of happiness for him or her. In fact the whole ordinary conception of after death states, inasmuch as they touch the problems of companionship at all, calmly assume that "those we have loved"

have always loved us; that all affections are mutual, and the task of Nature in providing happiness for her children, assuming she is disposed to do this, perfectly plain sailing. What should be recognised as obvious, is that some of the bitterest griefs humanity is capable of feeling down here, must be protracted in "heaven," or else there must be some desperate mistake in the commonplace theory of heaven and of the after death conditions of people who have known one another in earthly life.

This exordium is necessary in dealing with the Theosophical explanation as to how the matter really stands in the devachanic condition of the ordinary entity after death (and after the intervening condition on the astral plane); the devachanic vision, as it has sometimes been called, is *not* a reality in the sense usually attached to the word, but a delightful illusion in which the entity concerned fully believes he has the loving companionship of those whose companionship he desires. That illusion is built up of all the thoughts and desires he has had concerning them in the past life, so it presents them to him in the most engaging aspect. And the vision never fades until the long period of devachanic rest is over, although it may go through all the modifications dictated by the variegated interests of the past life. Although a spiritual existence in the strictest sense of the term, it is not one of the most exalted order, any more than the ordinary human being to whom it is allotted is a being of the most exalted order. The rūpa-devachanic state is a condition of the most perfect happiness while it lasts, but is essentially a condition adapted to the spiritual needs of humanity in its present stage of evolution, not one that fulfils all our loftiest imaginings—far outrunning our present evolution—concerning the final state of spiritual perfection. Before we can attain to that, we must have reached the final perfection of earthly evolution, and we are very far short of that as yet.

In one sense there is a greater degree of what is commonly meant by reality about the intercourse that may in some cases be possible on the astral plane, than can be fairly recognised as belonging to the rūpa-devachanic condition. In the case of two entities actually inspired by a mutual love as the strongest force of their nature, and passing away from this life at periods not very widely separated in time, the meeting on the astral plane might be quite genuine—even as regarded from the earthly point of view, but the ultimate falling asleep and the awakening on the rūpa-devachanic plane would not seem to impair the perfection of such companionship.

As for the embarrassment of "different planes and different faiths," it will be seen that the devachanic vision must necessarily ignore all such questions, having its origin for each person in his own subjective condition. It seems only necessary to add that the ârūpa plane of devachan is a sphere of existence in which the entity capable of passing on thither has outlived the need of the ordinary devachanic vision. There he is in the

presence of spiritual realities, but these are not easily comprehended from a level of thought so saturated with ideas of form as that on which most of us in incarnation habitually live.

X.—I have no doubt that more qualified writers than myself will take up the general question, but there is one point I should like to touch. The querist speaks of "one who, though trusting in God, yet believed in total extinction." I should like to emphasise as far as possible that nothing in our future directly depends on our belief or disbelief in any dogmatic statement of any kind. If anyone has been, in life, in complete sympathy with Christians, he will not be separated from them hereafter because he did not find their arguments for the life after death carry conviction to his mind. When he comes to full consciousness on the other side he will find he had been mistaken—that is all. On the other hand, if a man has lived the materialistic life, which is another and quite different thing—if he has given himself wholly to seek his pleasure in this life, regardless of anything beyond—the fact that he has given full credence to the *doctrine* of a future life will not by one hair's-breadth alter his destiny. When freed from the bonds of the physical body, men will draw together, not according to the articles of their creed, but according to the nature they have made for themselves in their past lives.

I have said nothing directly depends on our belief of this doctrine or that. We are accustomed to be told by theologians that no one can be a good man or worthy of God's favour who disbelieves their own particular creed; but the readers of THE VĀHAN hardly need me to disclaim this. The more correct statement would be that a man's belief is a symptom—a result of what he is. And yet, so curiously have faith and practice been separated in England during the last three centuries, that we should do our English fellows strange injustice if we judged them thus. Their professed creeds lag far behind the actual moral height to which they have attained; so that we cannot say that their belief will very seriously affect their destiny, even indirectly, by its consequences on their character; for, practically, it does not influence them at all. Where a faith is alive and aggressive the case is different; I think a Christian would hardly find himself well received in a Mohammedan "heaven."

I think our answer must be that there is nothing in a mere difference of dogma to divide us after death; what is meant by "a difference of planes" I don't quite understand. It seems clear that those bonds of affection which have their root only in the body must drop away with the body and leave merely the spiritual affinities, which often will have little or no relationship with our friendships on the physical plane. We have been often reminded that we know, in actual fact, almost nothing of our dearest friends in this world; and the more complete knowledge we gain on higher planes, whilst often showing us a close relationship with strangers, can hardly fail now and then to

betray to us that some of those we have loved have in truth but little in common with our desires and aspirations and are not truly related to us at all. But we shall gain far more than we lose by the change.

QUESTION 14.

B. G.—*Are disagreeable dreams of some dreaded presence, that seems to have a paralysing influence on the sleeper, which can only be overcome by a strong effort of will, sometimes a proof of contact with some undesirable entity on the astral plane?*

C. W. L.—We are hardly justified in speaking of a dream as a proof of anything; but we may perhaps assume that the questioner wishes rather to know whether such a dream would be likely to be an imperfect remembrance of a real encounter with some disagreeable astral entity.

Probably it would be so, though there is nothing in what is said which gives any clear indication of the nature of the entity. It might be some mischievous nature-spirit, it might be some evil artificial elemental, or it might be a human being, either living or dead, who for some unholy end of his own desired to dominate the will of the dreamer. It might be a thought-form sent by someone who cherishes hostility towards the sleeper; but perhaps the most probable hypothesis of all is that it is a thought-form or artificial elemental created by the sleeper himself—the result of some desire or current of thought in which he indulges during waking life without recognizing its true character. With the clearer sight which is gained by escaping from the physical body he might perceive that this habit, whether of thought or of action, was in reality limiting or paralyzing to the true self, and so he would strive to free himself from its influence, and it would seem to him a vague presence to be dreaded. In any case, and to whatever class the entity belongs, the dreamer need not fear it, but should oppose firm and confident resistance to its efforts.

QUESTION 15.

E. P.—*Is there any hope that there may be continuity of identical consciousness after death, in a state similar to the devachanic, for the souls of those pet animals which have been closely in sympathetic and responsive contact with the souls of human beings in this life? And is there hope for such human souls that in devachan they may renew their former loving converse with such animal souls?*

C. W. L.—The questioner should remember that for those who grasp Theosophical doctrine in its entirety the conditions of life after death are matters, not of hope at all, but of fact.

If the pet animal referred to has been individualized, as seems not improbable from what is said, then the identical consciousness will certainly continue permanently after death. There will be a happy astral life of considerable length, followed

by a still happier period of what has sometimes been called "dozing consciousness," which will last until in some future world the human form is assumed.

Every human soul will have in Devachan *everything* that is necessary to its perfect felicity, and if it has during earth-life had deep and true affection even for an animal, then assuredly that animal will be there among the images which the soul creates for itself (see Manual No. VI.). And the man who has so far evoked affection and intelligence in any animal as to individualize it, may also console himself with the reflection that he has created a link with it which cannot be broken—a force which in some future age will bring his humble friend, once an animal, but now a human being, under his care and guidance once more.

QUESTION 16.

W. E. F.—*We are told that Jesus was born in Palestine B.C. 105, and that the Christ continued to visit His disciples in the astral body for something over fifty years after the physical body was destroyed. This being so, must we place the epistles of Paul at an earlier date than is usually assigned to them? If not, how are we to understand 1 Cor. xv. 6, 8? The "greater part" of those who had seen the Master could not have remained for eighty years after the time that His presence had been withdrawn.*

G. R. S. M.—The point raised in this query is one of the greatest interest and importance and opens up a host of questions, at only one or two of which we can glance in these columns. In the first place we are confronted with the crucial problem: What was the story of Jesus known to Paul? The answer to this problem is perhaps the very starting-point of verifiable history in the whole area of Christian origins. The Letters of Paul (some ten at any rate of them) are the earliest authentic documents of general Christendom. And if this be so they are of the very first importance as showing how the nascent religion towards the middle of the first century presented itself to the mind of a man of intelligence who became perhaps the most ardent propagandist the Faith has ever possessed. The more carefully we study the Letters of Saul of Tarsus the more clearly the question forces itself upon us: Did this man know the now familiar story of the four later canonical Gospels; had he made it part of himself; had he got the great Sayings by heart? If all this was familiar to him, then it is almost incredible that he could have omitted it from his exhortations, and yet we find but the vaguest references to the Gospel story, and even when we have found them we cannot be certain that they may not have been added to the original text by an editor or copyist. Of the historical Jesus we can learn next to nothing from Paul. He preaches a mystic Christ, of intense reality, it is true, and no vague abstraction. But if we follow Paul we move in an atmosphere foreign to that of the editors of the Life.

Let us now turn to the summary of Paul's teaching as set forth in his First Letter to the troubled little community of Corinth. It prefaces what the late Dean Mansel in his *Gnostic Heresies* calls "the apostle's elaborate and triumphant argument for the resurrection of the body" (p. 50)—whereby he means the "again-rising" of the physical body; and so indeed it is understood by the vast majority of Christians to-day. But does Paul lend his authority to any such interpretation? If we have the correct text, what he writes is very simple. He recalls to the minds of his pupils at Corinth how that his teaching had been:

"That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

"And that, he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

"And that, *he was seen* of Cephas; then of the twelve:

"After that, *he was seen* of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

"After that, *he was seen* of James; then of all the apostles.

"And last of all *he was seen* of me also, as of one born out of due time" (xv. 3-8).

The doctrinal points marked by the phrase "according to the scriptures" we may leave aside from our present enquiry and confine our attention to what we may call the historic statement. I have italicised the four times repeated phrase "he was seen," because it is the key to the whole position. It is the "authorised" translation of the Greek *ὄφθη*, which occurs four times in the received text, followed in every case by a dative. The more correct rendering would be "he appeared unto." Now we know from Paul himself (and also from *The Acts*, the latest document of the whole canon) that this "appearing" was not of a physical nature as far as the apostle himself was concerned. Paul, however, makes no distinction between the nature of the appearance to himself and of that to the others. He uses the identical phrasing for all, and evidently, therefore, considered that it was of the same nature. In brief the "gospel" of Paul taught a non-physical appearing of the Christ among his pupils.

It is interesting also to notice the strange term used by Paul of himself—"as of one born out of due time" (*ἐκ τρώματι*). We are here, as in so many other passages in the Pauline Epistles, face to face with a technical Gnostic term. The "abortion" was the name applied to the incomplete plasm of the world-system before it was informed by the Reason of God, the Logos. As with the great world so with the little world; Paul, when he had the good fortune to "see" the Master, was as yet unformed, the Spirit had not descended upon him to make him a Child of the Father. In the days of Paul the Christ doctrines were still for the most part taught in the inner communities, and the nomenclature was that of the Gnosis.

But, at last to take up W. E. F.'s question directly, what are we to think of "Cephas," and "the twelve," of the "five hundred brethren," of "James" and "all the apostles"? If we still have the words which Paul wrote before us, we are face to face with a number of difficulties which I am unable to solve without further assistance.

It is confidently asserted by all the most advanced students of occultism whom I have the privilege of numbering among my friends, that the real historic Jesus was born 105 B.C. The only corroboration of this statement at present available to those of us who are compelled to confine our researches to the physical plane, is to be found in some obscure Jewish legends which are so overloaded with bitter misrepresentation of the great Teacher that one is almost ashamed to appeal to them. The same students who place the birth of Jesus at 105 B.C., confirm approximately the accepted date of Paul's activity, say 35-55 A.D.

I am inclined to believe myself, from a study of the mystic communities of the period and what I have heard about the earliest followers of the Christ, that the "Twelve" were an order which was continued intact by co-optation as vacancies occurred by death, and that "Cephas" was a title. There was always a "Cephas." The "apostles" mentioned were probably members of the existing community which had in course of time grouped itself round the "Twelve" nucleus. "James" was probably the name of the president of the existing community at Jerusalem. The "five hundred brethren" may perhaps refer to some larger gathering that on some special occasion still within living memory had been favoured with a Christophany, which was as a rule reserved only for those belonging to the "apostolic" degree.

But even these hypotheses are not altogether satisfactory, for we have to distinguish clearly between the "Church" at Jerusalem with whose members Paul had such unsatisfactory relations, and the sources of his information, those from whom "he received" a doctrine apparently so radically different from that of "general" Christianity. After the dramatic incident at Damascus, Paul disappeared into "Arabia" for some three years. Whither did he go during these three eventful years? Occult tradition says he went to the Essene community of which Jesus a century before had been a member. The "Church" at Jerusalem, on the other hand, belonged to the Ebionite line of tradition, that of the "poor men" (*ebionim*), based solely on what they could understand of the public teaching of the Christ.

But the more we learn of the occult tradition of

the at present lost history of the origins, the less are we inclined to regard the matter as simple. A gap of a hundred years is a terrible chasm to face, and at present I can hardly see the wisdom of saying any more about it. Let us, who aspire to be students of theosophy, first of all familiarise ourselves with every source of information procurable on the physical plane, before puzzling our brains with other factors which have been kept hidden from the world for so many centuries.

QUESTION 17.

B. G.—Of what nature are the rapidly flashing sparks of white light, the larger and more permanent spots of a delicate violet, seen with the eyes open or shut, and the masses of luminous dark blue, seen only with the eyes shut? These were never seen before the enquirer became a vegetarian and practised concentration.

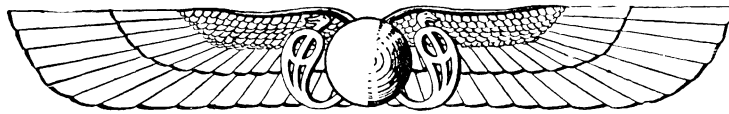
C. W. L.—It is impossible to give a definite answer to a question such as this (and it is a specimen of hundreds that are received) without very much more information. Indeed, to be really certain it would probably be necessary to investigate specially each individual case. It is on the whole most likely that such objects are either thought-forms or portions of the human aura; and in either case they may belong either to the seer himself or to some one else who is near. On the other hand, they may be "common objects" of the astral plane—mere clouds of astral or etheric matter which happen to float across the line of the partially-opened sight.

Whatever they may be, they belong to a world not open to the entirely undeveloped eye, and it is therefore quite natural that they should appear as a result of the effort to practise concentration and to live a pure life. The questioner may certainly be encouraged to persevere in his efforts, in the hope that presently more definite visions may replace these clouds and sparks. The first dawnings of clairvoyance not unfrequently manifest themselves in the way which he describes.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 4, Langham Place, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, DECEMBER 1, 1899.

NO. 5.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

SECTIONAL PREMISES.

In consequence of difficulties arising in course of negotiations as to the lease of 27, Old Burlington Street, it has been decided not to proceed further with regard to these premises. This being so, as a temporary measure the present premises at 4, Langham Place have been secured until March 25th (Lady Day). At the present moment the Executive Committee are in treaty for premises in Albemarle Street, which are admirably suited to our needs, and it is hoped that very shortly they may be able to announce that these have been secured.

A SUGGESTION.

It may be well, in order to prevent misunderstanding, for members when lending Theosophical books to non-members to see that the old Sectional address is taken out.

ACTIVITIES.

Guaranteed Donations.

Since the acknowledgment in last month's VĀHAN, the following donations have been promised up to November 20th: F. L. J. Z., £2; J. C., 5s.; M. M. C., £1 1s.; M. H., £1; J. H., 10s.; G. S. H., £2 2s.; E. M. J., 5s.; A. M. P., £1 1s.; G. H. P., £1 1s.; W. T., 5s.; J. W., £1. Total: £10 10s. This makes, with the promises already acknowledged, £589 18s.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received up to November 20th: T. J., 3s.; W. T., 5s.; M. M. C., £1 1s.; J. H., 10s.; F. M. M. R., £1; W. J.

L., £200; R. A. C., 2s. 6d.; F. K., 13s.; W. A. A., £1; W. G. W., 5s.; A. J. V. R., £3 3s.; E. A. B., £6; I. B., £5; R. C., £25; E. D., £2; G. R. S. M., £2 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. D., 10s.; E. G., £1; A. McD., £5; L. T. M., £2; J. C., 5s.; G. S., 15s.; M. A. B., £1 1s.; M. L., £1 19s.; T. J., 15s.; E. M. M., 10s.; J. R. A., £1; G. S. H., £2 2s.; H. W., £2 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. H., £10; E. M. J., 5s.; J. H., £1; H. M. K., 5s.; A. F. P., £6; E. F., £10; W. V., £3 3s.; F. C. S., £1; M. E. W., 10s.; W. B., £1; M. C., 10s.; R. W., 5s.; M. R. H., 5s.; E. E. F., 5s.; B. P. M., 5s.; J. M., 10s.; C. B. I., £6; J. W., £1. Total, £309 6s. 6d.

Section Reference Library.

The Reading Room, at 4, Langham Place, will be closed from Wednesday, December 20th, to Wednesday, December 27th, inclusive. It is open on week-days from 2 to 9 p.m., with the exception of Thursdays, when it closes at 7.30 p.m. On Sundays it is open from 3.30 to 9 p.m.

The following books have been received, and are now acknowledged with thanks: *Apocrypha of old Russia* (written in the ancient Slav, printed in Russian characters, with Slav letter-signs only), St. Petersburg, 1862; *The Destiny of the Soul. A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*, William Rounseville Alger, 14 ed., Boston, 1889.
A. J. WILLSON, *Librarian*.

Theosophical Lending Library.

Subscribers to the Library are requested to note that the Library offices are now in temporary premises, at 4, Langham Place, W. (next door to the offices of the Theosophical Publishing Society and two doors from Queen's Hall). Books can be exchanged on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, between the hours of 2.30 and 6 p.m.

This library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: one month, 1s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 4, Langham Place, W.

LILIAN LLOYD, *Librarian*.

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays, at 4, Langham Place, W. There will be no meeting on December 24th.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Dec. 10th, Address by Countess Wachtmeister; Dec. 17th and 31st, Class.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings at the Commercial Hotel, Westgate, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at the Queen's Hotel, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: Dec. 19th, *Socialism and Theosophy*, by R. T. Paterson. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m., Dec. 8th and 22nd, and by appointment.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the second Thursday of each month: Dec. 14th, *The Grand Man of the Cosmos*.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 12, Wartenau, on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Hotel zur Krone once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Dec. 3rd, *The Light of the World*, Baker Hudson; Dec. 10th, *The Invisible Forces of Nature*, D. S. Ward; Dec. 17th, *Some Early Christian Heretics*, W. H. Thomas; Dec. 24th, *Christmas Chimes*, Mrs. Bell; Dec. 31st, *Responsibility*, Miss Woodhead. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 12th, *Religions*; Dec. 27th (Wednesday), Selected Readings. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings by arrangement. For information apply to H. E. Nichol, 56, Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 10, Eldon Terrace, and on Fridays at 6, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton, for the study of Plato. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 9, Winstanley Terrace, Headingley, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings are held at members' houses. Dec. 6th and 20th, *Bhagavad Gita* Class; Dec. 13th, *Ancient Wisdom* Class. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meetings every Sunday at 7.15 p.m., at the Battersea Free Library. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hanover Square, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Dec. 7th, *Apollonius of Tyana, III.*, G. R. S. Mead; Dec. 14th, *Death*, C. W. Leadbeater; Dec. 21st and 28th, No meetings.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: Dec. 4th, *At-one-ment*, P. Tovey; Dec. 11th, Class for members; Dec. 18th, *Soul Culture*, Mrs. Leo.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: Dec. 1st, *Cells and Cell Life*, Mrs. Betts; Dec. 8th, *Thought Forms* (with lantern illustrations), C. W. Leadbeater; Dec. 15th, *The Heroic Enthusiasts*, Miss Ward.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale

Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Subjects for alternate evenings are "*Four Great Religions*," and "*The Evolution of Man*."

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 6 p.m., at 7, Via Lombardia: Dec. 4th, *The Christ*, G. Aureli; Dec. 11th, *The Philosophical Aspect of Theosophy*, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley; Dec. 18th, *New Scientific Corroborations of Theosophy*, O. Boggiani.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at the Oxford Temperance Hotel, St. James' Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meeting at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

City of Liverpool Branch.

The Annual Meeting was held on Wednesday, October 25th. There has been an increased activity in the work during the last year and three new members have been added to the Lodge.

Twelve papers have been read by the members, and one by a member of the Birmingham Lodge. Each paper aroused interest in its own special subject, and several were discussed at the next meetings.

There have been six meetings of the *Bhagavad Gītā* class conducted by Mr. J. H. Duffell.

The officers elected for the ensuing year are: President, Mr. J. H. Duffell; Vice-President, Dr. Pitt-Taylor; Secretary, Mrs. Gillison; Corresponding Secretary, Madame de Steiger.

JEAN B. GILLISON, *Hon. Sec.*

Blavatsky Lodge.

The last lecture delivered at the Blavatsky Lodge in the month of October was given by Mr. Kingsland; the Lodge was glad to welcome him again after his long absence from its platform. On November 2nd, Mr. Mead gave his second lecture on Apollonius of Tyana; the subject, it is hardly necessary to state, was profoundly interesting. Mr. Mead showed how widely spread were the teachings of this great philosopher, whose journeys led him even to the British Isles. On the 9th, Mr. Sinnett delivered to a most appreciative audience a lecture upon "Karma: the Extent and Limitations of our Knowledge." Rarely has the Vice-President delivered a more interesting lecture. The great difficulty and obscurity of the subject are hardly realised by the majority of students. On the 16th, Mr. Leadbeater lectured upon the "Use and Development of the Astral Body," throwing much fresh light upon an important and practical subject; the Lodge was crowded to overflowing.

In December there will be only two lectures, and they will be delivered at 3, Hanover Square, W., on December the 7th and 14th.

Members of the Lodge will receive with very great pleasure the news that, according to present arrangements, our President hopes to be with us again some time in the Spring.

S. MAUD SHARPE,
Hon. Sec.

North of England Federation.

A very largely attended meeting of the above was held at Harrogate on November 11th, under the presidency of Countess Wachtmeister. Delegates and members were present from Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield, Harrogate, Middlesbrough, York and other towns. Interesting discussions took place during the afternoon session on "Methods of Propaganda," and "Our attitude towards Superiors, Equals and Inferiors." At the evening session a very able address was given by Countess Wachtmeister on "A Conscious Universe." At the invitation of the Harrogate Lodge the members of the Federation were entertained at tea in the Winter Gardens. On Sunday, November 12th, a well-attended public meeting was held in Harrogate, when Countess Wachtmeister lectured on "Death and After."

W. H. THOMAS, *Hon. Sec.*

Bristol Branch.

On October 6th, Mr. Mead visited Bristol and delivered a most interesting lecture, entitled "Round the Cradle of Christendom," at the Hannah More Hall.

A. D.

City of Liverpool Lodge.

Mr. Leadbeater visited this Branch in November, lecturing on November 8th, and holding a meeting for enquirers on the following day.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PAPIAS AND THE DATE OF JESUS.

THE HAGUE,
Nov. 10th, 1899.

To the Editor of THE VĀHAN.

DEAR SIR,

With reference to Question 16 in THE VĀHAN of November 1st, I should like to observe that apart from 1 Cor. xv. there is yet another source, "on the physical plane," for the chronology of Jesus, *viz.*, the "Papias-Fragments" to be found in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, III. xxxix. 3-4. According to Harnack (*Texte u. Unters.* v., p. 176) Papias wrote his "*Δογίων κυριακῶν ἐξηγήσεις*," about A.D. 140. In the Proœmion he says that he has consulted some presbyters concerning what the "disciples of the

Lord," Aristion and the presbyter John, said to them. It is clearly to be seen that he had spoken to men who were contemporaries of disciples of the Lord. Writing in 140 at the age of seventy-five, he may have been, when he spoke to the presbyters he met concerning the absent Aristion and John, about twenty years, *i.e.*, in A.D. 85. Supposing these men to be then as old as seventy-five, they were born in A.D. 10, and accordingly twenty years old when they became disciples of Jesus, who entered on His ministry when he "began to be about thirty years of age." The above given chronology is thus in perfect accordance with the received date of the birth of Jesus.

Moreover, Eusebius relates that the same Papias said (according to Philippus Sidetes in his second book) that he conversed with the daughters of Philip, mentioned in *Acts* xxi. 9, who was a contemporary of the apostles.

As to the integrity and authenticity of the Papias-Fragments, there is but one voice (W. Weiffenbach, *Das Papias-Fragment*, 1874, pp. 10, 11).

A. J. ROTTEVEEL.

G. R. S. M.—The Fragments of Papias quoted by Eusebius (about the beginning of the fourth century), in his *Church History*, have given rise to endless controversy and the most contradictory hypotheses. These Fragments are taken from the now lost five books of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Syria, called "Expositions of the Dominical Logia."* The date generally assigned to the writing of these books is somewhere about 140 A.D. (Harnack in his latest work, *Chronologie der altch. Literatur*, i. 335, 342, says 140-160.) As these Fragments are the earliest extra-canonical source of information of any kind as to the composition of the Gospel writings, every single word in them has been microscopically scrutinised and hypothesis piled on hypothesis on the slender basis of a word or two.

The first Fragment referred to by Mr. Rotteveel runs as follows (for the text, see Routh's *Reliq. Sac.*, i. 7, 8):

"Moreover I will not hesitate to incorporate also for you into my commentaries all things which I at any time well learned [as coming] from the elders and well remembered (*ἐμνημόνευσα*), being convinced as to their truth. For I used not to delight, as most did, in those who said much, but in those who taught the truth; not in those who remembered (*μνημονεύουσιν*) someone else's commands, but those [who remembered] the commands given by the Lord to the faith and coming from the truth itself. And if, moreover, anyone who had been a follower of the elders came to where I was, I used to enquire closely into the words of the elders, what Andrew and what Peter had said, or what Philip, or what

Thomas or James, or what John or Matthew, or any other of the Lord's disciples; or what things Aristion and John, the elder, disciples of the Lord, were then saying. For I used not to think that what I got out of the (or their) books would do me so much good as what I got from the living voice that was still with us."

Assuming that this quotation is correct—and this is a large assumption to make when we consider the general inaccuracy of Eusebius—what are we to understand by the statement of Papias?

The puzzles this ancient worthy sets us have so far not been solved. In the time of Papias' youth or early manhood, apparently, there were two elders, "disciples of the Lord," living, of whom he had heard, a John and an Aristion. This John was to be distinguished from an older John, also an elder and a "disciple of the Lord." There were, then, presumably also elders who were not "disciples of the Lord," and the added title confers a special distinction. Of Aristion, it is generally asserted that we know nothing, but some months ago I came across a quotation which stated that Aristion was the writer of our canonical "Mark" gospel; unfortunately I cannot at the present moment put my hand on the reference. The second John is thought by many to have been the writer of our fourth gospel.

In the ancient Muratorian fragment it is said: "The Fourth Gospel is that of John, one of the disciples. When his fellow disciples and bishops entreated him, he said, Fast ye now with me for the space of three days, and let us recount to each other whatever may be revealed to us. On the same night it was revealed to Andrew, one of the apostles, that John should relate all things in his own name." Here we have the terms "apostles," "disciples" and "bishops" all mixed up together, a very curious compost, for the term "bishop" is a comparatively late one; we learn, however, from this interesting tradition the nature of the fourth Gospel and how it differs from that of an "eye witness," and this agrees entirely with the occult tradition which I have heard.

What, then, I glean from Papias is that "the living voice which was still with us," is the continued presence of the Christ among those of his followers who were distinguished as "disciples," that though this voice was then still "living" it by no means follows that the term "disciple" was applied to men who had heard the Christ in the physical body of Jesus.

All these disciples belonged to a circle which was to be distinguished from those who remembered "someone else's commands"—this is thought by some to refer to Paul and the Pauline Churches. Now Paul expressly declares that he is "the apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father" (*Gal.* i. 1). This distinctly implies that he regarded the "apostles" with whom he came into contact, as no apostles of Jesus, but as men who appointed themselves to this office; that is to say, as belonging to a circle whose authority Paul refused to recognise.

Papias, on the contrary, recognises this circle as the only authoritative "voice." We therefore get

* I give this barbarous rendering of the title, simply because every single word of the Greek original has been interpreted in a dozen different senses.

back to the same ground as that reviewed in my answer to Question 16.

The names of the "twelve apostles" are only known from our gospel documents, the first editions of which are contemporary with Papias. The "books" which Papias refers to are perhaps the "Memoirs of the Apostles," from which Justin Martyr quotes, and which have disappeared, and these "apostles" are presumably an order which kept its members intact by co-optation, they were "apostles of men," as Paul would say.

The second quotation of Mr. Rotteveel is taken from an anonymous note lately found by De Boor in the Codex Baroccianus, and conjectured to have been extracted from the *Ecclesiastical History* of Philip of Side, which was published about A.D. 427. It simply says that: "The aforesaid Papias has narrated as having received it from the daughters of Philip that Barsabas, who is also called Justus, being tested by the unbelievers, drinking the poison of a viper in the name of Christ, was preserved harmless."

These may or may not have been the daughters of the Philip of the *Acts*. In any case the *Acts* are not a document to quote as history; they have the least historical authenticity of any book of the New Testament. But who was Philip of the *Acts*? A "disciple," an "apostle," like the rest with whom we have dealt above. "Philip" was an "elder," belonging to a certain circle which Papias considered to have still the "living voice" within it; the "prophets" were not yet dead in the Church.

I thus leave the question where I did in my last answer. Of course after the publication of the synoptics, the fourth gospel, and the *Acts*, the fluid traditions of the earlier years became in a comparatively short time crystallised into a definite history round the axes which their assertions had laid down; anything which did not fit this configuration was rejected. But in the times of Papias it was not so.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 18.

J. D.—How is Mr. Leadbeater's luminous information in The Christian Creed—as to the Passion of Christ having never been real, physical and historical—to be looked at when compared with such realistic visions as those of the Catholic seers Anne Catherine Emmerich, concerning "the sorrowful Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ"? Can some explanation of those visions be vouchsafed from the standpoint of occult investigation?

C. W. L.—I suppose that different people will look very differently at the information given in the book mentioned. Like all other information obtained by clairvoyant vision, it stands entirely on its own merits, and the author has never expected his readers to accept any of his statements unless they commend themselves to the reason and common sense of those who peruse them. What he has seen he describes; whether others find

themselves able to believe that he has seen rightly is their own affair.

Certainly such visions as those of the Catholic seers can be explained from the occult standpoint. I should myself have no doubt that her statements were perfectly genuine; she was not labouring under a hallucination, but only under a mistake as to the nature of what she saw.

It must be remembered that to read the âkâshic records clearly and correctly needs a special training; it is not a matter of faith or of goodness, but of a special kind of knowledge. There is nothing whatever to show that the saint in question had this particular form of knowledge; on the contrary, she probably never heard of such records at all. She would therefore most likely be quite incapable of reading a record clearly, and certainly unable to distinguish one, if she did happen to see it, from any other kind of vision.

What she in all probability saw was a phenomenon familiar to all practical occultists. It is well known to such investigators that any great historical scene, upon which much is supposed to depend, has been constantly thought of and vividly imaged to themselves by successive generations of people. Such scenes would be, say, for the English the signing of Magna Charta by King John, and for the Americans the signing of the declaration of independence.

Now, these vivid images which people make are very real things, and are very clearly to be seen by any one who possesses some psychic development. They are real, definite forms existing on the mental plane, and are perpetually strengthened by all the new thoughts which are ever being turned upon them. Of course, different people image scenes differently, and the eventual result is often something like a composite photograph; but the form in which such an imagination was originally cast very largely influences the thought of all sensitives upon the subject, and tends to make them image it as others have done.

This product of thought (often, be it observed, of quite ignorant thought) is very much easier to see than the true record, for while, as we have said, the latter feat requires training, the former needs nothing but a glimpse of the mental plane, such as frequently comes to almost all pure and high-minded ecstasies.

Another point to be borne in mind is that it is not in the least necessary for the creation of such a thought-form that the scenes should ever have had any real existence. Few scenes from real history have been so strongly depicted by popular fancy in this country as have some situations from Shakespeare's plays, from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and from various fairy stories, such as Cinderella or Aladdin's Lamp. A clairvoyant obtaining a glimpse of one of these collective thought-forms might very easily suppose that he had come across the real foundation of the story; but since he knows these tales to be fiction, he would be more likely to think that he had simply dreamed of them.

Now ever since the Christian religion materia-

lized the glorious conceptions originally committed to its charge, and tried to represent them as a series of events in a human life, devout souls in all countries under its sway have been striving as a pious exercise to picture the supposed events as vividly as possible. Consequently we are here provided with a set of thought-forms of quite exceptional strength and permanence—a set which could hardly fail to attract the attention of any ecstatic the bent of whose mind was at all in their direction. No doubt they *were* seen by the seeress referred to in the question, and by many another. But when such clairvoyants come in the course of their progress to deal with the realities of life, they will be taught, as are those who have the inestimable privilege of the guidance of the Masters of Wisdom, how to distinguish between the result of devout but ignorant thought and the imperishable record which is the true memory of nature; and then they will find that these scenes to which they have devoted so much attention were but symbols of truths higher and wider and grander far than they had ever dreamed, even in the highest flights which were made possible for them by their splendid purity and piety.

QUESTION 19.

J. M.—Is it possible to avert any future calamity or misfortune indicated by Palmistry or Astrology; and should success in this direction be possible would it interfere with karma?

A. A. W.—All that any system of Astrology or other mode of predicting the future can do is to inform us of the powers and tendencies which shape the circumstances of our life. But of our own action, which forms by far the most important item of these, no one can prophesy. We are told that there is only one case in which an action is inevitable; and that is, where we have done it over and over again so often in thought that the very next time we think it we as it were pull the trigger and the action follows without conscious intention. Short of this, we can always decline to follow our “destiny.” There is a curious illustration of this in the life of Mrs. Kingsford. In one of her trances she seemed to be taken to the study of an adept, who drew her horoscope and then expounded it to her. The influences under which she was born promised great success for her in one direction only, and that a dishonourable one; all her sufferings had come from her refusal to follow this. Her whole life had been, and would be, one of suffering, because she was always crossing, by her own freewill, the path marked out for her by the influences which ruled her birth. It may thus be not only possible, but our highest duty in life, our only chance of future progress, thus to fight against our “destiny.” And if there are so many cases in which “Fate” seems too strong for men, it is because at present but few of us have developed sufficient resolution to make the fight successful; and we let our stars rule us instead of ruling them.

With regard to the special point referred to in the question, the possibility of averting any particular misfortune predicted to us—there is much to be considered. What the Lords of Karma may intend to bring upon us in this incarnation, and at any special time, our will certainly cannot avert. This is, in the fullest sense, our Fate; due, indeed, to our own previous actions, but their inevitable result. Now it is fairly conceivable that something of this may be seen upon higher planes and thus come within the knowledge of an astrologer; whether our present palmists or astrologers are capable of anything of the kind I do not know. But one thing is clear; if we do our best to avert it, and succeed in doing so, it certainly was not our karma that we should suffer it, and we have not (in J. M.’s words) interfered with karma by our efforts. There are, undoubtedly, times when no foresight, no resolution, avails against misfortune; and the value of the doctrine of karma in such case is that it replaces the blind, unintelligible Fate or still blinder chance by a law whose rationality we can perceive, although many lives must pass before we can expect thoroughly to comprehend its working.

A. P. S.—This is a very pretty problem, open to treatment in two ways. The practical, approximately accurate reply would be, I think, that we cannot circumvent the Kârmic Deities whatever tricks we may play. We need not be afraid of trying to. No more comic delusion has ever been generated by Theosophic teaching imperfectly understood, than the notion that it is our duty to refrain from doing this or that, lest we should interfere with karma. We might as well be warned not to sneeze lest we should generate an earthquake. If we think the law of karma to be operating in any case unfairly, and set to work repairing Nature’s oversights, we shall, if we seem to succeed, have been one of Nature’s unconscious agents. But the adept having got to a very high level of evolution, and having got behind the law to some extent, might sometimes be able to impede its course, and that makes him careful not to do so. How does this fact affect the question? In this way—as it seems to me—Palmistry and Astrology are occult sciences—so ill understood and clumsily practised for the most part that they are mainly occult nonsense—but still they *may* be genuine. Assuming them in any case to be so, it is theoretically possible to regard them as investing the person who can use them effectually with a minute trace of the power exercised in perfection by the adept, and thus, with a minute trace of his moral responsibility. To that infinitesimal degree the palmist or astrologer might be concerned as impeding karma, and thus banking it up against himself, for a future life. He would have succeeded in taking a step in the direction of black magic, and if he persevered through many lives and made his progress along that path the main purpose of his existence, he might bank up karma to a very formidable extent and succeed in the end in acquiring for himself a fate of altogether

indescribable spiritual misery. But that line of reflection has merely a mathematical interest, and the square root of minus two is relatively a matter of daily concern. Practical advice is—when you can ward off the blows of karma, either in the interest of others or of yourself—do so with a light heart by all means.

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that generally it would be a waste of time and energy to try to avert anything indicated by these occult arts. The average palmist or astrologer has neither the profound knowledge, the balanced intuition, nor the perfect selflessness required to read aright the riddle of another's destiny. Forces set in motion by us on any plane, in the shape of thoughts, desires or acts, can be neutralised by sending out equal and opposite forces in corresponding forms. To do this complete knowledge and recollection of the original forms are essential. As far as the present life goes memory will give the indications required, and much may thus be done to rectify old errors. But to attempt to arrest the working out of doom set going in another life, with no accurate recollection, but merely on hear-say indications, will probably be futile. It will be far wiser to brace the will to meet whatever comes with fortitude, and make the best of it; for by doing this the worst calamity or misfortune is turned into a blessing in disguise.

It is absolutely impossible to interfere with karma; any apparent interference is part of the karma. The Good Law is the fundamental law of the evolution of the solar cosmos, just as our little thread of it is the fundamental law of our individual evolution. As it is inconceivable that anything can get behind, or interfere with, the cosmic order, so it is equally impossible that anything or any individual can interfere with that part of the whole which constitutes our karma.

QUESTION 20.

H. D.—*Does the arrangements of atoms or particles in a well-developed astral body through which the ego functions in the physical waking state, differ from their arrangement in that astral body in which he functions during sleep as it is separated from the physical? If so, is this re-arrangement in any way similar to the re-arrangement of the particles of the astral body after death?*

C. W. L.—No difference in the arrangement of the particles of the astral body is produced by departure from the physical body during sleep, and consequently there is no resemblance to the condition after death. A certain difference in the appearance (though not of the arrangement) of the astral particles is visible when the man is away from his physical sheath, owing to the fact that in one case most of the force and energy of the man is passing through those astral particles to act upon their physical counterparts, whereas in the other the astral particle is for the time the terminus and special field of its activity. Probably the querent has clairvoyantly caught some glimpse

of this difference, and that is what has caused him to ask this question.

QUESTION 21.

H. D.—*What is the correspondence, if any, between the three guṇas (Tamas, Rajas, and Sattva) and the Three Logoi, or Ātmā, Buddhi, Manas?*

C. W. L.—The three guṇas are the qualities inherent in all matter, even in the atom—inertia, motion, and rhythmical vibration or balance. Every atom possesses the quality of inertia; if uninfluenced by any outside force it will remain, as regards its field of activity, in the same position in space, and if set in motion from outside it will continue to move in the same direction until its movement is again altered by some other external force.

But apart from all this it possesses within itself a quality of inherent motion within its own field of activity; no atom is ever still for the minutest fraction of time, even in the hardest of all known materials.

Yet this incessant motion is not vague or aimless; it is ever controlled by a third quality, rhythm or balance, so that it is always an orderly vibration about a centre—a vibration the rate and dimension of which remain the same unless affected from outside.

This is the lowest and most material aspect of the guṇas; it is obvious that there will be correspondences on other planes, but the subject is not one that can profitably be carried further in the columns of THE VĀHAN. I cannot undertake, therefore, to endeavour to relate them to ātmā, buddhi and manas.

QUESTION 22.

L. W.—*As a rule physicians do not catch the infectious diseases their patients are suffering from. Can this be attributed to the fact that they enter the sick room in a state of mind hostile to the disease, understanding it and determined to dominate it?*

A. H. W.—This is not quite the state of mind in which a doctor goes to an infectious case. His idea is to put the patient into the best possible position to battle with the infection, and to keep him alive through the struggle. Knowing the infection to be a microscopic fungus, he no more thinks of dominating it than a gardener thinks of dominating a mushroom-bed.

He escapes the disease either because he has already had it, or because he is protected by vaccination in the case of smallpox, or because he is naturally immune. Beyond these he takes his chance like anybody else.

The writer is personally conscious of a fixed determination not to catch whatever disease is present, and so far has been fairly fortunate in this respect.

J. V. M.—It seems obvious enough that if physical medicine is worth anything at all it will

first of all affect and benefit those who know not only its proper applications and prescriptions for prevention and cure in given cases, but who also have naturally a full disposal of the means to effect these prescriptions.

I do not believe that it is because of the friendliness of the elementals, or of his hostile state of mind towards mistakes in spelling, that the schoolmaster does not fall a victim to the snares of orthography, but simply because of the fact that he knows what he is about and applies this knowledge to his writing.

As to a firm will, the ordinary physician of today actually knowing as a rule as little about thought force and subtle vibrations as all the modern world, I should say that anyone's firmly positive thought would do as well as the physician's.

But that there is that in a firm attitude of mind which makes one less receptive to germs of disease, is stated in Mrs. Besant's *Manual Karma*, pp. 75 and 76 (Second Edition, 1897).

QUESTION 23.

A. C.—*When an animal becomes so far individualised as to be ready to receive the Divine Spark, does it cease to incarnate and go into a state of rest till it reappears as a rudimentary man in some future age? If so, what is the advantage to the animal in hastening his evolution by domestication, if he is not going to assist his fellows in their evolution?*

B. K.—When an animal receives the Divine Spark, it *ipso facto* ceases to be an animal in its inner nature, though of course the outer animal body may live on for some years, and in that case we have a rudimentary human ego working through a body of a non-human type. When that body dies, however, the now human ego will not again incarnate in animal form, but if a suitably low and unevolved type of human body to meet its needs is available, it will forthwith incarnate therein, while if no such body is at the time available it will wait in a state of *quasi-devachanic* rest till a suitable body offers itself. This is what is happening at the present time. There is no type of human form at present existing on our earth sufficiently rudimentary to afford a suitable vehicle for an ego just individualised from the animal kingdom. Hence such egos have to wait in a kind of devachanic rest until a suitable body appears either on the next globe of our chain or in some subsequent cycle.

The advantage that the animal gains (at the present time) by domestication and consequent early individualisation is that just as our own egos "ripen" as it were during our stay in Deva-

chan and emerge stronger, more developed, with added qualities and powers ready for use in the new incarnation, so in a similar manner do these newly individualised human egos, which have just crossed over the boundary between the human and animal kingdoms, grow riper, fuller and fit for a better human type suitable to their more developed powers, through the long period of assimilation and inner growth which they now have to pass through before a suitable human body will be available for their use.

QUESTION 24.

E. P.—*In the happy astral life of the individualized animal soul referred to in the answer to Question 15 is there consciousness as of the spiritual presence of the human comrade formerly loved with such trust and devotion during the earth-life in which that friend and protector is still bodily left? Or if not present intercourse, at least memory of the past?*

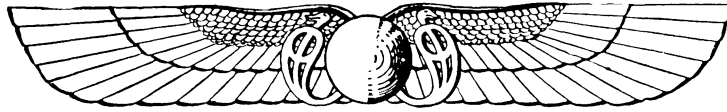
C. W. L.—This question seems to show some confusion of thought as to the qualities of the astral and mental planes respectively. During the astral life of the individualized animal he will in all probability remain in the immediate neighbourhood of his earthly home, and in the closest touch with his friend and protector—able to see and enjoy the society of his friend in the flesh as fully as ever, though himself invisible to the latter. His memory of the past will of course be just as perfect as it was on earth.

In the long period of rest on the mental plane that follows this, he will be in a state analogous to that of a human being in devachan, though at a somewhat lower level. He will create his own surroundings, even though he may be but drowsily conscious of them, and they will undoubtedly include the presence of his earth-friend in his very best and most sympathetic mood. It should be remembered that for *every* entity which comes into connection with it, whether only just entering upon human evolution or preparing to pass beyond it, devachan means the highest bliss of which that entity is at its level capable.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

ACTIVITIES.

THE NEW SECTIONAL PREMISES.

THE premises in Albemarle Street, which were mentioned in last month's VĀHAN, have now been definitely secured, and the Section can congratulate itself on having obtained a most suitable abode. The address is 28, Albemarle Street, W. Possession has been obtained from Christmas, but as there is of course a certain amount of work to be done in preparing the rooms for occupation, the office and library will probably not be moved in until the second week in January. The actual arrangement of the rooms will be settled by the Executive Committee, but it may be mentioned that the accommodation available includes a large room on the first floor suitable for lectures, three excellent rooms for members' use, as reading and conversational rooms, two rooms for the office and housekeeper's rooms. These rooms take up the whole of the upper part (three floors) of the house and are very well decorated. The large room will be available for lectures early in January and it is proposed to open the reading-room to members on Monday, January 15th, as it is confidently expected that by that date the arrangements will be sufficiently advanced. Until that date the office will remain in the present temporary premises at 4, Langham Place, and this will be the address for correspondence until the 15th January.

The annual rent of the new headquarters, including rates and taxes, is £425, but a good proportion of this will be returned in charges for the use of the lecture room. The Blavatsky Lodge it is anticipated will hire this room for two evenings per week at an annual rental. This room and probably one other will also be available for letting. The decisions of the Executive Committee as to the arrangements will be submitted to members in due course.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

Annual Guaranteed Donations.

The following additional promises of annual donations have been received to December 20th: A. V. C., 10s.; C. A. E. (second guarantee), £10 10s.; D. G., £5; A. W. G., 10s.; G. H., £1 1s.; F. J. T., 5s. Total, £17 16s.

Already acknowledged, £589 18s. Total guaranteed, £607 14s.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to Dec. 20th: T. J., 3s.; F. E. B., £5 5s.; O. H., 10s.; S. G., £3 3s.; M. S., 6s.; S. L., 2s. 6d.; S. H., 5s.; A. M., 6s.; H. S., £2 2s.; I. M. J., £5; F. L. J. Z., £2; A. W. G., 10s.; G. H., £1 1s.; C. A. E., £10 10s.; H. B. H., 2s. 6d.; Anon., £4; W. H. G., 15s.; A. V. C., 10s.; A. A. M., 5s.; I. F. B., 5s.; M. C. G., £1 1s.; W. B. L. and E. L., £5 5s.; E. de M. M., 5s.; D. G., £5; F. B. B., £2; C. H., £1; W. J. B. D., £2; A. H., £4; E. H., 10s.; W. M. G., 10s.; Dr. and Mrs. K., £2 2s.; J. D. C., £6 6s.; G. L. S., 10s.; A. v. H., £12 12s.; R. A. H., £1; B. P. M., 5s.; F. T., 5s.; A. F. S., 10s. Total £82 2s.

New Branches.

Nov. 28th, 1899. Charter granted this day to Armand Maclot, A. Schenck, J. A. Strijmans, Louis Istas, C. Lambert, J. Craeye, G. A. de Laet and P. Lachappelle to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society at Antwerp, Belgium, to be known as the Antwerp Branch.

Dec. 16th, 1899. Charter granted this day to Giocchino Cavallini, Mrs. A. C. Lloyd, Miss M. Telbin, Mme. Luisa Baldissera, Mme. von Pelka Nordenstrahl, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley and Mme. Cavallini to form a Branch of the Theosophical

Society at Florence, Italy, to be known as the Florence Branch.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

Lectures by Mr. Mead.

A course of four lectures on "The Mysteries among the Greeks" will be delivered by Mr. Mead during January in the new lecture hall of the Section, 28, Albemarle Street, W. They will be given on Tuesday afternoons, at 5 o'clock, beginning on Tuesday, January 9th, and will deal with: (i.) The Background of the Mystery Tradition; (ii.) The Official Mysteries—The Eleusinia; (iii.) The Private Mysteries—The Orphic Life; (iv.) The Philosophic Mysteries—Pythagoras.

Admission to single lectures, 2s. Course tickets for the series, 5s.

A syllabus is now ready and members can obtain it, and also purchase tickets, from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W.

Members should take every opportunity of making these lectures known to friends.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings at the Commercial Hotel, Westgate, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at the Queen's Hotel, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.; Jan. 23rd, *Our Planetary Chain*, Mrs. Tweedale. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m., and by appointment.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the second Thursday of each month: Jan. 4th, *Right and Wrong*, A. Wallace.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 12, Wartenau, on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Hotel zur Krone once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: January 7th, *The Egyptian Religion*, Hodgson Smith; January 14th, *Religions of India*, Miss Shaw; January 21st, *Buddhism*, E. J. Dunn; January 28th. . . . C. W. Leadbeater. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 9th, *Freewill and Karma*; Jan. 23rd, *Light on the Path*. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings by arrangement. For information apply to H. E. Nichol, 56, Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 10, Eldon Terrace, and on Fridays at 6, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton, for the study of Plato. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 9, Winstanley Terrace, Headingley, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 90, Canning Street, on alternate Wednesdays: January 10th, *Lao Tze*, J. H. Duffell; January 24th, *God, Man and the Devil*, Miss Shaw. Classes for study of the *Bhavadgâ Gîtâ*, January 12th and 31st. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of the *Bhavadgâ Gîtâ*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meetings every Sunday at 7.15 p.m., at the Battersea Free Library. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: January 18th, *From the Sayings and Sermons of Apollonius of Tyana*, G. R. S. Mead; January 25th, *The Welsh Bards*, Mrs. Hooper. On Sundays, at 7 p.m., beginning January 14th.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on

Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Subjects for alternate evenings are "*Four Great Religions*," and "*The Evolution of Man*."

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 6 p.m., at 7, Via Lombardia.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at the Oxford Temperance Hotel, St. James' Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

Blavatsky Lodge.

A series of Sunday evening meetings will be held in the Lecture Room, at the new headquarters of the European section, 28, Albemarle Street, W., beginning on Sunday, January 14th, at 7 p.m. These meetings are intended more especially for enquirers, and will therefore be of an elementary character. It is arranged that various members of the Lodge will make themselves responsible for their success, and time will be allowed for questions. A syllabus will be issued later. Visitors desiring to attend these meetings may do so by writing to the Hon. Sec. of the Lodge, at 28, Albemarle Street, W. (or before January 15th, to 4, Langham Place), for a ticket admitting them to the course.

It is felt that, once it is installed in its new home, the Blavatsky Lodge should become as widely useful as possible, and inasmuch as our Thursday evening lectures are more suitable for members and for students, it is hoped, in arranging for these Sunday evening meetings, at which the fundamental teachings of Theosophy will be dealt with in as clear a manner as possible, that help may be given to a larger number.

The lectures of the past month have been of quite as much interest and have drawn as large audiences as heretofore. The speakers have been Mr. Moore, Miss Pope, Mr. Mead, and Mr. Leadbeater. Mr. Mead gave the third of his exceedingly interesting lectures on Apollonius of Tyana, throwing much light upon the character and methods as well as the wisdom of that great teacher and philosopher. The title chosen by Mr. Moore was "*The Pendulum*," a title of a somewhat dry and non-committal character, as he himself said. But the title did not matter, for it heralded a lecture of peculiar suggestiveness,

and very many members attended to hear it. Miss Pope lectured on "*Romance in Plant Life*," and both the subject, and her method of dealing with it, were much appreciated; while on December 14th, Mr. Leadbeater lectured upon the subject of death, a subject upon which at the present time, above all others, reasonable and hopeful thought is needed.

The usual Thursday evening lectures will be resumed on Thursday, January 18th. They will be held in the lecture room at 28, Albemarle Street, and Mr. Mead will open the series with "*From the Sayings and Sermons of Apollonius of Tyana*."

S. MAUD SHARPE.

Mr. Leadbeater's Tour.

On Wednesday, November 22nd, Mr. Leadbeater visited Bath and lectured on "*The States after Death*," to a crowded room—about eighty people. On Thursday he went on to Exeter where Miss Wheaton had arranged the meetings admirably. There was a meeting for conversation in the afternoon and members seized the opportunity to propound their difficulties. In the evening the lecture was upon "*The Evolution of the Soul*." At Plymouth, on Friday, Mr. Leadbeater spoke on "*The Astral Body*," always an attractive subject, and enquiries afterwards about books to read and the way to study showed that the lecture was effective.

The North of England Federation and Countess Wachtmeister's Tour.

Countess Wachtmeister's northern tour has been most successfully carried out from its beginning at Harrogate, on November 10th, to its conclusion at Birmingham during the second week in December. A very large number of public and drawing-room meetings were held—frequently two meetings per day—besides receptions for enquirers and members. Among the cities and towns visited were Harrogate, Baildon, Bradford, Leeds, Ilkley, Ripon, Middlesbrough, York, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Birmingham. Not only has the membership of the Society been increased by the exertions of the Countess, but the older members have been incited to fresh effort, and greater activity may be expected in the immediate future. In connection with the tour a good sale of literature was effected, and a very large number of people have had the teachings of Theosophy brought home to them by means of Countess Wachtmeister's eloquent discourses.

The next Federation meeting is to be held at Harrogate on Saturday, January 27th, under the presidency of Mr. Leadbeater. All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend. Full particulars may be obtained from the undersigned, at 7, Ryedale Terrace, Middlesbrough.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Sec.

Florence Lodge.

The Florence Lodge is now established at Via Maggio, 58, next door to "Casa Guidi," where Elizabeth Barrett Browning passed the last years of her life.

The Lodge room is large and airy and the position very central, being close to the Palazzo Pitti, and the Ponte Vecchio. It is hoped that at the beginning of the New Year Mrs. Cooper-Oakley will resume her course of lectures and also that Mr. J. C. Chatterji, after his most successful visit to Rome, will give the members of the Florentine Lodge the benefit of his valuable assistance.

Birmingham Lodge.

The Countess Wachtmeister concluded her lecturing tour in the north by staying three days at Birmingham, where she lectured three times and held an enquirers' meeting. On Sunday afternoon, December 10th, she spoke in the Basement Room, Pitman Vegetarian Hotel, to an audience of about forty, on "The Power of Prayer and Devotion." In the evening she addressed the members of the Branch and their friends, at the house of a member, her subject being "Karma and Reincarnation." Questions were put and answered, and a most interesting evening spent.

On Monday evening a public lecture was held in a good-sized hall, when over 100 people listened to the Countess on "Life after Death." The lecture was followed with the closest attention.

Unfortunately the enquirers' meeting on the following day was somewhat of a failure as regards numbers on account of the wretched weather. In spite of this, however, the Countess was kept busy answering questions the whole of the evening.

The sale of books and pamphlets during the visit was, quite unexpectedly, a great success, and much is hoped from this.

West London Branch.

The regular Friday evening meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., commencing at 8.15 p.m., will be resumed on January 12th. A syllabus is in course of preparation. Any members or friends who wish to have copies can obtain them by applying to the Secretary at the above address.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 25.

S. II.—*It is sometimes stated in Theosophical books that the life in devachan is in truth fuller and more real than life on the physical plane; how is this possible, when all that a man has with him there are subjective images of his friends, which in reality are merely his own thought-forms?*

C. W. L.—This question betrays an absolute lack of comprehension of the real conditions of the devachanic existence. The images are something very much more than mere subjective dreams, and the statement as to their greater reality is absolutely true, although there are circumstances connected with it which are difficult to realize fully down here.

It should be remembered that the keen affection which alone brings one man into the devachan of another is a very powerful force upon these higher planes—a force which reaches up to the ego of the man who is loved, and evokes a response from it. Of course the vividness of that response, the amount of life and energy in it, depends on the development of the ego of the loved one, but there is no case in which the response is not a perfectly real one as far as it goes.

Our communion with and our knowledge of our friends down here, much as they mean to us, are in reality always exceedingly defective, for even in the very rare cases where we can feel that we know a man thoroughly and all through, body and soul, it is still only the part of him which is in manifestation on these lower planes while in incarnation that we can know, and there is far more behind in the real ego which we cannot reach at all. Of course the ego can be *fully* reached only upon his own level—one of the arûpa subdivisions of the mental plane—but at least we are very much nearer to that in devachan than we are here, and therefore under favourable conditions we could there know enormously more of our friend than would ever be possible here, while even under the most unfavourable of conditions we are at any rate far closer to the reality there than we have ever been before.

Two factors have to be taken into consideration in our enquiry into this subject—the degree of development of each of the parties concerned. If the man in devachan has strong affection and some development in spirituality he will form a clear and fairly perfect thought-image of his friend as he knew him—an image through which at that level the ego of the friend could express himself to a very considerable extent. But in order to take full advantage of that opportunity it is necessary that the ego of the friend should himself be very fairly advanced in evolution.

We see, therefore, that there are two reasons for which the manifestation may be imperfect. The image made by the devachanee may be so vague and inefficient that the friend, even though well-evolved, may be able to make very little use of it; and on the other hand, even when a good image is made, there may not be sufficient development on the friend's part to enable him to take due advantage of it.

But in any and every case the ego of the friend is reached by the feeling of affection, and whatever may be its stage of development it at once responds by pouring itself forth into the image which has been made. The extent to which the true man can express himself through it depends on the two factors above-mentioned—the kind of

image which is made in the first place, and how much ego there is to express in the second; but even the feeblest image that can be made is at any rate on the mental plane, and, therefore, far easier for the ego to reach than is a physical body two whole planes lower down.

If the friend who is loved is still alive he will of course be entirely unaware down here on the physical plane that his true self is enjoying this additional manifestation, but that in no way affects the fact that that manifestation is a more real one and contains a nearer approximation to his true self than this lower one, which is all that most of us can as yet see.

It is sometimes objected that since a man may well enter into the devachanic life of several of his departed friends at once, he must thus be simultaneously manifesting himself in all these various forms, as well as, perhaps, managing a physical body down here. So he is, but that conception presents no difficulty to anyone who understands the relation of the different planes to one another; it is just as easy for him to manifest himself in several devachanic images at once as it is for us to be simultaneously conscious of the pressure of several different articles against different parts of our body. The relation of one plane to another is like that of one dimension to another; no number of units of the lower dimension can ever equal one of the higher, and in just the same way no number of devachanic manifestations could exhaust the power of response in the ego above. On the contrary it seems certain that such manifestations afford him an appreciable additional opportunity for development on the mental plane.

Thus it will be seen that the theory that devachan is an illusion is merely the result of a misconception, and shows imperfect acquaintance with its conditions and possibilities; the truth is that the higher we rise the nearer we draw to the one reality.

QUESTION 26.

A. J. R.—*In the works of Clement of Alexandria are to be found some extracts entitled "ἐκ τῶν Θεοδοῦτου καὶ τῆς ἀνατολικῆς καλουμένης διδασκαλίας." I should like to get some information about the "Eastern School" here mentioned and about the contents of these extracts.*

G. R. S. M.—The full title of these interesting extracts is "Summaries from the Writings of Theodotus and the so-called Eastern Teaching in the Time of Valentinus." It is assumed that the followers of the great Gnostic teacher Valentinus were divided into two schools—the Anatolic or Oriental and the Italian School, of which the former was spread through Egypt and Syria, and the latter through Italy and Southern Gaul. Much ingenuity has been expended in trying to establish the differences of teaching between the Eastern and Western Schools, but to my mind without any success. I am even sceptical that such a difference existed, but to establish my point I should require to write a treatise on the subject. The criticism of the jumbled and disordered extracts from Theodotus and comments of

Clemens thereon, is one of the most difficult subjects in the whole of Valentinianism and cannot be treated in THE VĀHAN; the most accessible source to which I can refer A. J. R. is the admirable article on "Valentinus," in Smith and Wace's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, by the German scholar, R. A. Lipsius, the greatest living authority on the subject. I might also refer A. J. R. to my own articles in *The Theosophical Review* (late *Lucifer*), on "The Valentinian School" (xx. 441 *sqq.*, xxi. 31 *sqq.*, 134 *sqq.*). He will thus be able to learn what are the contents of these extracts and also the nature of the "Eastern Teaching" which was the common property of the Valentinian Gnosis.

QUESTION 27.

B. S. D.—*Why, since according to Theosophical teachings like attracts like, is love so often not reciprocated?*

A. P. S.—I never heard of a Theosophic teaching to the effect that like attracts like. In electricity and chemistry the facts are rather the other way about, and in the experience of the human heart the grievous trouble is that one cannot discern any rational law at work in the matter at all. The question invites treatment in a vein that would be hardly serious enough for THE VĀHAN, but there are many phenomena of life "too solemn for the comic touches in them," and one may go behind the too familiar difficulty that disturbs B. S. D. to a problem of supreme interest, the solution of which, if it is ever solved on the physical plane, will bring about a millennium on earth. What is the true origin of mutual love? No poet or novelist has attempted to grapple with the problem because it must be formulated with due regard to the facts of human evolution, with full knowledge of the aspect which love assumes on planes of Nature where form and sex are forgotten, with a comprehension of some ultimate possibilities concerning the higher spiritual evolution which the most advanced Theosophic knowledge amongst us but dimly suspects.

The love principle—the highest attribute of our spiritual nature—is so masked and sheathed on the physical plane, that these masks and sheaths confuse the understanding of undeveloped humanity and misdirect its ardour of emotion; but they are responsive to a spiritual force of inexpressible grandeur, and if we could but comprehend that more fully we might perhaps escape to some extent from the melancholy condition of things described by our correspondent as "so often" to be deplored.

A. A. W.—I might fairly ask our querist where he finds in Theosophical teachings any such broad statement as that "like attracts like." It would need much limitation and qualification before it could be used as the basis of the difficulty sought to be raised upon it. But what has love to do with likeness? As far as it is concerned with the physical plane (and that is much farther than

most lovers would allow), it is the merest commonplace of the sixpenny novel that like does *not* attract like. Of the higher affinities which draw souls together life after life, it would, I venture to think, be true to say that they are always reciprocated; and, by the nature of things, must be. For there can be no mistake as to the character of the love on the higher planes. But this love may fail to find its manifestation in one or more lives on the physical plane, through the working of kârmic causes. A hopeless love in this world may, and often does, mean the kârmic punishment of selfish evil-doing in a previous life, as is set out in Mr. Sinnett's *Karma*. There are many of us who, from the nature of our past, do not deserve to be happy in love, and can only hope by unselfish devotion to lay the foundation of happiness hereafter. And there are also many whose present love is selfish only and neither promises nor deserves return. Such love does not make likeness, and they have no need to blame karma for their failure.

QUESTION 28.

H. D.—Is it not true that in each life-wave all three Logoi are present and active in certain degrees, but that in the first life-wave the mânasic quality is predominant, in the second wave the buddhic is predominant, and in the First Logos or third life-wave the âtmic is predominant, and further that the increase and decrease as to dominance is gradual and mutually interactive?

C. W. L.—I am not quite sure that I comprehend the last clause of this question, but the earlier part of it seems to me to be an endeavour to state one aspect of the great mystery of the Three in One. Perhaps the following suggestions may help to make the idea a little clearer to the mind of the querent.

It must never for a moment be forgotten that the Logos is fundamentally One as well as Three. If it were possible (which, of course, it is not) that any mere man could stand side by side with the Logos of our solar system upon His own plane, and look at Him with equal eye, as a brother Logos of some other system might, he would see that divine Power as *one*—unmistakably one and indivisible, yet possessing within Himself three aspects. Now supposing that the Logos wished to manifest Himself upon the plane next below that, it would be necessary for Him to descend to it and take upon himself a veil or body or vehicle of its matter. All these words are, of course, entirely inappropriate, for the planes of which we are now thinking are far above the level of any kind of matter which we can at all conceive, but nevertheless the analogy suggested is a true one.

Now that which we call His first aspect is not capable of full expression or manifestation on any plane below His own, and consequently (in order to pass downward) it is necessary that He should, as it were, pour Himself forth by way of His second aspect. That manifestation of the Logos,

wearing His second aspect, on a plane one stage lower than His own, is what we sometimes call the Second Logos of our solar system. If for any reason He wishes to manifest Himself directly upon a plane still one step lower, neither the first nor the second aspect will serve, but the third must be used; and that manifestation of the Logos, wearing His third aspect, on a plane two stages lower than His own, is what is sometimes called the Third Logos of our system. But it is nevertheless one and the same Great Being showing Himself in various aspects and on various planes.

It must also be remembered that His consciousness is capable not only of acting through every one of these aspects equally, but of acting in fullest perfection through all of them simultaneously. And in each and every such case it would appear to the spectator that the whole of His strength and life was equally working. There is little wonder, therefore, that the untrained mind regards as different entities aspects which differ so widely and are simultaneously in full activity.

Now from each and all of these aspects—the three aspects of the Triple Logos on His own plane, and the lower manifestation of two of those aspects—spiritual force is steadily pouring forth into the worlds which owe their existence to Him. As they descend through many planes to reach our level, these forces take many and varied forms, and are the fount of many and varied activities, and it often happens that some of these manifestations of energy appear to our minds to be warring one against the other, although in truth they are one and all come down from the same great “Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

The whole subject is, and cannot but be, far beyond human comprehension, and the most that any of us can do is to endeavour to indicate a line along which in meditation it may be possible for some to draw a little nearer to enlightenment.

QUESTION 29.

J. E. C.—Why is suffering always assumed to be so much more beneficial to individual perfection than happiness?

G. R. S. M.—It seems to be laid down in the nature of things that happiness is the outcome of suffering, and that without this “passion” there could be no salvation—that is to say, perfection or gnosis. The soul if she remained ever by herself in her own state and without change, would be practically non-existent, and unknowing of her own nature and bliss. To know herself she must descend into matter, seeking sensation and so suffering. When the lowest point of descent is reached, she turns upward to ascend, stretching forth her hands to her lord, the spirit or true mind, who descends unto her and becomes her saviour, finally restoring her to her pristine condition but with all the added gnosis of her long pilgrimage. Thus is it laid down in the Gnosis of the Christ and we must receive it with

all reverence from so high a source. Now this "suffering" is a mystery, for in her descent the soul goes forth in love, not to suffer but to enjoy; for her in her descent all is happiness, and only when she turns and "repents" and begins to re-ascend does she recognise her former happiness as suffering. What was the happiness of the soul is suffering to the spirit, and what is happiness to the spirit is suffering to the soul. But the soul has now to change from her former will to enjoy to a new will to know and so once more to be. She must become the spirit, and so for her now her happiness is to unite herself with the spirit and free herself from her old nature of enjoying the things of sense, which now no longer satisfy. What was her former happiness becomes now her ignorance and misery; but she has still to tread the path of happiness—a new and greater happiness—and not of woe, for she must now ascend and no longer descend, she must return to "those-who-are" once more—no longer as a passive substance but as an active power.

Now the two most extremely opposed views of life with regard to suffering and happiness are the "Jewish" and the "Greek." The Javehist fanaticism which rejoices in suffering as the chastisement of a God for sins committed against his jealous personality, has led to a morose and melancholy Puritanism, that sees sin in the most innocent pleasures—"sins" against the Almighty. It is responsible for the monstrous dogmas of "original sin" and unending torment which make this world grey and the world to come an inferno, and which portray the Deity in the loveless guise of a bloodthirsty and revengeful fiend. It is almost impossible to imagine a more distorted caricature of the doctrine of the Christ than is imagined by this (unfortunately very large) class of minds. It is the outcome of that "fear of Jahveh," which has transformed the doctrine of the eternal "passion" of the soul into the blasphemy of the savage sacrifice and pitiful suffering of a son to appease the wrath of a bloodthirsty parent.

On the other hand, the laughter-loving "Greek" view that yearned after the ever-smiling soul of nature, and would make life one long holiday, was a great danger if its love were not turned to the higher soul. Still it was free from the paralysing sense of sin in all things, and prevented life growing grey.

We want more colour in our lives in this mechanical age, a brighter view of things, and I for my part cannot see why in our Theosophical life we should prefer the melancholy ideal of the "path of woe" to the winsome comradeship of child Psyche who was the "conductor of souls" in certain mysteries of the rare remembered past.

QUESTION 30.

W. B.—*We are told that the crime of murder committed is perhaps sometimes the out-gate of a long series of thoughts or tendencies in that direction, and that such acts are almost involuntary. Now where is the ex-*

planation for any other karmic images weakly indulged in in the weak cycles, and which may find an outlet in action, the agent discovering a violent distaste in the realisation, yet driving himself consciously to experience it in the concrete with a certain knowledge that the anticipated pleasure had its seat in the mind alone. Briefly put, may we not suppose that a wrong committed which brings no sort of pleasure in its commission is in itself half the debt paid for that act?

A. A. W.—The querist has in his mind one of the commonest—yet deepest—mysteries of life; a case (like Sydney Carton, in the *Tale of Two Cities*) in which a man feels himself trodden down in a hopeless struggle with the monster he himself has made—into which, as G. R. S. M. has said here a month or two back, he has put so much of himself that there is not enough of him left even to resist the horror. If such a one believes in "Providence," many hard thoughts will arise in his mind; he will look back and see himself born with the fatal weakness—most likely inherited; he will remember the circumstances (which might well have been otherwise) which brought it out—the yielding, time after time, to the pleasure; and the sudden consciousness one terrible day that the pleasure was over, and the stern necessity left in its place—that he had by degrees shaped for himself an incubus he could no longer shake off, for whose pleasure he must go on doing the thing he had learnt to hate—and he will think, "Can there be a God who cares for us at all?"

What can we say to him? First, we can dignify his struggle. It is not, as he thinks, merely a shameful weakness, which puts him beneath the level of mankind; it is *his* form of the great fight which all have to wage, and which, in one shape or another, must last until we stand on the farther shore; nor is his true Self a hairs-breadth lowered by all the foulness through which the struggle may drag him. Who shall say how many lives back it first began—how often he has failed, incurring thereby the karmic penalties of temptation, hereditary and otherwise—or how many more bodies he must take, one after another, for the fight before *his* Satan shall find his strength equal to his own, and, as in E. Carpenter's apologue, say "I love thee" and spread his wings and bear him to the joy above?

Better still—the very pain and shame of it make it more effective for our true welfare—we grow all the quicker for it. Not for us the pride of virtue, the peace of the soul; neither is there for us the dull repose of the self-satisfied, dreaming through life after life without taking a step on the way. And for us the advance lies here, that we have to meet the temptation time after time upon higher planes. I think the querist is mistaken in writing of a wrong which brings no sort of pleasure in its commission. What could make us commit it? I am speaking with very insufficient knowledge upon very abstruse matters; but I am inclined to say that when we find (as some of us do find) that instead of the temptation seeming to be more and more confined to the physical body by our efforts to gain self-control, the contrary

seems to come about—that the infection seems to spread ever higher up, or (in the querist's words) that the anticipated pleasure seems more and more to have its seat in the mind alone—that we should not be distressed or discouraged. I think (with all due humility) that it rather means that we have not been such total failures on the lower plane as we think, and are now trusted to undertake a higher trial.

Anyway, one thing is certain—that the main point is that nothing should distress or discourage us. As many lives—as many millions of years—as we need for victory we shall have—what else is time made for?

As regards kârmic penalties—no doubt all our weaknesses and sufferings are such; and, as they are used, either pay off old debts or make new ones: but after all the reign of karma is a limited one, and these questions of the life of the higher ego are rather beyond and above it. Dare I say it? Yes, I will—I think we do not deal generously enough with our karma; we are meanly avaricious about it, as if it were money. It is of vast importance to the comfort of our physical selves—that is true; but we ourselves should grow better if we were as careless of one as the other. It is but a matter of the “opposites” which we have to transcend!

QUESTION 31.

H. M.—How can an aspirant best attract the attention of a Master?

C. W. L.—As a matter of fact, it is absolutely unnecessary to try to do this, for the Masters are ever watching for those whom they can help, and who will be of use to them in the great work which they have to do. We can do nothing on our side but work steadily at the improvement of our own character, and endeavour in every way possible by study of Theosophical works and by self-development to fit ourselves for the honour which we desire. The regular practice of meditation and concentration will be of the utmost help to us in such an attempt; but we must remember that the regularity is an important factor in producing the result. It should be undertaken daily at the same hour, and steadily persevered in, even though no immediate effect should be produced.

QUESTION 32.

A. D. P.—On page 108 of Dr. Hartmann's Life of Paracelsus, I read: “The odour of incense may sooner attract evil spirits than drive them away. . . if we wish to drive them away it would be more reasonable to employ disagreeable odours for that purpose.” How does this agree with the teaching to make use of incense?

C. W. L.—No such passage as is quoted above

is to be found on the page given in the 1887 edition of the book. On p. 130, however, occur words of similar import: “The making of circles and the burning of incense are all tomfoolery and temptation, by which only evil spirits were attracted.”

I am not aware of any Theosophical “teaching” to make use of incense; if there be any such, of course the above remark does *not* agree with it at all. But why should it?

If Paracelsus ever wrote anything like the words which are here attributed to him, one can only say that his opinion is in direct conflict with the experience of the vast majority of occultists, and with the universal tradition of all religions; for they all agree that the use of incense *has* been found to drive away evil influences and to purify the place in which it is burnt.

QUESTION 33.

M. E. W.—Mrs. Besant, speaking in Manchester, stated that the human embryo passes through the mineral and vegetable—as well as the animal—kingdoms. Can a scientific authority for this statement be given, and where shall I find it?

*B. K.—Beyond the fact that human germ-cells are built up out of the so-called “inorganic” chemical elements, I do not know in what sense it can be said that the “human embryo passes through the mineral kingdom,” and I venture to think that the questioner has probably confused the statement he quotes with another somewhat similar one, which is often made by occultists and was very probably quoted by Mrs. Besant on the occasion he mentions, *viz.*, “Life evolves through the mineral, vegetable and animal to the human stage,” or as the older writers put it: “The stone becomes a plant, the plant an animal, the animal a man, and the man a god.”*

As regards the vegetable, it is a scientific fact that the human germ-cell in its earliest stages of segmentation is practically indistinguishable from that of a plant or an animal; and in its later stages it passes through a series of stages which reproduce in brief the main evolutionary types of the animal kingdom. These will be found described in detail in any good text-book of embryology.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 1, 1900.

NO. 7.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

THIRD FLOOR.

General Office, and Housekeeper's Room and Kitchen.

NEW SECTIONAL PREMISES.

THE rooms at 28, Albemarle Street are now open to members.

The following are the rooms and the use to which it is intended, in the first instance, to put them. Members are asked, however, to bear in mind that these arrangements are merely tentative and subject to such alteration as the Executive Committee may by actual experience find to be desirable.

FIRST FLOOR.

Lecture Hall.—This room is capable of seating 110 persons comfortably. Twice a week the Hall is rented in the evening by the Blavatsky Lodge. It is hoped that it may often be let to members for special courses of lectures. It is also proposed to let it to other societies for meetings and lectures. In this way the rent paid by the Section will be materially recouped. Terms of letting can be obtained on application to the General Secretary.

Drawing-room.—This room is intended to be used as a strangers' room, to which members will be at liberty to invite visitors. On two afternoons a week this room can be engaged by members for special receptions.

SECOND FLOOR.

Library.—This will be open to members on weekdays from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. On Sundays from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. In this room will be the Reference Library.

Reading-room, in which smoking will be permitted. In this room will be the Lending Library.

General Secretary's Private Office.

The endeavour has been to do only the "absolutely necessary" in the way of painting, papering, and generally adapting the house to serve our needs, and to do this as economically as possible. The Committee look forward to a time when the financial position of the Section will warrant a further outlay in this direction. As it is, much is still lacking in the way of furniture, and a variety of other things, which will add much to the comfort and beauty of our new home when they are obtained. To supply this deficiency the Committee are sanguine enough to hope they may rely on individual members. A list of what is most urgently needed will be kept in the Library, which members will be able to consult. Any donations for this special purpose will also be gladly received.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

PRESIDENT-FOUNDER'S TOUR.

I have much pleasure in stating, for the information of members, that I have received notice from the President-Founder that he intends paying a visit to Europe, and, as at present arranged, he proposes leaving India on February 17th, and will probably visit the Italian Lodges and also pay a visit to Germany ere reaching England; we may therefore hope to welcome our President to London in the month of April. During May and June a tour embracing the Scandinavian, Dutch and French Sections is planned. It is Colonel Olcott's intention to be with us again in time to preside over our Annual Convention. Later in the autumn it is probable that the President's return journey to India will be made *via* the United States.

No doubt many of our Lodges will look forward to a visit from the President, therefore when dates are definitely settled due notice will be given.

The Section will, I am sure, extend to our President-Founder their most cordial greetings and welcome on the occasion of his forthcoming visit, with the hope that he may find reason to be satisfied with the growth and vitality in all parts of the world of the Society which he and his indefatigable Co-Founder, H. P. B., worked so devotedly to inaugurate nearly a quarter of a century ago.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

The London Lodge.

I have very great pleasure in stating that I have received notice from the President of the above Lodge that they desire to join the Sectional organisation. The London Lodge will therefore for the future be a Lodge of the European Section.

The London Lodge is the oldest established Lodge in Europe, and its President, Mr. A. P. Sinnett, is Vice-President of the Theosophical Society.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

Lectures by Mr. Leadbeater.

A course of four lectures on "Clairvoyance" will be delivered by Mr. Leadbeater during February in the new Lecture Hall of the Section. They will be at 5 p.m. on Tuesdays, commencing February 6th. Admission to single lectures 2s.; course tickets for the series, 5s.

A detailed syllabus is now ready, and members can obtain it and also purchase tickets from the Librarian of the Section Library, or the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W.

Members should take every opportunity of making these lectures known to friends, as the course promises to be of great value to a large number of people outside the Theosophical Society who are interested in the subject of the expansion of consciousness beyond the normal.

Countess Wachtmeister.

Countess Wachtmeister is at present in London and is willing to hold drawing-room meetings for the discussion of Theosophy. Any members who may desire to offer their drawing-rooms for this purpose are requested kindly to communicate with me as soon as possible.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

Annual Guaranteed Donations.

The following additional promises of annual donations have been received to January 20th: H. B. (second guarantee), £1; R. P., 5s.; J. X., £3; M. F. G., 5s. Total, £4 10s.

Already acknowledged, £607 14s. Total guaranteed, £612 4s.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to Jan. 20th: J. B., 15s.; F. C., 5s.; A. D., £2 2s.; M. E. G., £1; L. E. C., £1; C. C., £5; S. C., £2; J. McN., 10s.; C. de M. M., £1 1s.; R. P., 5s.; E. E., 10s.; L. U., £1 1s.; A. D., 7s.; A. S., 15s.; M. H. L., £2 10s.; A. L., £1; C. L. P., £1 1s.; M. E. McM., 10s.; E. T., £4; M. H., £1 1s.; A. H. W., £3 3s.; K. K., £1 1s.; W. S.-E., £2; F. L. B., £1; C. S. K., 10s.; J. X., £3; F. S., 5s.; A. A. de P., £2 2s.; H. S. G., £1; E. H., 10s.; E. M., £2; A. C., £1 1s.; M. F. G., 5s.; B. P. M., 5s. Total, £44 15s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been received, and are now acknowledged with thanks: *Psychology as a Natural Science applied to the Solution of Occult Psychic Phenomena*, G. C. Rane, M.D., Philadelphia, 1889; *The Mystic Guide in the Gospel according to John*, H. A. V., T.P.S., 1899; *Some Problems of Life*, Annie Besant, T.P.S., 1900.

A. J. WILLSON, Librarian.

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays, at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The Lodge held a special business meeting on Thursday evening, January 11th, when the following resolutions were proposed and carried:

1. That the Thursday evening lectures of the Blavatsky Lodge be open only to members of the Lodge, and to such country or foreign members of the Society as may happen to be in town.*
2. That the Sunday evening meetings be open to all members of the Society, and to non-members by card of admission signed by the Hon. Secretary.

The Secretary therefore desires to give notice that cards hitherto issued for the Thursday evening lectures will be no longer available, but that any visitor wishing to attend the Sunday evening meetings may obtain a card admitting to the present series, by writing to the Hon. Secretary of the Blavatsky Lodge, 28, Albemarle Street, W., and giving full name and address.

The Lodge has held no lectures on Thursday evenings since December 14th, but it inaugurated its removal to its permanent quarters by the above-mentioned business meeting on January

* It is particularly requested, in order to prevent disappointment, that foreign or country members, who are not at the same time members of the Lodge, will, whenever possible, notify the Secretary when expecting to be present at the Thursday evening lectures.

11th. On Sunday, January 14th, the first of the series of Sunday lectures was held, and there was a good attendance. Mr. Mead was the lecturer, and spoke upon "The Beginning of Things," after which he replied to various questions.

It is very much hoped that, once we are really settled, the members of the Lodge will feel as much at home in the new lecture room as they did in the old one at Avenue Road, which for many of us held so many memories.

All communications for the Hon. Secretary of the Blavatsky Lodge must in future be addressed to 28, Albemarle Street, W.

S. MAUD SHARPE,
Hon. Secretary.

Florence Lodge.

Mr. Chatterji's visit to Florence terminated with a Lecture in one of the Halls of the "Studii Superiori" (or what was formerly the University—now moved to Pisa—of Florence)

He was exceedingly well received by a packed audience, and was introduced by Professor Pavolini, the Professor of Sanskrit. He was asked to visit Florence again shortly to give a course of Lectures on Hindu Philosophy.

During his ten days visit his whole time was occupied with lectures, answering questions, or Drawing-room Meetings.

Lectures were also delivered at the rooms of the Florence Lodge, 58, Via Maggio, in the house of the President, Signor Cavallini.

Piazzini V. Emanuele and Mr. Chatterji was accompanied by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, who, it is hoped will return very soon to take up her own course of instruction.

Much interest is shown in Florence, especially by Professors and scientific men. Several new members have joined.

A. C. L.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings at the Commercial Hotel, Westgate, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at 5, Beaconsfield Road, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 7 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.; Feb. 20th, *Karma and Freewill*, E. J. Cuthbertson. Enquiries

may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m. (Feb. 2nd and 16th), and by appointment.

FLORENCE LODGE. Meetings at 58, Via Maggio, on Saturdays, at 3.30 p.m.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the second Thursday of each month: Feb. 8th, *Reincarnation*, D. G. Williamson.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 12, Wartenau, on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Hotel zur Krone once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *The Religious Teachers of China*, C. N. Goode; Feb. 11th, *Theosophy and Home Life*, Mrs. Bell; Feb. 18th, *The Theosophical Movement*; Feb. 25th, *Buddhism*, E. J. Dunn. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 6th and 20th, *Light on the Path*. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings by arrangement. For information apply to H. E. Nichol, 56, Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 10, Eldon Terrace, and on Fridays at 6, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton, for the study of Plato. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 9, Winstanley Terrace, Headingley, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquh Street, on Wednesdays: Feb. 7th and 21st. Class for study of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Feb. 14th and 28th. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meetings every Sunday at 7.30 p.m., at the Battersea Free Library: Feb. 4th, *Mysticism and Morals*, R. King; Feb. 11th, *Environment and Growth—from a Theosophic Standpoint*, Mrs. Hooper; Feb. 18th, "The Golden Chain," F. Horne; Feb. 25th, *Transformations*, Miss Edith Ward. Students' Class, Feb. 14th and 28th. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Feb. 1st, *The Reality of the Devachanic Life*, C. W. Leadbeater; Feb. 8th, *The Age of Humanity*. A. P. Sinnett; Feb. 15th, *Nineteen Hundred Years Ago and Now*, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 22nd, *Religion and Worship*, Miss Arundale. These lectures are open only to members of the Lodge. On Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *Death—and After*, Countess Wachtmeister; Feb. 11th, *Reincarnation—(a) In Relation to Character, (b) In Relation to Environment*, Mrs. Sharpe; Feb. 18th, *The Power of Thought*, Miss Ward; Feb. 25th, *Karma*, Dr. A. A. Wells. The Sunday evening lectures are open to visitors by cards to be obtained from the Secretary.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 6th, *The Brain as an Instrument of the Ego*, P. Tovey; Feb. 13th, *The Theosophy of Tolstôï*, Miss Mallet; Feb. 20th, *Some Psychic Phenomena*, P. Tovey; Feb. 27th, *Mysticism and Morality*, R. King. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: Feb. 2nd, *II. Theosophical Conceptions of the Worlds we live in, (b) The Conditions of the Present*, Miss Ward; Feb. 9th, *Zuni Creation Myth*, Mrs. Hooper; Feb. 16th, *III. Theosophical Conceptions of the Bodies we use, (a) The Way we came by them*, Miss Ward; Feb. 23rd, *Freewill and Karma*, Miss Arundale.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Subjects for alternate evenings are "*Four Great Religions*," and "*The Evolution of Man*."

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 6 p.m., at 7, Via Lombardia.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at the Oxford Temperance Hotel, St. James' Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 34.

G. A.—*We are told in The Secret Doctrine that of each globe in the Planetary Chain the Lunar Monads pass through the three elemental kingdoms, then the mineral, vegetable, animal and human. We are also told in more recent books that the three elemental kingdoms belong to the two devachanic levels and to the astral plane. How could all these kingdoms and the mineral exist on the higher globes of the Chain, which have no physical, and in two cases, neither a physical nor an astral, basis?*

C. W. L.—These kingdoms *do* all exist quite comfortably on those higher globes, but in truth the conditions there are so totally different in every way from any with which we are acquainted in this world that it is exceedingly difficult to make them at all comprehensible to those who are as yet unable to see them. This much, however, is clear—that we must think, in every case, of the evolving of the ensouling monadic essence, not merely of that of the encasement, whether that encasement is physical, astral, or mental. Take the case of what is sometimes, though rather misleadingly, described as the mineral monad. This consists of an enormous mass or flood of the force outpoured from the Logos, already divided into many different streams, and having already reached the lowest point of its descent into matter, so that it is able to manifest itself on the physical plane.

It must not, however, be forgotten that it has descended through all the other planes and retains what it has acquired in that descent, so that the monadic essence ensouling any particular mineral has also its own special expression on the astral, mental, and all other planes—hardly definite enough yet to be spoken of as its astral or mental *body*, but nevertheless fulfilling for it some of the functions which such bodies fulfil for more advanced entities.

The mineral monadic essence in passing from globe E to globe F must, of course, cast off its physical vehicle—that which we call the mineral; but the condition of the essence itself is no more affected by that than is the condition of the true man when *he* casts off for the time his physical body. It is still the same living essence, though manifesting now only in its astral vehicle, and no doubt it can still be acted upon through that vehicle in such manner as to assist its evolution, though the exact methods of such action are not clearly known to us.

The same truth holds good all the way through, and therefore every kingdom is fully represented on each globe. This much we can clearly see, although the processes through which each kingdom passes in those higher worlds are not readily comprehensible by the physical brain.

QUESTION 35.

A. S. C.—*In The Key to Theosophy it is stated that the name Theosophy dates from the third century of our era, and began with Ammonius Saccas and his disciples. Can THE VÂHAN quote some passage*

which substantiate this assertion, as well from writings of the early Theosophists themselves, as from equally early writings about them? If the quotations cannot be given, can THE VĀHAN furnish the authority for the statement?

G. R. S. M.—The authority for the statement made by H. P. B. in *The Key to Theosophy* is Dr. Alexander Wilder in his *New Platonism and Alchemy* (A Sketch of the Doctrines and Principal Teachers of the Eclectic or Alexandrian School; also an Outline of the Interior Doctrines of the Alchemists of the Middle Ages. Albany: New York, U.S.A.; 1869). I do not know on what authority Dr. Wilder bases his assertion, but the classical references are as follows:

θεοσοφία.—Porphyry (latter half of 3rd cent.), *De Abstemio*, 327 (ed. Reiske); Eusebius (1st half of 4th cent.), in *Patrol. Gr.*, iii. 48A., 176B.; Pseudo-Dionysius (5th cent.), *Mystic Theol.*, i. 1; Leontius (A.D. 610), i. 1368D.

θεόσοφος.—Porphyry, *Epistola ad Anebonem* (in Villosion's *Anecdota Græca*, ii.), 30, 15; Iamblichus (end of 3rd cent. and beginning of 4th), *De Mysteriis*, 249, 10; Eusebius, iii. 256c; Sozomen, 897 A.D.

θεοσόφως.—Clemens Alexandrinus (end of 2nd and beginning of 3rd cent.), in *Patr. Gr.*, 708A.; Methodius (end of 3rd and beginning of 4th cent.), in *Patr. Gr.*, 377c.

The above are taken from Sophocles' *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100 (New York; 1887). Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon* (the standard work in England), gives no references at all to these terms.

We thus see that the earliest writer who uses any form of this compound, as far as we have any remaining evidence, is Clement of Alexandria. We certainly cannot suppose that Clement invented it; it was in all probability a known term in the schools, and, therefore, may have been familiar to Ammonius Saccas, who was a contemporary of Clement. Ammonius, however, is generally said to have left nothing in writing, so that we have no exact knowledge as to his use of the term. All we can say is that as Porphyry and Iamblichus used it immediately after him, and as Clement used it immediately before him, and as he was in the direct line of these ideas, he most probably was familiar with the word. It is not, however, true that Ammonius left nothing in writing, for we possess a small fragment from his pen; the word "theosophy," however, does not occur in it.

That the word became subsequently a well-recognised and well-defined term may be seen from the record of the work of some now unknown theosophist, Aristocrites, preserved to us in the following anathema: "I anathematise also the book of Aristocrites, which he calls Theosophy, in which he attempts to show that Judaism, Hellenism, Christianity and Manichæism are one and the same doctrine" (from the "Cursing of the Manichæans," Cotelierius ad *Clement. Recog.*, iv. 544).

I do not for a moment suppose that the above

exhausts all the evidence, but it is all I can lay hands on for the moment. *Theosophia* is only a later and more precise term to designate the range of ideas which were covered in the time of Pythagoras (6th cent. B.C.) by the word *philosophia*. Pythagoras is said to have invented this term, but I no more believe that the sage of Samos invented it than that Ammonius Saccas invented *theosophia*. In course of time the term *philosophy* became employed for speculations and investigations which so entirely lacked the spirit of the science of sacred things so beloved by Pythagoras, that a more precise term became necessary for the students who continued the study of that holy science of many names.

QUESTION 36.

Z. B.—How can moral heredity—the heredity of character with all its peculiarities, often manifest among members of a family even when education in common has been lacking—harmonise with the theory of reincarnation, which attributes a different origin to every member of a family?

A. A. W.—In answering this question we must first put aside the needless introduction of "education." The querist's point is at the peculiarities of the body and mind we bring with us into the world; what modifications may be made in them afterwards have nothing to do with reincarnation or with heredity. Now what are the observed facts as to this last? In any fairly large family, born of parents who have themselves a tolerably distinguishable individuality, we shall most likely find the children differing much one from the other. Some (usually the daughters) as is said "take after" the father; others (most frequently the sons) take after the mother; others again will more or less faithfully reproduce the traits of a more remote ancestor, of which, very possibly, the actual father or mother may show nothing. Besides this, there is often traceable a classification of another kind—that the vital energy and the peculiar habits and tastes of the child seem to come rather from the father, whilst the character of the mind is the mother's—thus suggesting the explanation of the well-known fact that great men have usually had remarkable mothers, and, almost never, remarkable sons.

But still more noticeable than this heredity is the strange capriciousness with which it seems to act. I think I may venture to say that in the majority of cases it *don't* act—that the children might, as far as we can see, have just as well have been produced by any other pair as by their actual parents. The supporters of the various physical theories of heredity are accustomed by way of explaining this to assume that they reproduce earlier and unknown ancestors. This sounds well enough, but it must not be forgotten that it is a pure assumption, and neither an explanation nor a confirmation of the theory.

The Theosophical view is (see *Man and His Bodies*) that the reign of heredity from the physical parents extends to the physical and etheric bodies

only. "The etheric double" (in Mrs. Besant's words) "is built after the mould given by the Lords of Karma, and is not brought with him by the ego, but awaits him with the physical body formed upon it." The parents of the child are chosen for him by the Lords of Karma precisely in order that the law of heredity may furnish a portion of the influences by which the body is to be formed for him. I say, a portion only; for no two egos can require precisely the same body, and hence what seems the caprice by which the law acts. There is an actual, living will which chooses what portion of the ancestral characteristics shall in this particular case be reproduced, and how these shall be modified to make the fit dwelling for the ego which is to inhabit that body.

The next point to be made clear is that the result of this action—the physical and etheric body and brain, with all their hereditary peculiarities—is only, when complete, an *instrument* for the thought and action of the ego itself, which comes down into it, clad in its mental and desire bodies, to do what it can with it in the physical world. Nor is it even the instrument of its own choice. At best a sheath in which the ego is hidden from view, it is frequently a dark and noisome prison by which its action is prevented—a foul and shameful mask which utterly misrepresents to the world the pure spirit behind it. It is true it is always the fate which the ego has made for itself in past lives, and which *must* be lived through; but it is often a hard fate, for all that.

With this explanation it will, I think, be easy to see that if two egos have much in common and have possibly passed one or more than one previous life together, there is nothing more likely from the Theosophical point of view than that their very similar organisation and closely resembling karma should bring them into incarnation together as members of the same family, and even as twins; nor could the very close correspondence sometimes found in the lives of twins be any difficulty. At the same time the marked *differences* also not unfrequently noticed are equally easy of explanation. The kârmic body is, in mathematical language, the "resultant" of many different forces; and two very different egos may have incurred kârmic rewards and penalties which may work out in similar bodies set in the same family circle. But the lives will *not* correspond; you may have the "Fleur de Marie" in the vilest surroundings, or the "black sheep" in the holiest and purest. Our claim as regards these matters is—against the ordinary religious views—Law, not capricious Grace; whilst where the ordinary scientific man says Blind Law—Chance—we say Intelligent Law, working out consciously the purpose of the universe.

L. R. H.—We are given to understand that the laws of heredity affect the vehicles of the man rather than his ego or true self, which is drawn to any special incarnation in order to give the best expression to the qualities inherent in that ego;

and to afford opportunities for the working out of its kârmic necessities, the main idea being that the heredity affords the best manifestation on the physical plane of the real man. With reference to moral heredity—that of character—it is possible that a certain class of ego would be attracted to a given type of family: say, for instance, that the prevailing family peculiarity was amiability, the group incarnated in that family would be natures of the sweet and gentle kind. Of course there are many other things to be considered, such as old links which draw individuals together, race necessities, and so on; but moral heredity seems to be accounted for in this way to a very considerable extent.

I. H.—Is there such a thing as "moral heredity" in the sense in which the phrase is apparently used by Z. B.? If one considers the fact that the qualities expressed through the physical body are qualities which the ego has developed in past lives, it seems to be obvious that souls with qualities in common will naturally be drawn to parents who can furnish the appropriate physical vehicle whereby to express such qualities. Thus we observe what appears to be "moral heredity." For example, if A has developed, through past experiences, a quality of self-assertion; and B has evolved a similar faculty through somewhat different lives, widely separated in time and space from those of B, it seems not unnatural that A and B should find suitable physical bodies in the same family; and in both cases the self-assertive quality which is their leading characteristic will be displayed, even when education in common has been lacking, and in spite of the fact that those souls may have gained their quality-building experiences in surroundings which may have widely differed the one from the other.

X.—One might very well answer this question with another, "How can the enormous *differences* between the members of a family, so frequent even when education has been in common, harmonise with a theory which attributes the *same* origin to every member of the family?" It is quite true that frequently such peculiarities may be traced back to a remoter ancestor, but far more frequently they cannot. I think Z. B. has not done justice to the Theosophical view in speaking of it as attributing a different origin to every member of a family, though his words are not in themselves incorrect. A separate origin—each being a separate individual, having had many lives before, and not necessarily in contact with its present physical parents before this life at all—this we do claim for each member of a family. But that these separate individuals must be all different, in the connotation of the word as he uses it, we do not say—rather the contrary. For all the members of the family those parents were chosen by the Lords of Karma as being proper to furnish them with the bodily clothing and circum-

stances fitting for their state of development and kârmic responsibilities; and hence, surely, the probabilities are that they will be egos which have a strong resemblance one to the other, as we actually find. They do not come into the same family by accident, and the natural conclusion from the fact that they are born as brothers and sisters would be that they are not seriously unlike each other. We may add to this another consideration. Not unfrequently they have been in close relationship in previous lives, and the fact of their reappearance in the same family is the direct result of the tie thus formed, and often strengthened by repetition, life after life. For the explanation of the frequent unlikeness—the black sheep in the family—we must look to karma. Many a soul in its past lives has deserved not to pass his childhood in the happiness of a loving family circle; many a parent has that in his own youth, or earlier still, which is fitly punished by suffering through his own children, as in a grim old story which Robert Browning has versified in one of his later poems.

QUESTION 37.

L. W.—*If a person is continually thinking ill of another, does he create a thought-form by this thinking, and if so, would a clairvoyant on the astral plane be deceived by that thought-form, and mistake it for the real person, who might be quite different?*

C. W. L.—The meaning of this question is not absolutely clear. Every thought creates a thought-form of some sort, and if one person thinks strongly of another (whether ill or well) he not infrequently calls into existence a thought-form resembling himself which appears to that person.

But it seems more probable that the questioner is suggesting a possibility that by thinking frequently of another we might create an image of the person thought of, and that since such an image would obviously represent only our idea of the person, and not his real condition, injustice might be done to him if our misrepresentation were mistaken for the reality. I have not personally met with any such case as is here suggested, but I imagine that it is by no means impossible; and I suppose that an entirely untrained clairvoyant might perhaps be considerably influenced by such a misrepresentation, much as a foolish or unthinking person may allow himself to be considerably influenced by gossip and slander on this plane.

But it is inconceivable that any one who had been at all properly trained in the use of astral sight could ever mistake a thought-form for a living person. The distinction between them is so clear to practised sight, that to confuse them a man must be either extremely ignorant or almost incredibly careless.

QUESTION 38.

H. Z.—*It has been stated that through want of care and self-restraint on the part of the parent many incarna-*

tions of children are wasted. How can wasted incarnations be accounted for while we are taught that the Lords of Karma regulate and are responsible for the incarnations, which ought to be for the further development of the ego?

C. W. L.—It is foolish for us, who understand nothing of the necessities of the case, to pretend to criticize the action of kârmic deities who by the hypothesis must understand *all* about it on every plane. But obviously their responsibility ends with the provision of conditions; the use which a man makes of those conditions must be left to his free will.

If a parent through ill conduct or want of self-restraint injures the character of his child (and it is unfortunately true that many do this) then it is the parent who is responsible for the waste of time caused, and not the kârmic deities. It must be remembered, too, that a child is born into a certain family not only because the conditions there provided for him are such as he has deserved, but in many cases because he has previously-existing ties of affection or service with some of its members. A great opportunity is thus afforded to those members, whether it be to discharge an ancient debt, to repay affection shown to them long ago, or perhaps to resume their loving care of one who has been their child in former days; whether they will take advantage of that opportunity, of course, rests entirely with themselves.

Underlying this question, and many others, there seems to be a lurking doubt of the justice of the action of karma. When will students understand that it is utterly *impossible* for the action of karma to be unjust—that if it could be so in even one case for a single moment, or in the smallest particular, it would mean the absolute upsetting of the law of the universe—a failure in the power of the Logos Himself?

QUESTION 39.

H. L.—(1) *What is the relation between the Absolute and the three Logoi, and between the three Logoi mutually?*

(2) *Do Chaos, Theos and Kosmos, named in this order, correspond to First, Second and Third Logos?*

(3) *Do all the three Logoi separately possess the double aspect of Spirit and Matter (Purusha and Prakriti)?*

G. R. S. M.—(1) Perhaps *H. L.* will not think me very ignorant if I answer that I have not the ghost of an idea. If I had any notion what meanings he connotes with the terms he uses, I might perhaps be courageous enough to play at dice with them and shake them up in my brain before throwing; but I fear it would be to no good purpose. I should be playing with words, which we are told are the counters of fools. For instance, I am assured by those who profess to have more than a bowing acquaintance with metaphysics that the term “absolute” is *ex hypothesi* something entirely opposed to every idea of relation; if this be

so, then H. L.'s first question must be put in the category of the "horns of the hare" and the "son of the barren woman." But indeed the question is one that has been dealt with many times already in THE VĀHAN and it has been pointed out repeatedly in very vigorous language that "we do not discuss such questions in our school"—as Iamblichus said on a famous occasion. We are content to put the solution of the question off to that remote future when perchance one may have grown into the stature of Him in whom we at present live and move and have our being—the Logos of our system, the Self of our universe.

The second part of the question concerning the "three Logoi" was treated by C. W. L. in these columns only a few months ago and has been dealt with elsewhere by others; but I for my part have not the faintest real notion as yet of this highest manifestation of the god-head in our cosmos; for me it still remains the mystery of mysteries. Who are we to vulgarly pry into the inmost relationship of God with Himself; what "tongue of flesh" shall shadow forth the mystery of the "sacred marriage" and the "divine birth"?

(2) Chaos means unordered "matter"; kosmos signifies ordered "matter" or the world-order; Theos is He who orders the chaotic elements of primal nature. Theos is father; Chaos is mother; Kosmos is child. But, "Listen, ye Sons of the Earth, to your teachers the Sons of the Fire: there is neither first nor last, for all are one."

(3) If we will not use the "single eye" of the soul, then I suppose we must look through "two" at "three," and so get ever further away from the centre.

I am afraid that H. L. will regard my answers as unsatisfactory or too mystical; but how can one answer otherwise than mystically on questions which are only asked in silence alone?

QUESTION 40.

L. H.—In The Human aura (Marques), it is said that books possess an aura according to their material, language and subject; is this statement generally accepted? If so, supposing a book read frequently and exclusively by one person, would its aura change or gain from contact with the aura of the reader? Again, how would its use, say in a public library, by all and sundry, affect its aura, or affect the casual reader if sensitive?

C. W. L.—The statement as it stands is incorrect. The aura of a perfectly new book would differ in no respect from that of any other collection of printing-ink, paper and binding materials, except that it would bear traces of the workmen

through whose hands it had passed. A *manuscript* is, of course, strongly impregnated with the aura of the writer, but the book printed from it has no direct connection with him; and it has no aura beyond that ordinarily appertaining to its materials, except what it acquires from those who handle it.

The language and subject of the book could not possibly make the slightest difference to its aura while it is new; but it is true that after it has been long in use they have indirectly produced an effect upon it, for a book written upon a special subject would most likely be read chiefly by a particular type of persons, and these readers would leave their impress upon the aura of the volume. Thus a book violently advocating some sectarian religious views would not be read except by persons who sympathised with its narrowness, and so would soon develop a decidedly unpleasant aura; and in the same way a book of an indecent or prurient nature would quickly become loathsome beyond description. Old books containing magical formulæ are often for this reason most uncomfortable neighbours.

In the same way the language in which a book is printed may indirectly affect its aura by limiting its readers largely to men of a certain nationality, and so by degrees enduing it with some of the prominent characteristics of that nationality; but directly and of itself it could have no influence whatever.

A book read frequently or exclusively by one person would of course be impregnated with his influence just as would any other article which was constantly in close connection with him. A book used in a public library is not infrequently as unpleasant psychically as it usually is physically, for it becomes loaded with all kinds of mixed magnetisms, many of them of a most unsavoury character. The sensitive person will do well to avoid such books, or if necessity compels him to use them he will be wise to touch them as little as may be, and rather to let them lie upon a table than to hold them in his hand.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR
THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, MARCH 1, 1900

NO. 8.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER'S TOUR.

The President-Founder, Colonel Olcott, is now on his way to Europe, and, as notified in THE VĀHAN for February, proposes to make an extended tour through most of the Sections of the Society. Further information will be available next month, but in the meantime members are invited to assist in defraying part of the necessarily heavy expenses of the tour. Any contributions forwarded to me for this purpose will be gratefully acknowledged.

It is probable that the President will arrive in Italy about March 5th. Secretaries of Branches who desire him to visit them are reminded that they should at once communicate with me.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

DRAWING-ROOM AT HEAD- QUARTERS.

The drawing-room on the first floor at 28, Albemarle Street, is available for engagement by members who may desire to use it for small private meetings or receptions, on two afternoons per week, or on any evening. A small charge is made, which is placed in the funds of the Section. Further information may be obtained on application to me.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

Guaranteed Donations.

Since the notice in THE VĀHAN for February, the following promises have been received: J. G., 5s.; M. E. T. (second promise), 10s. 6d.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received up to February 20th: H. S. W., 10s.; K. B., £1; C. W. G., £1; S. B., £1; E. S., 5s.; I. M. J., £5; J. E. H., £5; T. D. J., 10s.; E. P., £1; J. G., 5s.; M. R., £1; M. S. J., 10s. 6d.; A. F. P., £6; E. W., £15; M. A. N., £1 1s.; N. H. W., 10s.; M. E. T., £1 1s.; G. S., £5 5s.; E. D., 10s. 6d.; E. P. D., 15s.; B. O., £1; B. P. M., 5s.; M. A. C. T., £1; K. and H. D., 7s.; F., £1. Total, £50 15s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been received, and are now acknowledged with thanks: *Some Problems of Life*, Annie Besant, T. P. S., 1900; *In Ghostly Japan*, Lafcadio Hearn, Boston, 1899; *Hazār Dāstān* (a trs. into Hindustani of *The Thousand and One Nights*); *Nakkaliyah-i-Usaf* (a trs. into Hindustani of *Aesop's Fables*); *The Onida Community*, Allan Estlake, London, 1900; *A Short View of Great Questions*, Orlando J. Smith, New York; *The Evolution of General Ideas*, Th. Ribot, trs. from the French by Frances A. Welby, London, 1899; *Zetetic Cosmogony, or Conclusive Evidence that the World is not a Rotating, Revolving Globe*, Rectangle, Durban, Natal, 1899; *Science and Faith*, Dr. Paul Topinard, trs. Thomas J. McCormack, London, 1899; *Better World Philosophy*, J. Howard Moore, Chicago, 1899; *The Science of Homoeopathy*, Charles J. Hempel, M.D., New York, 1874; *Ideal Gods, and other Essays and Poems*, Wm. Sharpe, M.D., Canning Town, 1900.

A. J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Countess Wachtmeister.

Countess Wachtmeister has engaged the drawing-room at 28, Albemarle Street for a series of five afternoon receptions, the first of which was

held on Monday, February 26th. The others will take place on the four Mondays in March, the 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th. The Countess will be "At Home" from 4 to 6 p.m., and will be glad to receive members and their friends.

Lectures by Mr. Mead.

During March Mr. Mead will deliver a course of four lectures on "The Wisdom Schools of Earliest Christendom," in the lecture room at 28, Albemarle Street. The lectures will be given on Tuesday afternoons from five to six o'clock, and the prices of admission are 2s. for single lectures, and 5s. for course tickets.

Syllabus of subjects for the different dates, and tickets, can be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W.

Mr. Leadbeater's Lectures.

The course of lectures on "Clairvoyance," which Mr. Leadbeater has just delivered in the Lecture Room of the European Section, has been most successful. Very large audiences have attended and listened with great interest to the exposition of this fascinating subject.

Mr. Leadbeater will give four lectures on Tuesday evenings during March and April, in the Society's Lecture Room at 28, Albemarle Street, W. The subject will be "The Other Side of Death," and the following are the dates and titles of the lectures:—

- March 20th.*—"Immediate Post-mortem Conditions."
 ,, *27th.*—"Theories and Phenomena of Spiritualism."
April 3rd.—"The Rationale of Ghosts."
 ,, *10th.*—"Later Progress of the Disembodied, and the Heaven-world."

Prices of admission will be 2s. for single lectures, and 5s. for course tickets, which can be had with detailed syllabus from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W.

Lectures will begin at 8 o'clock.

Mr. Leadbeater's Visit to Paris.

Notes have just come to hand of Mr. Leadbeater's work during his visit to Paris, December 18th to 28th, and we notice that for each day two or three meetings, lectures, or receptions were planned. The enthusiasm aroused was great, and the report of the effect of the visit a very encouraging one.

Italy.

It is but a few short months since Mrs. Cooper Oakley came to Rome with the object of helping the members of the Rome Branch and of forming new centres of activity in Italy. These months have been busy ones, for, side by side with the regular work of the Branch, she has been able to attract and interest many outsiders, in this way rendering it possible for Mr. Chatterji to fill the

post which is his to-day—the post of public lecturer at the University of Rome. So great was the interest excited by Mr. Chatterji's first course of lectures, that permission to hold a "*Cours libre*" of Indian Philosophy at the University has been granted by the Rector, in spite of clerical opposition. These public lectures are supplemented by private classes and evening receptions at Mrs. Oakley's rooms, 78, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino. By these means many are coming into intimate touch with Theosophy, whose position might make it difficult for them to seek its teachings at public meetings. Meanwhile work is steadily going on in other towns of Italy. A Branch in Florence has been founded by Mrs. Oakley since her arrival, which gives promise of good work in the future. The lectures given there by Mr. Chatterji in the Studi Superiori and the Procultura were followed with deep interest by some of the Professors of the University.

Florence was visited three times by Mrs. Oakley during the months of November and December. In January she and Mr. Chatterji spent ten days there and left the Branch with seventeen members, a steady increase, for at Mrs. Oakley's first visit in November there were only two members and no Centre or library. A lady in Rome has now ordered for the Florence Lodge a most valuable gift, which is to include all the published works of Mme. Blavatsky, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater and Mr. Mead. The same gift has been given to Mrs. Oakley for the new Centre which she is now going to start in Naples. On February 17th she goes to Florence to hold classes on Saturday and Sunday, and returns on Monday, February 19th, to Rome, bringing back Mrs. Lloyd, who after spending one day in Rome with her old friends, goes down with Mrs. Oakley to Naples to remain and take charge of the library which has been given. Mrs. Oakley will return in time for the Friday class here.

There is a constant steady stream of work in progress: on Monday, the Rome Lodge holds its open meeting; on Tuesdays Mr. Chatterji gives his lectures at the University; on Wednesday Mrs. Cooper Oakley holds her *Secret Doctrine* class; on Friday Mr. Chatterji holds his students' class; various small intermediate classes are held wherever opportunity occurs. In Florence, Mrs. Sythes will take charge of the secretarial work in place of Mrs. Lloyd. From Milan news comes of a Group who are getting interested in Theosophy. Col. Olcott is expected in Rome about March 5th.

Attention is particularly called to the fact that the address of the Rome Lodge is now 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino.

M. C.

North of England Federation and Mr. Leadbeater's Tour.

The twenty-fourth Conference of the Northern Lodges was held at Harrogate on January 27th, under the presidency of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater. The attendance of delegates and members was ex-

ceedingly good, eleven out of the twelve Lodges and Centres forming the Federation being represented. The reports of activities during the past quarter were of a very encouraging nature, and special mention was made of the valuable stimulus which the Countess Wachtmeister's tour had given to the movement.

The afternoon meeting was devoted to general discussions on "How does Reincarnation bear on the Special Mental Characteristics of the Sexes?" and "The Place, Function or Value of Religious Exercises in the Evolution of the Spiritual Nature." The former was introduced by Mr. Hodgson Smith, and the latter by Mr. C. J. Barker.

At 5 p.m. the Conference was adjourned, and the members present were entertained to tea in the Winter Gardens by the members of the Harrogate Lodge.

On re-assembling Mr. Leadbeater delivered a most interesting and instructive address on "Auras and Thought-Forms," which was illustrated by means of lantern slides.

In connection with the Federation visit Mr. Leadbeater lectured to good audiences in Middlesbrough, Bradford, Leeds, Manchester, York and Hull. Special Lodge lectures were also given in Harrogate, and a well-attended public meeting was addressed on Sunday, January 28th. Altogether the tour was very successful, and much valuable assistance was given publicly and privately to students by Mr. Leadbeater. At the conclusion of the Conference Mr. Leadbeater was most cordially thanked for the great boon he had conferred by devoting so much time and trouble to the benefit of the Northern members.

The next Conference will be held in May, when Mrs. Besant expects to be present.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The Lodge has listened to two lectures by Mr. Mead during the last month. The first of these, given on January 18th, was the last of his series on the Life and Teachings of Apollonius of Tyana, and was devoted to a sketch of some of his sayings and sermons. This lecture was among the most interesting of any Mr. Mead has given, and it was with regret that the Lodge took leave of the great Philosopher and Teacher, who had been the subject of these lectures.

On January 25th, Mrs. Hooper gave a most interesting lecture on the Welsh Bards, and as a result of her researches was able to prove that their deeper teachings were in many respects almost identical with those which we now call Theosophy. Differences in language and phrasology do not matter at all, and we shall best prove our growing understanding of the teachings which have been given to us by learning to look more and more beneath forms and phrases for the spirit which has informed every phase of religion which has ever helped and uplifted mankind.

On February 1st, Mr. Leadbeater lectured on

"The Reality of the Devachanic Life," and gave many new hints upon a subject which has been too little understood. He concluded by suggesting the possibility of our finding, as the result of increasing knowledge, that the whole of our life on earth may be but a preparation for the life in the Devachanic world. This valuable lecture of Mr. Leadbeater's went to prove, what must more and more appear as time goes on, that everything is infinitely greater and more glorious than even our most vivid imaginations can picture, and that we do not do wisely when we impose limits upon those things which are quite beyond our present understanding.

The Lodge once more had the pleasure of listening to Mr. Sinnett, when on February 8th he lectured upon "The Age of Humanity."

The Sunday evening lectures have been very well attended in spite of the most discouraging weather, which has almost persistently prevailed.

The lecture by the Countess Wachtmeister on "Death and After," and that by Miss Ward on the "Power of Thought," were specially crowded.

S. MAUD SHARPE,
Hon. Secretary.

Chiswick Lodge.

At the annual meeting of the Lodge, held on January 24th, it was resolved in future to have *monthly* lectures, to be given by members of the Lodge, or others, on the first Wednesday of every month. Alternate Wednesday meetings are to be devoted to the study of Mr. Sinnett's *Growth of the Soul*.

The officers of the previous year were re-elected as follows:

A. A. Harris, President; W. C. Worsdell, Secretary.

During the past year several new books by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater had been added to the Library, and *The Theosophical Review* regularly taken in and read by some of the members.

W. C. WORSDELL, *Hon. Sec.*

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays, at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Yorkshire Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m. First Wednesday in the month, for members only, study of *In the Outer Court*. Other Wednesdays, open to visitors, subject, *Man and his Bodies*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for

study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at 5, Beaconsfield Road, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 7 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: March 20th, *The Ethical Aspect of Vegetarianism*, Miss Roberts. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanch, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m. and by appointment.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the second Thursday of each month: March 8th, *Truth—a Study*, J. P. Allan.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 12, Wartenau, on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Hotel zur Krone once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: March 4th, *Theosophy and Education*, Miss Shaw; March 11th, *The "Vita Nuova" of Dante*, Mrs. Duncan; March 18th, *Ethics in Art*, A. W. Waddington; March 25th, *Life and Form*, Baker Hudson. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: March 6th and 20th, *Man's Origin, Evolution, and Destiny*. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings by arrangement. For information apply to H. E. Nichol, 56, Albany Street, Hull.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 46, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquih Street, on Wednesdays: March 7th and 21st. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meetings every Sunday at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill. March 4th, *Death*

and *After*, Countess Wachtmeister; March 11th, *Some Symbols and their Meaning*, L. Stanley Jast; March 18th, *Personality*, Alan Leo; March 25th, *The Necessity for Re-incarnation*, P. Tovey. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: March 1st, *Destiny and Providence*, C. W. Leadbeater; March 8th, *A Short Study of Animal Cells*, Mrs. Betts; March 15th, *The Mystery-Tradition among the Greeks*, G. R. S. Mead; March 22nd, *Mathematics—Ancient and Modern*, M. U. Moore; March 29th, *The Mystery of Physical Life*, A. H. Ward. These lectures are open only to members of the Lodge. On Sundays, at 7 p.m.: March 4th, *Reincarnation and Karma in Relation to Social Problems*, Mrs. Hooper; March 11th, *Theosophy and Evolution*, M. U. Moore; March 18th, *Theosophy in relation to existing Religious Systems*, W. B. Lauder; March 25th, *The Goal of Human Evolution*, Otway Cuffe. The Sunday evening lectures are open to visitors by cards to be obtained from the Secretary.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., at 8.30 p.m.: March 7th, *The Astral Plane*, C. W. Leadbeater. Other Wednesdays: Study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: March 6th, *The Five Gates and the Narrow Way*, Alan Leo; March 13th, *The Ladder of Life*, A. H. Ward; March 20th, *Some Symbols*, L. Stanley Jast; March 27th, . . . Fred Horne. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: March 2nd, *IV. Theosophical Conceptions of the Bodies we use, (b) Their Functions and Possibilities*, Miss Ward; March 9th, *Mathematics—Past and Present*, M. U. Moore; March 16th, *Ancient Links in Mexico*, Miss Pope; March 23rd, *Humanity in Education*, E. Bell; March 30th, *The Vision of Piers the Ploughman*, Rev. W. Charter-Piggott.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale

Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Subjects for alternate evenings are "*Four Great Religions*," and "The Evolution of Man."

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 6 p.m., at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at the Oxford Temperance Hotel, St. James' Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR SIR,

In the November and December numbers of THE VĀHAN, two texts (Paul, 1 *Corinth.*, xv., and the Papias-fragments) have been opposed to the assertion of some Theosophical writers, which places the birth of Jesus in the year 105 before the Christian era.

Will you allow me to mention a third, more decisive even than that of Paul, in respect to which Mr. Mead cannot but recognise the enormous difficulties in which the partisans of the new chronology are placed.

The passages to which I wish to draw the attention of Mr. Mead, whose deep researches I fully appreciate, are in the writings of Irenæus and concerning the great Polycarpus.

In the first place, in *Adv. Hæc.* III. 3, he has written as follows (I give the Latin text, better known to the great majority of readers):

"Et Polycarpus autem non solum ab Apostolis edoctus, et conversatus cum multis ex eis, qui Dominum nostrum viderunt; sed etiam ab Apostolis in Asia, in ea quæ est Smyrnis Ecclesia constitutus Episcopus, quem et nos vidimus in prima nostra ætate (multum enim perseveravit et valde senex gloriosissime et nobilissime martyrium faciens exivit de hac vita), hæc docuit semper quæ ab Apostolis didicerat, quæ et Ecclesie tradidit, et sola sunt vera," etc.

From this quotation it follows, amongst other things, that Polycarpus knew "*numbers of the faithful who had seen Christ.*"

Secondly Eusebius (*Ecccl. Hist.*, V. 20) relates the following of Irenæus:

"Irenæus has written a number of letters against those at Rome who were corrupting the holy rules of the Church. He has written one to Blastus touching the schism, another to Florinus touching the monarchy, or that God is not the author of evil, as Florinus has persuaded himself. Since then he has written a book in his favour respecting the number eight, when he saw him falling into the error of Valentinus. He declares in this book that *he had received the first tradition of the Apostles*, and he adds at the end a remark which

I consider very suitable for insertion here. The following are the terms thereof: 'In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ and of His glorious coming when He shall judge the quick and the dead, I implore you who transcribe this book, to compare your copy word for word with the original and to correct it, and also to transcribe at the end this prayer.' I have taken care not to omit a remark so important, which contains an example—that we should always keep before us—of the diligence and exactitude of the ancients, who were celebrated for their sanctity."

The following is the most important passage: "He declares in the letter to Florinus that he had formerly conversed familiarly with Polycarpus. Here are his words: 'This doctrine, my dear Florinus, to speak as mildly as I can, is not a sound doctrine. It is contrary to the teachings of the Church and involves in impiety those who profess it. Even the heretics who are outside the pale of the Church have never dared to uphold it. The holy priests who have been before us and who were disciples of the apostles have not instructed us in regard thereto. When still a youth I saw you in Asia Minor near the person of Polycarpus. At that time living in splendour at the Court, you were doing your best to gain the estimation of the saintly Bishop. For I remember better what happened then than much of what has occurred more recently. The things learned in childhood which are nourished and grow into the spirit with advancing age, are never forgotten; in such a manner I could tell you the spot where the thrice-happy Polycarpus was seated when preaching the word of God. I can see him entering and leaving, his manner of walking, his exterior, his mode of life, the discourse he addressed to his people, the whole is engraved in my heart. *Even now I seem to hear him relating how he had conversed with John and many others who had seen Our Lord himself, repeating to us their words and all that he had learned touching Jesus Christ, his miracles and his doctrine from those themselves who had seen the Word of Life. Polycarpus used to repeat literally to us their words, and what he said was confirmed in all points by the holy writings.* (. . . . Sermones denique quos ad populum habebat, et familiares consuetudines, quæ illi cum Joanne, ut narrabat, et cum reliquis qui Dominum ipsum vidissent, intercesserant; et qualiter dicta illorum commemorabat; et quaecumque de Domino ab iisdem audierat. De miraculis quoque illius ac de doctrina, prout ab iis qui verbum vitæ ipsi conspexerant Polycarpus acceperat, eodem prorsus modo referebat, in omnibus cum scriptura sacra consentiens.) I listened unto all these things and engraved them, not upon tablets, but in the innermost depths of my heart. Before God I can affirm that had this apostolic man heard of an error like unto yours he would in an instant have stopped up his ears and would have expressed his indignation in this exclamation which was customary to him: My God, why hast Thou preserved me to this day, that I must suffer these things—and, whether sitting or standing, he would immediately have fled away.

What I have said can be verified by the letters he has written either to the neighbouring churches for the purpose of fortifying their faith or to some of the faithful in particular to reawaken their devotion and to apprise them of their duty."

In analysing these texts, and in adding to them certain others which it would be useless to cite now, the conclusions arrived at are diametrically opposed on most points to the recent theories of Theosophical writers on that which concerns the origins of Christianity.

However, for want of space I will not deal with anything but the new date of the birth of Christ. These texts allow me to use with greater force the argument already invoked in regard to 1 Cor. xv. It is known that Polycarpus lived between the years 69 and 155. If we estimate at twenty the age at which he knew those who had seen Jesus we arrive at this result: that about the year 90 A.D. there still lived in Asia Minor men who had seen Christ. But if the year 105 B.C. is taken as the date of his birth these men would then have been at least 130 years old! (By subtracting 33 years from 105 we arrive at the year 72; if we subtract 50 years for the appearance we arrive at the most at the year 22; by estimating the age of those who had seen Christ at that period at 20, they must have been born 40 B.C., which to the year 90 A.D. gives us an age of 130.) Consequently the texts of Irenæus and Eusebius as well as that of Paul completely invalidate the date of 105 B.C. given as that of the birth of Jesus.

On the contrary these texts, as also Paul's and all similar texts, accord perfectly with the accepted date of the birth of Christ.

E. L. Z. R.

G. R. S. M.—Here we have apparently a perfect refutation of the view that the "historic Jesus" was born about 105 B.C., and those who are not familiar with the controversial literature on the origins of Christianity will not so much as dream of questioning such (to all appearances) conclusive testimony. But let us for a moment put on one side this too provokingly exact date and turn our attention to the views of those who have contended that Jesus never existed; for such there be, men who are perfectly acquainted with all that Irenæus and Eusebius and the rest have to say on the subject, for of course the passages quoted are perfectly familiar to all students of the origins.

With regard to such extremists then, they do not hesitate to bring a wholesale charge of forgery against these early writers. This view, however, meets with favour only among such rationalists as regard the whole internal evidence of Christian writings, in the absence of one single corroborative word from external contemporary sources, as of no value, and who are rendered all the more unmerciful by their frantic hostility to the "miraculous" element, belief in which they regard as the most pitiful superstition.

This view is of course too extreme for any kindly student of human nature; the problem is

far more complex. There was no doubt falsification of fact when the "historicizing" party gained the upper hand (it can be proved in a number of instances), but the original "historicizing" did not begin in falsification but in ignorant misunderstanding.

In order to understand this point of view, I would recommend E. L. Z. R. to read Gerald Massey's Lectures, especially "The Historical (Jewish) Jesus and the Mythical (Egyptian) Christ," "Paul as a Gnostic Opponent, not the Apostle of Historic Christianity," "The Logia of the Lord; or the Pre-Christian Sayings ascribed to Jesus the Christ," and "Gnostic and Historic Christianity." These lectures were privately printed and are difficult to procure, but the data on which they are based is fully given in Gerald Massey's four encyclopædic volumes, *The Book of the Beginnings*, and *The Natural Genesis*, published by Williams and Norgate some twenty years ago. The author first of all contends that the real historic Jesus was, as the Talmud states, Jehoshua Ben Pandira, the disciple of Jehoshuah Ben Perachia, whose date was about 105 B.C. He further contends that "the original mythos and *gnosis* of Christianity were primarily derived from Egypt on various lines of descent, Hebrew, Persian, and Greek, Alexandrian, Essenian and Nazarene, and that these converged in Rome, where the History was manufactured mainly from the identifiable matter of the mythos recorded in the ancient Books of Wisdom, illustrated by Gnostic Art, and orally preserved amongst the secrets of the Mysteries. . . . It can be demonstrated that Christianity pre-existed without the Personal Christ, that it was continued by Christians who entirely rejected the historical character in the second century, and that the supposed historic portraiture in the Canonical Gospels was extant as mythical and mystical before the Gospels themselves existed" ("Gnostic and Historic Christianity," pp. 1, 2).

Here we have the view of a man who has worked in complete independence of modern Theosophical writers, and yet who arrives at certain general conclusions, the main outlines of which can be amply demonstrated. The Jehoshuah Ben Pandira tradition, as I have several times stated before, is the most difficult point of all to disentangle; but it is of minor importance compared to the main position that Christism is ante-Christian; indeed, as Mr. Massey says, the Ben Pandira story is not necessary to his general contention. The canonical account is the account of the historicizers of the myth; the canonical gospels were composed about the reign of Hadrian (117-138 A.D.). It was about this time that this view began to be strongly asserted by those outside the Gnostic communities, and amongst its leaders were Polycarp, Papias and Justin Martyr, who no doubt honestly believed it with their whole hearts, whereas the Gnostics knew the Life was composed of fragments from the mystery-tradition.

"According to the unquestioned tradition of the

Christian Fathers," says Gerald Massey, "which has always been accepted by the Church, the primary nucleus of our canonical gospels was not a life of Jesus at all, but a collection of the Logia, oracles or sayings, the Logia Kuriaka, which were written down in Hebrew or Aramaic, by one Matthew, as the scribe of the Lord. . . . This tradition rests upon the authority of Papias, Bishop of Hieropolis, a friend of Polycarp, who is said to have suffered martyrdom for his faith during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, 165-167 A.D. Papias is named with Pantænus, Clement and Ammonius as one of the ancient interpreters who agreed to understand the Hexæmeron as referring to an historic Christ and the Church. He was a believer in the millennium, and the second coming of the Lord, and therefore a literalizer of mythology. But there is no reason to suspect the trustworthiness of his testimony, as he no doubt believed these 'sayings' to have been the spoken words of an historic Jesus, written down in Hebrew by a personal follower named Matthew." ("The Logia of the Lord," pp. 5, 6.)

I quote this passage, as I have quoted others above, not to endorse their statements without considerable qualifications, but to show how a man who held some general conclusions which are to some extent endorsed by the occult tradition regarded the evidence. He sees no reason to doubt the *bona fides* of Papias, and so I take it of Polycarp (and Irenæus). They honestly believed their statements, and took the mystical utterances of the apostles of the Gnostic schools who "had seen the Lord" to be historic recitals concerning a definite person.

But the occult tradition goes further than all this; while asserting that the basis of the Life is composed of fragments of mystery-tradition, it allows for a certain admixture of "history"; while asserting the universality of the Christ myth (using the word myth in its best sense) in all the great mystery-traditions, it also declares the coming of a Great One who taught through Jesus; while allowing that the sayings were generally pre-Christian, it asserts the teaching of the Master (in and out of the body) who threw fresh life into the minds of many thousands of pupils; while admitting that the synoptics were composed by historicizers, it declares that the original draft was not only sayings but also the simple outlines of a mystic life that was intended to be interpreted in the inner circles by further instruction in the Gnosis. This and much more does it assert; so that though I have quoted Mr. Gerald Massey as an offset to Eusebius, I do not put him forward as the mouth-piece of the occult tradition, scraps of which occasionally appear in our Theosophical writings.

Briefly, Papias, Polycarp and Irenæus may perfectly well have believed what they assert, and yet be very far out as to the real facts; contemporaneously with them were thousands of men of great ability—of far greater ability than those who were subsequently regarded as the Fathers of the General Church—who smiled at the his-

toricizers. How history was made and how the inner tradition differed from the outer legends, may be seen from the following instance.

One of the great festivals of the main stream of the Gnosis was the celebration of the Baptism on the fifteenth day of the Egyptian month Tybi. "They of Basilides," says Clement, "celebrate His Baptism by a preliminary night-service of readings; and they say that 'the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar' means 'the fifteenth day of the month Tybi.'"

That is to say the "fifteenth of Tybi" was changed by the historicizers into "the fifteenth of Tib(-erius)"!

Finally I entirely remove the evidence of Paul from the category of the beliefs of Papias and Polycarp; it is of quite a different nature, and as I have pointed out, entirely in favour of the mystic view.

Next month I will return to the subject and go into the matter more in detail, but I somewhat fear it is too lengthy for proper treatment in THE VĀHAN.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 41.

H. D.—Does luminosity of the aura increase with the mental development only when love and unselfishness grow in proportion? Or if there is any luminosity in the aura of a conscious black magician, how does it differ from the luminosity of the white magician or of an Initiate?

C. W. L.—Luminosity, whether in an aura or in anything else, is caused surely by intensity of vibration, not by love and unselfishness. Some of the colours most prominent in the aura of an Initiate would certainly be absent from that of a purely selfish student of occultism, but there is no reason why certain qualities should not be sufficiently highly developed in the latter case to show very considerable luminosity. I have myself seen a gentleman of the type described who exhibited quite a gorgeous glow of deep orange and lurid red, indicating the intensity of his passion along certain lines, and the amount of intellect which he exerted in procuring its satisfaction.

Mere luminosity, therefore, would hardly be a safe guide as to moral development or the lack of it; the questioner (who is presumably clairvoyant, as otherwise there would be no point in the enquiry) will find that colour and purity of light are far more trustworthy indications. He may as well also bear in mind that the "conscious black magician" is not exactly a common object even on the astral plane.

QUESTION 42.

Y.—In reference to the story in Invisible Helpers of a warning given which saved a man from death, I am confused on the following points: The man heeded the voice and was saved, therefore it seems not to have been in his karma to die at that time. But if so, what

is the use of the warning, as in any case his life would be safe? And if a man whose karma it was to die suddenly from an accident had such a warning, presumably he would not heed it; else why the opportunity given of paying the debt, and why in that case the warning? We often hear of warnings being given, sometimes attended to, sometimes not.

A. A. W.—Y.'s first point of confusion is a very simple matter. It was, apparently, not in the man's karma that he should die at that time; but there is nothing in that which would prevent his being killed, by accident or otherwise. His life was by no means made "safe" unless the Lords of Karma chose to take some action to hinder his death; and the method They chose was to give him warning of the impending danger. In the case of a man having been warned, and not heeding the warning, we may suppose that the warning did not come from any agent of karma at all, and that the interference of the Lords of Karma (if any) was to *prevent* his heeding it, so that he might *not* miss the opportunity of paying the debt. Our friends must many times try to prevent us running into danger without being in any sense the agents of karmic law.

W. H. T.—In studying questions of karma, I have always found it a good plan to keep entirely separate the effects produced on the different individuals concerned, and also to keep separate the parts played by those who bring about such effects. It is only when we treat the respective parts of actor and acted upon as one, that confusion arises in our minds. Taking Y.'s illustration and applying the above rule, we treat the question of the karmic duty of a person A, who has the opportunity presented to him to warn a fellow-being B of some impending danger, quite distinct from the effect produced upon the person to whom the warning is given. The duty of A is fulfilled when he has given the warning; it has nothing, necessarily, to do with him whether B acts upon it, rejects it, or is not even in need of it. It may at first sight appear that in the two latter alternatives A was wasting his time; but this is not so, for the fulfilment of his duty, whatever the result, must aid his evolution. It is evident that karma needs some instrument to save B from the impending danger—the questioner appears to have overlooked this detail—but the particular instrument is a matter of little importance; if A be at hand and does the work, well and good; if not, the work will be done by other lawful and natural means; no miracle is ever performed. How B acts is, as stated, a matter entirely apart, and must be considered solely from the point of view of B. It may not be a karmic necessity, in one sense of the term, that he act either one way or the other; in that case his choice determines his future karma, and doubtless whichever way he chooses the result will be to him a very necessary experience. Y. may be assured that in a world of law no effort is wasted, and that all experiences are needed. Nor can any injustice be perpetrated, for "Eternal justice rules the world."

I. H.—It appears to me that the first point is answered on pp. 69-70 of Mrs. Besant's recent book on *The Evolution of Life and Form*. Y. says: "In any case his life would be safe." True! but it appears clear to me that the karmic law must have an agent; surely all nature's forces and all human beings are such agents. Say that, as in the case to which reference is made, a chimney is falling upon a human body; it is not within the karma of the ego to whom that body belongs, to meet with such a death; nevertheless, if the chimney falls upon his body, that body must be destroyed; the karmic law prevents such an occurrence by means of a warning human voice. It may be said that if that warning is not given the man will be saved just the same, even perhaps by an apparent miracle. But it seems to me that the warning voice, or a reversal of the laws of gravity, would equally be the effect of karma working on behalf of the man who was to be saved, and I cannot see why the lesser expenditure of force should not be the one used. It is obvious that something must be done, because a heavy chimney hurled upon a human body must destroy it, whether the owner "deserves" that it should be destroyed or not. As to the second point, it seems to me that it might be possible that the "invisible helper" might give the warning, seeing a fellow-man in peril, and entirely ignorant of his karma. If the warning failed, I suppose he would know that it was the man's karma to be killed, but I do not see that this would be any concern of his. Often in ordinary affairs of physical life one may try to help and fail. But I think that cannot be helped, and should not enter into one's calculations if it be possible to avoid it.

QUESTION 43.

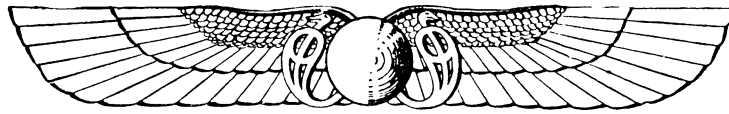
J. B.—*Why should a cow be regarded in the old religions as a sacred animal?*

I. H.—The cow typified the nutrient side of nature; that is to say the form side, which protects the life as a centre which is being evolved within it. The cow was an emblem of Isis, the great mother whence all forms proceeded. Isis and Osiris represented form and life, matter and force; hence Osiris was typified as a bull, Isis as a cow. The animals were sacred because they were used in order to picture in a concrete form the abstract truths of those higher regions to which the majority of worshippers were unable to rise.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, APRIL 1, 1900.

NO. 9.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER'S TOUR.

The President-Founder reached Italy, landing at Naples, on March 5th. He then visited Rome, Florence and Milan, leaving the latter place on March 28th, and commencing his tour of the French Branches at Nice. During his tour in France he will visit Nice, Toulon, Marseilles, Grenoble and Lyons, leaving Lyons on April 14th for London.

On April 16th Colonel Olcott will leave London for Edinburgh, to visit the Scottish Branches. On April 20th he will go to Bradford and begin a tour of the North of England Branches, returning to London on 27th or 28th of April.

As at present arranged the President will leave England on April 30th to visit the Belgian Branches, returning to London about May 7th, and leaving for a tour of the Scandinavian Section about May 17th. During the month of June, Paris will be visited and a tour of the German Branches will be made.

The above programme is subject to alteration, and in the May VĀHAN will be announced the further arrangements.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

LETTER FROM THE NEW ZEALAND SECTION.

The following letter has been received from the General Secretary of the New Zealand Section:

February 5th, 1900.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you a resolution passed at the fourth Annual Convention of this Section: "That fraternal greetings be sent to the European Section Theosophical Society, with good wishes for the success of its work."

Yours fraternally,
C. W. SANDERS, *Gen. Sec.*

ACTIVITIES.

Notice to Members.

Members are informed that for the present Mr. Leadbeater has arranged to be at the Headquarters on Tuesday afternoons, and Dr. Wells on Friday afternoons, and they will be available on those occasions for interviews with members and enquirers between three and five o'clock.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to March 20th: T. J., £2 2s.; O. S., £1; J. B. P., £20; A. W. W., £1; A. M. S., £1 1s.; F. E. W., £1; T. B. B., £1 1s.; G. J., 5s.; C. B. J., £6; C. B. W., £1; A. F. S., 10s.; C. W. S., £1 12s. 6d. B. P. M., 5s. Total £36 16s. 6d.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been received and are now acknowledged with thanks: *Het Astraal gebied*, C. W. Leadbeater, *tr.*, Johan van Manen, Amsterdam, 1899; *Imagination and its Wonders*, Arthur Lovell, London, 1899.

A. J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Theosophical Lending Library.

The following books have been added to the Library:—*L'Homme et ses Corps*, Annie Besant, trans. by F. Brooks; *Dharma*, Annie Besant; *The Story of the Great War*, Annie Besant; *Modern Astrology*, Vol. 6, edited by Alan Leo; *Esoteric Science in Human History*, Thomas Lake Harris; *Rāma Krishna*, Max Müller; *The Nārada Sūtra*, trans. by E. T. Sturdy; *Spirit and Mind Polarity*, Arthur Young; *The Great Law*, W. Williamson; *Another World*, A. T. Schofield; *Death and Afterwards*, Sir Edwin Arnold; *Hinduism*, Sir Monier Monier-Williams; *The Uttara Gītā*, trans. by D. K.

Laheer; *The Real History of the Rosicrucians*, Arthur E. Waite; *Indian Idylls*, Sir Edwin Arnold; *Buddhism: Its History and Literature*, T. W. Rhys Davids; *Cock Lane and Common Sense*, Andrew Lang; *Swallow*, Rider Haggard; *Guide to Theosophy*; *The Gospel of Buddha*, Paul Carus; *Witch, Warlock and Magician*, W. H. Davenport Adams; *Enoch*; *Fo*; *Theosophical Gleanings*; *The Republic of Plato*, trans. by Thomas Taylor; *Egyptian Ideas of a Future Life*, Wallis Budge; *Egyptian Magic*, Wallis Budge; *Some Problems of Life*, Annie Besant; *Consuelo*, George Sand; *The Doctrine of the Heart*; *Babylonian Religion*, L. W. King; *Wisdom and Destiny*, Maurice Maeterlinck; *Manual of the Science of Religion*, P. D. C. de la Saussaye; *Researches in Spiritualism*, Sir W. Crookes; *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, James Ward; *A Book of the Beginnings*, Gerald Massey.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: one month, 1s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Mr Leadbeater's Lectures.

The remaining lectures of Mr. Leadbeater's course entitled "The Other Side of Death" will be given in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, W., on April 3rd and 10th, at 8 p.m. The subjects are "The Rationale of Ghosts" and "Later Progress of the Disembodied." Price of admission to each lecture, 2s.

Receptions at Headquarters.

The receptions inaugurated by Countess Wachtmeister will be continued during the month of April by various members on Monday afternoons, from 4 to 6 o'clock, with the exception of Easter Monday. Members and their friends are invited to attend.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On February 15th, Mr. Mead was the lecturer, and took for his subject: "Nineteen Hundred Years Ago and Now." Miss Arundale read a paper to the Lodge on the 22nd; its title was "Religion and Worship," and the subject was dealt with in a most thoughtful manner. Mr. Leadbeater's lecture on "Destiny and Providence" was full of lucid explanations of many of those daily problems of life and fate which confront the student of human nature and human history. On March 8th, the Lodge welcomed a new lecturer in the person of Mrs. Betts, whose paper on "Animal Cells" was full of interest, especially the portion dealing with recent experi-

ments in the making of that which has been called artificial protoplasm. Mrs. Betts illustrated and elucidated her lecture by means of diagrams.

The Sunday evening lectures continue to draw good audiences; the lecturers announced for the month have been: Dr. Wells, Mrs. Hooper, Mr. Moore, Captain Lauder and Mr. Cuffe.

S. M. S.

Rome Branch.

The members of the Rome Lodge have had the great pleasure of welcoming Colonel Olcott in their midst. He arrived in Rome on the 7th, and attended the same evening a reception held in his honour. Whilst here he gave two interesting lectures in French, one of which was on the founding of the Theosophical Society and its aims.

Afternoons and evenings were spent in paying visits and receiving enquirers; but time was also found for some little sight-seeing. A most enjoyable day was passed with a large number of the members at Tivoli on Sunday, the 11th, previous to his leaving for Florence on the 13th. A strong link of sympathy has been formed between the members in Rome and the President-Founder of the Society. Should he return here on his way back to India he may be sure of a warm welcome.

The work is going on as usual.

Mr. Chatterji has finished his course of lectures at the University, and is now giving two lectures on the *Mahâbhârata* in aid of the Mansion House Fund and Imperial Yeomanry Hospital. He will give one more lecture at the Lodge, after which he will spend some days with Mrs. Murphy at Olevano, to take a much-needed rest. He hopes to be in Florence at the beginning of April.

M. C.

Birmingham and Liverpool Lodges.

In connection with the Liverpool Lodge a very successful class for the study of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* having been established by the President, a similar experiment was tried at Birmingham on Saturday, February 17th, when fourteen students gathered together—as a result mainly of the late visit of Countess Wachtmeister—for the study of that ancient masterpiece.

There are signs of great activity in those two large Centres, and efforts are being brought to bear to make in each of these cities a nucleus and a centre of Theosophic thought.

For further information of the *Gîtâ* classes apply to Mrs. Gillison, 18, Colquh Street, Liverpool; or Miss Hustler, No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, Birmingham.

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays, at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Yorkshire Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m. First Wednesday in the month, for members only, study of *In the Outer Court*. Other Wednesdays, open to visitors, subject, *Man and his Bodies*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at 5, Beaconsfield Road, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 7 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: April 24th, *Spirit, Force, and Matter*, J. Lorimer Thompson. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanch, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m. (for date see notice at the door), and by appointment.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the second Thursday of each month: April 12th, *Religious Experiences*, J. McKenzie.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 12, Wartenau, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Hotel zur Krone once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, Clarence Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: April 1st, *Practical Theosophy*, B. Woodhead; April 8th, *Wisdom, Love, and Power*, Mrs. Crossland; April 15th, *The Resurrection and the Life*, Hodgson Smith; April 22nd, *The Good Law*, W. H. Thomas; April 29th, *No Cross, No Crown*, Mrs. Bell. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Some Problems of Life*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: April 3rd, Short Papers; April 17th, *The Bhagavad Gita*. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings every Monday at 8 p.m., at 97, Westbourne Avenue.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 46, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 18, Colquih Street, on Wednesdays. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meetings every Sunday at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: April 5th and 12th, No meetings; April 19th, *Theosophy and Modern Science*, W. C. Worsdell; April 26th, *The Earliest Inner Commentary on the original Outer Gospel*, G. R. S. Mead. These lectures are open only to members of the Lodge.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., at 8.30 p.m.: April 4th, *The Astral Body*, R. King.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. A syllabus for the coming quarter is in preparation and copies can be obtained from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Subjects for alternate evenings are "Four Great Religions," and "The Evolution of Man."

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 6 p.m., at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge

Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Date of Jesus.

G. R. S. M.—In fulfilment of my promise in last month's VĀHAN I return to the questions raised by E. L. Z. R. ; but before doing so I should like to make quite clear what I consider to be the only reasonable position that any ordinary student of Theosophy can take up with regard to this most important problem.

A few of our colleagues state that the real historical Jesus lived some hundred years before the generally accepted date.

This statement is made, it is claimed, on the authority of the occult records.

No student in the Society who has given any evidence of the power of reading these records, contradicts this assertion.

On the other hand, all the assertions of the early Christian literature preserved to us to all appearances flatly contradict this assertion, the only supporter of it being the Talmudic tradition.

It results that the students in the Society who cannot read the occult records must form their opinions by the ordinary canons of evidence.

These students have not all the same privileges of opportunity to test the statements of their more advanced colleagues, nor the ability for a critical examination of the records of early Christianity, and therefore their judgments must be very dissimilar.

Speaking for myself, I have had the opportunity of testing many statements of friends who can read the occult records; in hundreds of cases I have checked their statements with regard to dates and facts, where facts and dates were previously unknown on this plane both to my informants and myself. I have, therefore, confidence in accepting their statements with regard to this subject as a *reasonable hypothesis* which I may be able to verify by research. So far, however, I have not been able to do so. Were it possible to have done so in any *direct* fashion, I should have attempted the task years ago. But the problem is far more delicate and complicated; the only possibility of its solution with the present materials at our disposal, is by the cumulative evidence of a series of deductions from very obscure traces, the investigation of which requires years of patient labour.

Meantime it may interest my colleagues to read a brief account of the way in which Polycarp and Irenæus transmuted belief into history. It is based on what I have heard, and is interesting as an analysis of the attitude of the "mind" of the early Fathers with regard to "history."

Irenæus was really convinced that the insignificant communities in the Rhone valley over which he presided at the end of the second century were destined to be great; he looked with burning impatience for the second coming of the Master and the immediate victory of the "elect." He wrote enormously and spoke with great fluency, with a vast mass of phrases at his command, of which for the most part he had no very clear conception.

In his boyhood, when about fourteen, he did see Polycarp at Smyrna, was greatly impressed by him, and remembered some of his assertions. This was about 130 A.D. Polycarp, owing to his official position as bishop, had some years before received a copy of one of the now canonical gospels which had just been composed at Alexandria, and it made an enormous impression on him. He began to interpret everything that had happened to him in his youth. He gradually read into his own life many things which did not really belong to it, and appears to have had the capacity of going over and over a thing until it became part of himself, telling a story so often that at length he believed it absolutely and honestly, and was utterly unable to distinguish between imagination and fact.

As to the John ("the disciple of the Lord")—whom he had met some twenty years before, and who had told him some things "concerning the Lord"—he had been in connection with one of the "twelve" and "seventy" communities, and had spoken of their tradition of the Christ, but "seeing the Lord" meant the spiritual sight of vision, and not the historic Jesus.

Polycarp, after receiving his copy of the Gospel, at once jumped to the conclusion that this "John" was the John of that Gospel. This Gospel was one of the over-workings of the draft of an ideal Life (with a slight genuine historic admixture) written by a member of one of these inner communities, but placed out of its true historic environment to guard the real Teacher from the researches of prying curiosity.

In brief, Polycarp used all his wits to discover points of contact between the people he had himself come across (and who had taught the Christ tradition from their association with the inner communities), and the characters he read of in the new Gospel which had come into his hands.

Not only so, but he takes Aristion, one of his old teachers and an "apostle" of one of the communities, as being the writer of his Gospel, and refuses to believe Aristion when he denied that he had anything to do with it.

Polycarp believed too much; he was no doubt an excellent person, but he had not the faintest conception of history, and the "historicising" of the Gnostic writer of the original draft of the Life completely dominated his thought. It was an untold joy for him to think he had actually spoken with those who had known Jesus on earth, and he believed it with all his heart, and thus unconsciously laid one of the first foundations of the "Catholic" tradition.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 44.

F. M.—In an "article in the February Review entitled "*Spiritual Darkness*," Mrs. Besant writes: "*Disciples are the crucibles of Nature, wherein compounds that are mischievous are dissociated, and are re-combined into compounds that promote the general good. As the seething compounds break up with explosive violence, the sensitive human crucible quivers under the terrible strain, and little wonder that, at times, it breaks, unable to endure. By such discipline, long continued, the disciple strengthens his powers,*" etc., etc.

Is it necessary for all disciples to become "crucibles"? Is there no other way of becoming strong for service? One had thought the life of the disciple must of necessity be so full of joy!

C. W. L.—The life of the disciple is full of joy—never doubt it for one instant. But it is not a life of ease. The work which he has to do is very hard, the struggle is a very real one. To compress into a few short lives the evolution of millions of years—the evolution for which the ordinary processes of nature allow *three rounds and a half*—is not a mere holiday task.

It is not necessary for anyone to become a "crucible;" perhaps it would be nearer the fact to say that to become one is a distinction eagerly sought after; nearer still to say that when once a man has seen the great sacrifice of the Logos, there is no other possibility for him but to throw himself into it—to do his tiny best to share in it and to help it, at whatever cost to his lower nature. And this is no child's play; it does indeed involve often a terrible strain. But an earnest student will be able to realize that one may so love one's work and may be so full of joy in it that outside of it there can be no pleasure worth considering, even although that work may tax, almost beyond bearing, every faculty and every vehicle, physical, astral or mental, that one possesses.

It must be remembered that when humanity in general has this work to do, and this evolution to accomplish, it will be far better fitted for the effort than is the man who is trying now to take the shorter and steeper road. Many of his difficulties are due to the fact that he is attempting with a set of fourth-round bodies to achieve a result for the attainment of which nature will prepare her less adventurous children by supplying them in the course of the ages with the splendid vehicles of the seventh round. Of course even to gain those glorified vehicles these weaker souls will have to do the same work; but when it is spread over thousands of incarnations it naturally looks less formidable.

Yet behind and above all his struggle the pupil has ever an abiding joy, a peace, a certainty that nothing on earth can disturb. If he had not he would indeed be a faithless servant of his Master, for he would be allowing the temporary strain on the vehicle to overpower his perception of the Self within, and identifying himself with the lower instead of with the higher.

And now, since this question is but a sample

of perhaps a score that have reached me within the last month, and so apparently many students are sadly troubled about this matter, and are taking these passages quite in the wrong way, may I venture to put forward a gentle protest on behalf of an absent friend? Surely it is not quite fair to our distinguished colleague thus to take one passage from an article written evidently with a special purpose, and base upon it a contradiction to all that she herself has so often and so eloquently said. Even in that very article how plainly the fact is emphasized that the aspirant is *not* alone, that the darkness is only Māya after all! Let me offer my friend the questioner two quotations from Mrs. Besant's writings which will supply him with the other side of the picture, so that his view may be a less distorted one. The first shall be from THE VĀHAN itself, vol. v., no. 12, and it refers to this very question of the "crucibles":—

"There are keener forms of suffering voluntarily faced for the helping of the world by some on the Path, hinted at in *The Voice of the Silence* under the simile of the snow that bears the icy blast in order that the seed beneath it may be protected; but the nature and details of these are not matters for discussion in a public print. It may suffice to say that through all such sufferings there is a deep and abiding joy, for the suffering is of the lower nature, and the joy is of the higher. . . . That of which little has been said is the profound content that comes from being on the Path, from realising the goal and the way to it, from knowing that the power to be useful is increasing, and that the lower nature is being gradually extirpated. And little has been said of the rays of joy which fall on the Path from loftier levels, the dazzling glimpses of the 'glory to be revealed,' the serenity which the storms of earth cannot ruffle. To anyone who has entered upon the Path all other ways have lost their charm, and its sorrows have a keener bliss than the best joys of the lower world."

The other quotation to which I should like to draw my friend's attention is from that glorious book, *In the Outer Court*, p. 162 *et seq.*:

"In tracing the steps of the preliminary Path, in speaking in words all imperfect of what lies on the other side the Golden Gate, have I seemed sometimes to speak too hardly, have I seemed to paint the Path with colours too dark, too gloomy? If it be so, then the fault is mine, and not the fault of the Path; if it be so, then the error is in the speaker, and not in that which feebly she has striven to describe.

"For though there be difficulty and struggle and suffering, it is true for all those who enter the Outer Court, to say nothing of those who have passed beyond the Golden Gate, that when once they have entered within that Court, they would not for aught that earth can give them tread backwards to where they were before; and for those who have passed across the threshold, is there aught that earth could give of joy or promise that would make them even glance backwards at the world they have left behind? For this Path which stretches onward before us is a Path of

which the pains are better than earth's joys, and the sufferings more glorious than earth's fruitions.

"If you could press within the span of a human life every joy that the lower earth could give; if you could crowd it with pleasure, and with the giving of the pleasure could give also the power to enjoy without ceasing; if into that span of human life you could bring all that men know of the joys of the senses, nay, even what they know of the joys of the intellect; if you could make it with no touch of pain nor of weariness; if you could make it an ideal life so far as earth can make ideal; then beside the steps of the Path—no matter what those steps may seem from the outer world—that life of earth's joys would be sordid and dull in its colouring, and its harmonies would be discords beside the harmonies that lie beyond.

"For on this Path each step that is taken is a step taken for ever; each pain that is suffered on it is a pain which, if it is felt, is welcome because of the lesson which it gives. And in treading this Path it grows brighter as ignorance lessens, it grows more peaceful as weakness vanishes, it grows serener as the vibrations of earth have less power to jar and disturb. What it is in its ending, Those only can tell who have ended; what it is at its goal, Those only may know who stand there. But even those who are treading its earlier stages know that its sorrow is joy as compared with the joy of earth, and the very smallest of its flowers is worth every jewel that earth could give. One gleam of the Light which shines always upon it and that grows ever brighter as the disciple treads onwards, one gleam of that makes all earth's sunshine but as darkness; they who tread it know the peace that passeth understanding, the joy that earthly sorrow can never take away, the rest that is on the rock that no earthquake may shiver, the place within the Temple where for ever there is bliss."

Is the questioner satisfied with *that* description of the life of the disciple?

QUESTION 45.

W. G.—*If before entering the devachanic plane the desire body disintegrates, surely the individuality must still be conscious of evil, inasmuch as the loftiest conceptions of conscious bliss are attained by the knowledge of evil, or are brought about by selfishness which entails a knowledge of self or in other words desire; and if conscious so far must also be conscious of the terrible evils yet unconquered, and therefore potentially possessed. Is this correct?*

J. V. M.—Leaving aside the purely technical answer to the question I should like to remark that one of its propositions seems scarcely well taken. The querent says that "the loftiest conceptions of conscious bliss are attained by the knowledge of evil, or are brought about by selfishness which entails a knowledge of self or in other words desire." This statement I regard as not quite correct, if we take it in its general surface meaning such as seems implied here. Only a much deeper intention might lend truth to the assertion.

I mean this. We down here, limited in con-

sciousness, limited in knowledge, and limited in true, unselfish love and devotion to each other's interests and evolution, are apt to regard this or that action, word, or opinion, either as evil or as good. This means only that the visible side of that manifestation does not square with the end and line of evolution of our neighbour's sphere of existence and activity which *we* are able to see and comprehend. But broadening our power of understanding and expanding our faculty of knowledge and love, we soon find that what seemed evil with reference to the small visibilities that our sight is able to compass, becomes useful and helpful—maybe even good—with regard to wider stretches of vision, and that the old saying holds good, that all is well that ends well. In this light we are able to see the profound truth of the adage that *tout comprendre est tout pardonner*.

To the perfectly opened vision—it seems to me—the "evil" is still known and seen, but not as before. Evil is realised as evil only in its smaller connections, but the broader view transmutes that smaller evil at the same time into mere links—useful and necessary—in the great chain of the evolving life, resulting in a most glorious and lofty end. To him who realises all this evil cannot longer appear as such, as he knows that evil is a thing of the sheaths and not of the innermost self, a passing, temporal, *mâyâvic* clothing, which screens the inner life, but forms no part of its essential being. One of the highest expressions of this ennobling truth is in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* (x. 34, 36): "And all-devouring death am I; I am the gambling of the rogue." Such is also the teaching of that priceless, though too little known, book, the *Tao Te King*, of which as yet no faithful and truly spiritual translation exists in English. Compare for instance chapter 38, if possible in Victor von Strauss' German rendering.

To quote a few lines from the said chapter, translated almost literally from the text:

1. High virtue, no virtue,
2. Therefore it has virtue.
3. Low virtue loses virtue not,
4. Therefore without virtue.
5. High virtue is actionless, but not for the action.
6. Low virtue acts, but it is for the action.

Which means: High virtue loses even the consciousness of its own excellence; for *being* virtue, having become one with virtue, it *has* no virtue; that is why it is truly virtuous. But low virtue does not lose the consciousness of being virtuous, it *has* virtue and so is impelled to *become* such itself, remaining a subject in contradistinction to its object, *viz.*: virtue. Therefore it is only a secondary virtuousness. And thus high virtue acts not, because it is not the virtuous one who acts, but it is *the one virtue* through and within him, whose action he expresses ("Father, thy will be done"), whereas low virtue acts not merely as a passive though willing agent of virtue itself but on account of virtue's beautiful sheaths, the *individual* pleasure found in doing what is good and noble.

And this high virtue is truly an imaginable

ideal, wherein all knowledge of evil as such completely falls away, so that, realising this, we will find ourselves able to form those "loftiest conceptions of conscious bliss" which are *not* "attained by the knowledge of evil, or are brought about by selfishness which entails a knowledge of self or in other words desire." This is what has been taught so completely in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* and *Tao Te King*, and this is that same Yoga on which Mrs. Besant lays so much stress.

Of course, I do not mean to say that this primary virtue is within direct reach for us common mortals, or that this secondary virtue itself is to be despised instead of being valued at its high worth, nor do I want to discuss whether the individuality, in devachan or before it, is conscious of evil in the same narrow and limited way as ordinary mortals in the flesh; the only thing I wanted to draw attention to, is that of conscious bliss and virtue there may be formed even a loftier conception than the "loftiest" described in the query to which I append these words.

A. A. W.—Our querist has confounded two very different things—the *feeling* of bliss, and the *conception* of bliss formed by the mind. We must remember that "bliss" belongs, in its own nature, to a plane above the mind. It is the buddhic body which is the true Body of Bliss; and the mind, in forming its conception of it, is only doing its best to make intelligible to itself something which is really beyond its reach. This it seems only able to do by way of exclusion. It brings before its view all the evils it can think of and says, "Bliss is that which has none of these." And as long as this is all the conception it has, it is perfectly true, as W. G. remarks, that it depends wholly upon the knowledge of the evils so excluded. But this is not any real *knowledge* of bliss; it is only the conception, the imagination of something quite beyond all knowledge in the physical brain-mind: and it passes with the *kâma-manas* which has formed it, with the earthly sights and sounds which have given joy to the ego whilst in the flesh.

The bliss which floods the soul on the higher planes is not this merely negative conception of the intellect—not a removal of evil, but the positive, actual bliss itself, as independent of all conditions of the mind as the light of heaven is; you do not gain it by reasoning, you feel it. You have not to remember either the evil or the good of your past life in order to feel it; it is something quite independent of all pleasure in thinking of past performance or future help for humanity, of all the *mental* enjoyments of the devachanic state. Perhaps the joyous feeling of perfect physical health and strength comes nearest to an intelligible analogy on this plane.

QUESTION 46.

L. S.—*We are given to understand that the Seven Planetary Logoi of the Solar System, each having a scheme of evolution in charge, are identical with the "Seven Self Born Lords." These presumably are the*

Deities whose sevenfold influence is perceptible in every part of the system, and has been recognised by occultists and astrologers from early ages, as in some way connected with the movements of the physical planets.

With regard to three of these, viz., Venus, Jupiter, and Saturn, there is no difficulty. But as regards the other four: do the movements of the Sun, Moon, Mars and Mercury correspond in any way with the influences poured forth by the Planetary Logoi connected with the Vulcan, Earth, Uranus, and Neptune schemes?

C. W. L.—This is one of the many questions to which the fragments of knowledge at present available does not enable us to give a satisfactory answer. It deals with a subject only the very outer fringe of which is at all within our comprehension, hampered as we are by our absolute inability to form the least conception (down here) of the dimension in which these schemes are really moving. The best that we can hope to do is to throw out a few suggestions which may be helpful.

The existence of the sevenfold influence mentioned in the question is unmistakable. It is certain that these lower planes (including, of course, the vehicles in which man functions upon them) are composed of seven types of matter which we may take as being respectively manifestations of those influences. (It will be useful to read in this connection what appears in the February issue of *The Theosophical Review* on the subject of the faith of ancient Chaldæa.)

But each of the Great Ones from whom these influences come has one of the schemes specially in charge, and the principal physical planet of that scheme indicates in some way which we do not yet understand the condition (or perhaps we should rather say the stage of activity with reference to us) of the influence behind it. We cannot image this to ourselves with any degree of clearness, but the thought might be suggested that the motion of the planet from perihelion to aphelion and back again was the physical expression of a stupendous heart-beat, and so its position at any moment showed the stage of expansion or contraction through which the action of that mighty heart was passing.

Whatever relation the physical planets Venus, Jupiter and Saturn hold to the great forces of which they are respectively fragmentary expressions, that relation we may reasonably suppose to be also held by the physical planets Vulcan, Uranus and Neptune to *their* controlling forces. That gives us six of the great influences, and we know that the seventh is that which energizes our own Earth scheme. Now since our orbital motion is indicated to us by the apparent motion of the Sun on a background of zodiacal constellations, we might conceive his apparent position as showing us the stage through which the great heart-beat of our own presiding Deity was passing. But what then can be indicated by the position of the Moon, which is simply the mummy of our own previous incarnation, and of Mars and

Mercury, which as planets of our chain must be manifestations of the same great Power as ourselves?

Mr. Sinnett, in *The Growth of the Soul*, writes of the three other schemes in the solar system "which are altogether established on the higher planes, and have no physical planets connected with their evolution at any time" (p. 264). While not entering into the composition of the lower worlds in the same direct way, these higher schemes undoubtedly pour down influences of a very potent order. Can it be the working of these mighty influences which is in some measure indicated to us by the movement of the three globes with which we are most closely connected? It is perhaps worth remembering that those ancient Chaldæans, who seem in many ways to have been well-informed by their occult tradition, revered ten great planetary Angels, and classified their people under ten heads, and not seven only.

QUESTION 47.

M. N.—*In the Key to Theosophy and also in What is Theosophy? it is stated that during the Dark Age the Great Ones cannot spiritually influence this world as before. What is the reason of this, and how does it affect mankind in general and Theosophists in particular? Is there any reference made to this state of things in the following and similar passages of scripture: "My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. vi. 3)?*

A. P. S.—Probably no one amongst Theosophical students likely to write in the VĀHAN knows enough about the mystery of "Yugas" to answer this question with exhaustive confidence. Certainly nothing in print on the subject throws even a glimmer of light on the theory that some periods, in ever revolving cycles, are in spiritual sunshine and others in spiritual shade. Probably there is some natural truth behind the (exoteric) oriental doctrine of Yugas which would infuse some meaning into the terms employed if we understood it. But for the present the wisest course may be to rely on our complete inability to make sense of them as they stand.

On the other hand, there is plain common-sense in the reflection that while the forces of evolution are engaged in perfecting the mental capacities of man, or to put the idea in another way, while man is engaged in the close study of the physical nature around him, his attention is turned aside from the ulterior super-physical existence for which he may be destined. Such periods, therefore, are not favourable for the activities of the spiritual teacher; but even recognising that, the situation is not one to moan about. Mental growth has to be accomplished by growing man, sooner or later, and it is not the highest wisdom to abuse the carpenter at work during the day, because he is not at the moment in a position to improve himself with good books.

QUESTION 48.

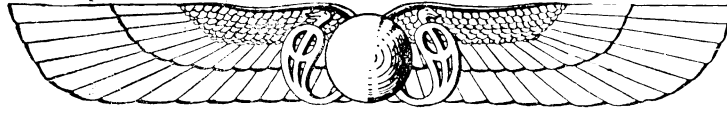
P. H.—*In view of the well-known fact that as this race advances, as the manasic powers unfold, the fewer is the proportionate number of births, until it would seem that those in the forefront are almost childless (e.g., the Carlyles, Geo. Eliot), in the future, will the pressure of the reincarnating personalities on the incarnate be a force counteracting this tendency?—(may I call it "Law"?)—and, if so, is it likely to be a force sufficiently strong entirely to counteract the tendency? Otherwise it would appear that from the operation of this law alone the race must become extinct.*

A. A. W.—I think a careful study of what has already been said on reincarnation in Theosophical literature would enable P. H. himself to answer this question better than can be done in the short compass to which a writer is here limited. Theosophists regard the present method of sexual reproduction as one destined to cease altogether in the progress of evolution, and there cannot be much doubt that the multiplication of human forms by this means will be (as the querist suggests) more and more diminished as this time draws nearer. But the phrase "the pressure of the reincarnating personalities on the incarnate" has to us no meaning whatever. All the reincarnating ego can do is to descend and take possession of the forms provided for them by the Lords of Karma; it is upon the practically unlimited power of these Rulers the continuance of the race depends, and may safely be left to depend. Other modes of multiplication will take the place of sexual reproduction, as other modes preceded it. If it be remembered that the race, as a whole, exists, and always has existed, on the higher planes where death is unknown—only from time to time sending out a small proportion into the physical world and withdrawing them again after a short period of what we here call life but which they most likely call death—it will be seen clearly enough that even if manifestation on the physical plane ceased entirely (as in process of time it will) the very last phrase we could think of applying to the occurrence would be that of the "extinction of the race." We must learn to think better of ourselves than that!

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 25, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, MAY 1, 1900.

NO. 10.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

THE CONVENTION.

Members are hereby notified that the next Annual Convention of the European Section will be held on Saturday and Sunday, July 7th and 8th. The business meeting will take place on Saturday morning at 28, Albemarle Street, and the evening meetings will be held in the Small Queen's Hall. The usual reception will be held at Headquarters on the evening preceding the Convention.

Secretaries of Branches are requested to send their annual reports and lists of members in good time.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

GUARANTEED DONATIONS.

Members who have promised to contribute annually to the funds of the Section, and have not yet sent their first contributions, are reminded that the anticipated increase in expenditure began some months ago, and therefore that the promises should be fulfilled as promptly as is convenient for the members.

W. B. LAUDER,
Hon. Treasurer.

THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER'S TOUR.

Colonel Olcott, after a short but most fully-occupied visit to Continental Branches, arrived in London on Sunday, April 15th, leaving for Edinburgh on the following evening, to begin a tour through the northern Branches.

On Tuesday, April 17th, the President lectured to the Edinburgh Lodge on "The Progress of the Theosophical Society"; on Wednesday, the

18th, he again spoke to the Lodge, and by particular request took as his subject "The Masters of Wisdom." The President also received visitors and enquirers on Wednesday and Thursday.

On Thursday the President visited Glasgow, where he lectured to an attentive audience; and on April 21st he reached Harrogate, leaving for Manchester on the 23rd.

Particulars of the later stages of the tour will, it is hoped, be received in time for issue in next month's VĀHAN, and presidents of Lodges are requested to furnish reports.

As at present arranged, the President, having left for Belgium on April 30th, will proceed thence to Sweden, arriving at Copenhagen on May 9th, to begin a tour through the Scandinavian Branches. The Convention of the Scandinavian Section will take place on May 19th. The President will afterwards visit the Branches in Holland and attend the Convention in Amsterdam on June 3rd.

DEATH OF MR. CORBETT.

It is with great regret that I have to announce the decease of Mr. C. Corbett, who succumbed after a very short illness. Mr. Corbett was for many years President of the Manchester Branch, and was well known to most members of the Section as an able and energetic worker for the Society. His loss will be very deeply felt, not only by the members of his own Branch, but by all who knew him.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branch.

March 30th, 1900. Charter granted this day to Dr. L. Barbieri de Introini, Miss Elisabeth Gatey, Mlle. M. E. Lischka, Mme. Adele

Bigatti, Princess Ada Troubetzkoy, Miss C. M. Holworthy, Mme. Barbieri de Introini, Carlo Gazzera and Miss Jane Bird to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Milan, Italy, to be known as the Milan Branch.

“White Lotus Day.”

The meeting always held upon the anniversary of Mme. Blavatsky's death will take place on May 8th, at 8.30 p.m., and will be held at 28, Albemarle Street. All members are invited to attend.

Flowers for the decoration of the hall will be very gladly received.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to April 20th: L. H. A., £2; E. S., 5s.; M. H., £1; H. S. G., £1; J. W., £1; H. B., £3; V. T., £15; W. D., 5s.; H. and K. D., 7s.; P. W., 5s.; C. R., £1 10s.; M. B., 16s.; H. R., £1; J. E. H., 5s.; G. P., 15s.; W. C., 5s.; E. J. D., 15s.; E. W., £2; W. V., £3 3s.; G. G., £9 15s.; B. P. M., 5s.; G. T., £10; E. M., £1 1s. Total, £55 12s.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Countess Wachtmeister's Receptions.

The Countess Wachtmeister will be “At Home” at 28, Albemarle Street, on every Monday afternoon during May and June, from 4 to 6 p.m., and members and their friends are cordially invited to attend her receptions.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On March 15th the Lodge listened to a remarkably interesting lecture from Mr. Mead, dealing with the Mystery Tradition among the Greeks; Mr. Mead demonstrated the universality and importance of the mystery tradition among various nations, besides tracing and elucidating the teachings of the differing Grecian schools. On the 22nd Mr. Moore spoke on the subject of “Mathematics—Ancient and Modern”; the lecturer being unable to deal fitly with the subject within the limits of a single lecture, promised to complete the consideration of the question on some future occasion. On the 28th Mr. A. H. Ward spoke on “The Mystery of Physical Life.” There were no

meetings on the two following Thursdays, but on the 19th of April the Lodge re-opened to welcome a new lecturer, Mr. Worsdell, who, like Mr. Ward, brought the light of Theosophy to bear upon scientific problems. Mr. Worsdell read a highly instructive paper on “Theosophy and Modern Science”; some of his illustrations drawn from the results of his botanical studies were peculiarly interesting.

The Sunday evening meetings were brought to a close on March 25th, on which occasion Mr. Cuffe spoke on “The Goal of Human Evolution.”
S. M. S.

Brighton Lodge.

On April 8th, Mrs. Sharpe visited the above Lodge and gave a highly appreciated lecture on “The Emotions”; many questions were asked and answered; it was felt that the Lodge work was helped and stimulated by Mrs. Sharpe's visit.

Bournemouth Lodge.

The Countess Wachtmeister lectured to a very appreciative audience, setting forth the general trend of purpose of Theosophic teachings. The meeting, which was held at Marnwood, Portarlinton Road, was well attended, and most favourably reported in the local press.

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays, at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: May 6th, Lecture, H. Duffell; May 20th, Lecture, T. Duffell; May 13th and 27th, Study of *The Ancient Wisdom. Bhagavad Gita* class on Saturdays, May 12th and 26th, at the Cobden Hotel, conducted by Mr. H. Duffell. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. W. Chaplin, at above address.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Yorkshire Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m. First Wednesday in the month, for members only, study of *In the Outer Court*. Other Wednesdays, open to visitors, subject, *Man and his Bodies*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at 5, Beaconsfield

Road, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 7 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: May 22nd, *Lessons from "The Life of Anna Kingsford,"* A. P. Cattanach. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m. (for date see notice at the door), and by appointment.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the second Thursday of each month: May 10th, *Some Aspects of Mind and Memory*, Mrs. McKenzie.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 12, Wartenau, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Hotel zur Krone once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, Clarence Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: May 6th, *Our Elder Brethren*, Hodgson Smith; May 13th, *The Holy Grail*, Mrs. Bell; May 20th, . . . Mrs. Besant; May 27th, *One Life or Many*, Miss Shaw. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 8 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Some Problems of Life*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: May 1st, *Psychology*; May 15th, *Short Papers*; May 29th, *Spiritual Growth*. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings every Monday at 8 p.m., at 97, Westbourne Avenue.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 46, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Hyde Park, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meetings every Sunday at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: May 3rd, *Some British Saints*, Mrs. Hooper; May

10th, *Faith and Intuition*, C. W. Leadbeater; May 17th, *The Earliest Inner Commentary on the Original Outer Gospel*. II., G. R. S. Mead; May 24th, *Reincarnation or Immortality?* A. A. Wells; May 31st, *Free-will and Karma*, Miss Arundale. These lectures are open only to members of the Lodge.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: May 1st, *Dreams*, R. King; May 8th, *India's Message to Mankind*, R. K. Doss; May 15th, *Proportion*, A. J. Faulding; May 22nd, *Free-will and Karma*, Miss Arundale; May 29th, *Some Aspects of the Problem of Pain*, O. Cuffe. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: May 4th, *The Reality of the Devachanic Life*, C. W. Leadbeater; May 11th, . . .; May 18th, *Irish Saints*, Mrs. Hooper; May 25th, *The Svastika*, Miss Ward.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Subject for study, *Four Great Religions*.

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 6 p.m., at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 49.

D. D.—Was the consciousness of the Apostles supposed to have been raised to the arûpa levels of the mind, when they suddenly knew all languages after the Initiation of Pentecost?

G. R. S. M.—If the Apostles as a sober fact

actually did on a definite occasion "know all languages," then *we* must suppose that their consciousness was raised to at least what have been called the "formless" levels of the mind—but which, as explained, are formless only to the consciousness below such levels. The believers in the actual historicity of the account in the *Acts*, however, supposed and suppose that this was a direct manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit, which Spirit they further identify absolutely with God Himself. The question of the validity of the account as historical is entirely apart from the question of the possibility of such a happening. In my opinion, the account of the "tongues of fire" is a glorified description of some happening in the inner circles set forth with highly dramatic embellishments: but whether or not it refers to a particular Initiation I am unable to say. Criticism connects the tradition with the common phenomena among the outer untrained communities of "speaking with tongues," but is exceedingly puzzled to account for the fact that the "languages" in the later *Acts* account are said to have been understood, whereas in the far earlier Pauline account the "tongues" required interpretation, and Paul himself evidently thought but little of such manifestations.

That on the mind plane difference of language is no bar to communication is amply confirmed by the testimony of a number of our students; it is not so, however, on the so-called "astral plane," where difference of language is almost as great a bar to satisfactory conversation as here.

But the *Acts* account presents to us a series of difficulties, for it purports to describe what took place entirely on the physical plane. The questions that theologians ask themselves are therefore exceedingly puzzling. They would like to be informed, for instance, whether the Apostles spoke each in his own language, and the various hearers heard their words each in his own tongue; or whether the power in the words was so great, that the hearers felt their force, and translated it each in his own words; or whether the Apostles spoke in an "unknown tongue" and the hearers heard each in his own language, etc. Personally, though we deem it highly unphilosophical and absolutely unscientific to deny the possibility of such things happening, we reserve to ourselves the right of doubting the historicity of any particular account, especially when it emanates from a literary workshop whose labourers had not the faintest notion of the sense of history, and who eagerly believed anything that enhanced the "super-naturalness" of their faith.

The modern Irvingites, who still "speak with tongues," are certainly not understood by the modern Elamites, Parthians, Medes and dwellers in Mesopotamia; like the members of the early communities among whom Paul carried on his propaganda, they require an interpreter—that is to say, some one who feels the inspiration but retains sufficient control of himself (generally herself) to express himself rationally.

QUESTION 50.

X.—In the "Watch-Tower" of the Theosophical Review for April there is a reference to the account given by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen concerning the Aruntas of Central Australia. I should like to learn something more of the interesting beliefs of these people.

I. H.—The Arunta conception of the soul is very complex; it may be sketched as follows: Every man is the reincarnation of an *Alcheringa* ancestor. The *Alcheringas* were a race possessed of remarkable powers, and able to do many things which their descendants have forgotten. Nevertheless, certain classes of *Alcheringa* are now incarnate upon earth. But it is the "spirit part" of the *Alcheringa* that reincarnates; and this spirit part is mysteriously linked, not only with the sacred amulet, the *Churinga*, but also with a certain order of *Iruntarinia* or gods. When a human being dies, this spirit part, or *Uthana*, withdraws to its totem centre, and there it dwells with its *Arumbaringa*, until its former physical body has entirely disintegrated, when it reincarnates. A man therefore consists of: the physical body; the spirit part of the *Alcheringa*; the *Uthana*, which is practically the same as the *Alcheringa*; this reincarnates, and it is this which is linked with the *Churinga*: finally there is the *Arumbaringa*, which is, like the *Uthana*, immortal. But the *Arumbaringa* is changeless, which the *Uthana* is not; the *Arumbaringa* never fully incarnates; it is a kind of Guardian Spirit which sometimes warns the man of impending danger (like the S.P.R. subliminal self), and sometimes, very rarely, can be seen by him. In short, the *Arumbaringa* appears to be the higher self, and its occasional appearance seems to suggest the same idea as that indicated by the statements concerning the *Augocides*. The beliefs of the Aruntas respecting their totems are very interesting; as I have said elsewhere, I think the belief in Totemism may be traced to a more or less distorted reminiscence of teaching concerning the Rays, or streams of tendency. The Aruntas teach a sort of Darwinian theory of the evolution of form; their myths deal largely with the transformation of animals into men; and of *Inapertwa* creatures into human beings. These *Inapertwa* were shapeless, rounded masses which were gradually carved into shape. All these forms of life, *Inapertwas*, plants, animals, and men, are believed to belong to totems; the *Inuntarinia*, or gods, also have their totems. A man's tribe may change; he is not necessarily born in the same tribe as that into which he incarnated in his previous life; but his totem never, or very rarely, changes. There are certain totem centres which are held sacred, and to these the discarnate *Uthana* withdraws at the death of the physical body; when a woman becomes aware of her pregnancy she observes carefully which is the nearest totem centre, for from that centre the reincarnating Ego is believed to have been drawn. This determines the totem of the unborn child.

THE VAHAN.

The belief in the complexity of the human soul, or rather perhaps the complexity and multiplicity of its vehicles of consciousness, is very generally diffused among semi-civilised peoples. Readers of Miss Mary Kingsley's book respecting the tribes of the West Coast of Africa will remember that they have a very remarkable and interesting theory respecting the bush soul, the shadow soul, etc. Reincarnation is also believed in among these people, as it is among the Australian tribes. It is a very noteworthy fact that a certain theory advanced by Miss Kingsley touching the African tribes will not hold good with regard to the Aruntas. Miss Kingsley, commenting upon the sincerity of the people when they asserted that they had seen the various apparitions, portions of the soul, etc., in which they "powerfully and potently believe," said, in a lecture delivered at the Westminster Town Hall, that the African was always a degree nearer delirium than was the European—in short, he was very excitable; but the Arunta is an exceedingly stolid and unimaginative person, if we may trust the very elaborate report of him with which Messrs. Spencer and Gillen have furnished the folk-lorist and anthropologist. It appears to me that the theories which are accepted by the majority of theosophists receive no small nor unimportant amount of support from the beliefs found among these simple peoples; the beliefs are too elaborate to have been made by savages; moreover they agree so marvellously in trifling details as to render it highly improbable that such beliefs originated independently of each other. If they are linked, as they certainly seem to be, where is the link? Why have human beings, so widely separated by space, by time, by degree of civilisation, by intellectual advancement, evolved theories which are alike not only in broad conception but in minute detail. They are linked, not by general similarity of thought, but by innumerable subtle touches; the means by which these links were forged are more deeply hidden than are the links themselves.

QUESTION 51.

C. S.—*Might a thought of evil directed against an individual become an elemental working harm to that person, quite beyond the knowledge and control of its originator and also against his desire?*

A. H. W.—The writer understands that the power for good or ill of an artificial elemental depends on the amount of conscious intention which animates it. A thought of evil directed against a person will reach its mark, and take effect, if there is a corresponding evil quality in the thought-sphere of that person. Such a thought sent out in ignorance of these possibilities, though evil, has no conscious intention of actually injuring, consequently it will be proportionately feeble, and easily neutralised. Such a thought, again, unless constantly repeated, would rapidly exhaust

any force it could exert, and cannot be supposed to work continuous harm.

On the other hand, a thought of evil deliberately forged by one who understands, and winged by the force of a developed will, is dangerous in proportion to the knowledge and power of its creator. It is just the difference between a bullet from an old blunderbuss let off by an agitated amateur, and a lyddite shell scientifically placed by a trained gunner.

We may, the writer thinks, comfort ourselves that the evil thoughts we set going in ignorance, were, by that very ignorance, deprived of much power to hurt, or much energy to endure. For us to create such thoughts now, when we do understand, even a little, would undoubtedly lead to injury both to others and to ourselves; for action and re-action are equal and opposite, and curses in deed and in truth *do* sooner or later, come home to roost.

A comparatively feeble thought might precipitate a man into a crime, if it reached him at a time when a large force of a like nature had been accumulated beforehand, just as the last straw breaks the camel's back. But no more responsibility for the crime would attach to the generator of the thought in question, than would have been his had his "straw" been any other than the last.

The only way for an ordinary man to create a really active elemental seems to be by constantly reiterated thinking, and deliberate willing. A Welsh friend tells the writer that his countrymen, when they have an enemy, which seems to be very often, keep a pile of stones by the garden path, and, whenever they pass, they throw on another stone and curse their foe. Thus the reiterated and systematised hate is believed to do real vengeance. When the enemy becomes seriously annoying, they "read the psalm against him." This consists in sending for the Family Bible, standing up and reading, *at* the person, aloud, with fell intent, the awful psalm about "May his children be fatherless and his wife a widow." When this was done in a certain case, by an educated man against a bad tenant, my scientific friend says—with a shudder—"The father died of pneumonia, the mother went blind, and the son was drowned at sea, *before the year was out!*"

One can easily imagine that either by the reiteration marked by the heap of stones, or the reiteration marked by the verses of the psalm, an elemental of some force might be piled up. The first case would resemble the stream of small bullets spouted from a Maxim, the second the scattering missiles discharged from a shrapnel shell; in both cases some of the shots would probably get home.

QUESTION 52.

J. S. H.—*What is the best method of cultivating the power of concentration?*

I. H.—Surely there can be no better method than that suggested in the writings of Mrs.

Besant, who has so often dealt with this question? The attempt steadily to fix the whole energies of the mind on the matter in which it is engaged at any given moment. I cannot see that any method can be more efficacious, and it has the advantage of being within the reach of all. It may be, and is, very difficult to accomplish, but it is a method that can be practised under all circumstances.

A. A. W.—St. Francis of Sales, in one of his Conferences, says that to the question then before him the only answer he can make is that which is made by those who say that to arrive at a certain place we must go on putting one foot before the other until we get there. Something very like this is all we can say in reply to J. S. H. It is absolutely incredible, until we come to make the experiment, how little power the ordinary person has to keep his thoughts fixed, even for a few moments, upon any subject. We are used to this with young children; we understand that the infant attention is easily exhausted, and we do our best by choice of interesting subject and by frequent change of occupation slowly to strengthen its power. Well, we are grown up; but in most of us the attention is but very little beyond the childish state, and must be treated now as it was in our youth. It is not the special kind of exercise which is of importance; whatever method we take up, the essence of it lies in the habituation of our wandering mind to think of *everything* with its full, undivided attention, and not to pass from the immediate subject of its thought until that is exhausted. What H. P. B used to call "visualising" an object is thus a valuable exercise, not so much because the power is useful as that it provides a way of concentrating the mind very completely, and often for some considerable time, and that any relaxation is instantly recognised. We tell the children "Give the *whole* of your mind to what you are doing!" and this is the rule for the man's concentration as for the child's, and should be carried out in every action of our daily life, and not only in set exercises. It would be a very interesting and valuable contribution to our knowledge if those of our friends who have attained some success would tell us what they have found most useful in their own case: I strongly suspect that each must find his own method. When we enter upon active work it is absolutely necessary, as in the Arabian Nights' tale of the singing tree and the golden water, that no kind of distraction should, for an instant even, draw our mind away from what we are doing—and this under penalties as serious as those which befell the young Princes in the story. But this is not a work of one life or of two; the highest of the Christian mystics assure us that even when their Higher Ego was absorbed in God, their lower mind was wandering hither and thither in its childish way still. What we have to attain to is that the wandering brain shall have no power to disturb the deep *heart's* attention to our higher duties which is the one essential qualification for our passing onwards.

QUESTION 53.

C. E.—*I am much interested in Theosophy but I want to see that its views tally with the teachings of our Great Master. For instance, what would be said on His description of the last judgment, more especially His words in verses 41 and 46 of Matt. xxv.?*

G. R. S. M.—The verses referred to are as follows in the authorised version:

"41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand. Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

"46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

Speaking for myself I should say that these words were never uttered by the Christ. I would first of all refer C. E. to my review of Dr. Charles' recent book on *Eschatology* in *The Theosophical Review* for February. This will give readers unacquainted with the subject some notion of the circle of ideas from which such doctrines proceeded. Dr. Charles is the Professor of Biblical Greek at Trinity College, Dublin, and the scope of his work may be seen from the full title, *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity, or Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian Eschatology from Pre-prophetic Times till the close of the New Testament Canon*. Professor Charles, in speaking of New Testament eschatology, writes: "In the first place, we shall not be surprised if the eschatology of the latter [the N. T.] should, to some extent, present similar incongruous phenomena as the Old Testament and subsequent Jewish literature. And, in the next, we shall be prepared to deal honestly with any such inconsistencies. So far, therefore, from attempting, as in the past, to explain them away or to bring them into harmony with doctrines that in reality make their acceptance impossible, we shall frankly acknowledge their existence, and assign to them their full historical value. That their existence, however, in the New Testament Canon can give them no claim to the acceptance of the Church, follows from their inherent discordance with the Christian fundamental doctrines of God and Christ; for such discordance condemns them as survivals of an earlier and lower stage of religious belief.

"That certain Judaistic conceptions of a mechanical and unethical character have passed into the New Testament must be recognised. But since these possess no organic relation to the fundamental doctrines of Christ, and indeed, at times betray a character wholly irreconcilable therewith, they have naturally no time *rationale* in Christianity. In Christianity there is a survival of alien Judaistic elements."

And this is especially the case in the two verses cited. The first is based on *Enoch*, liv. 1-6. This Jewish apocalyptic had an enormous influence on the early Christian communities, and has evidently supplied the compiler of the canonical *Matthew* with the material he has here worked into a sermon of the Christ. The verses referred to run as follows:

"1. And I looked and turned to another part of the earth and saw there a deep valley with burning fire. 2. And they brought the kings and mighty and put them into this deep valley. 3. And then mine eyes saw how they made instruments for them, iron chains of immeasurable weight. 4. And I asked the angel of peace who was with me, saying: 'These chain instruments for whom are they prepared?' 5. And he said unto me: '*These are prepared for the hosts of Azazel* so that they may take them and cast them into the abyss of complete condemnation, and cover their jaws with rough stones as the Lord of Spirits commanded. 6. Michael, Gabriel, Rufael and Fanuel will take hold of them on that great day and cast them on that day *into a burning furnace*, that the Lord of Spirits may take vengeance on them for their unrighteousness in becoming subject to Satan and leading astray those who dwell on the earth.'"

Verse 46 has its natural heredity in another great pseudopigraph of the time, the famous *Book of Daniel*, composed by the same school of apologists for unfulfilled prophecy and foretellers of the evil end of the enemies of Israel. In *Daniel*, xii. 1, 2, we read:

"1. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.

"2. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, *some to everlasting life*, and some to *shame and everlasting contempt*."

Here we have certain factors in the evolution of the dogma of the Last Judgment, and to them many hundreds of others could be added. Gradually the outlook of Jewry in the future was widened, as their hopes of re-establishing their political independence were again and again shattered, and finally in Christian circles the original hope of the "great day" for the Jews was evolved into the dogma of the "final judgment" of the whole world. But the crude elements of the vengeful Judaism were never entirely eliminated from it, and the compiler of the final synoptic, by including such ideas among the "Sayings," shows himself incapable of really understanding the spirit of the teachings of the Christ!

QUESTION 54.

X.—*If a man pursues riches or any other selfish end, and thus develops purpose and strength of character, how would this be turned to an unselfish end in another life? Would it be through satiety, or would not the giving way to desire in one life only tend to increase desire in another?*

H. S.—No "pursuing of riches or any other selfish end" can ever turn an individuality to an "unselfish end," because effects are always ade-

quate to their causes. As long as the desire is on the increase the tendency in the next incarnation will be increased accordingly. If the man gets satiated with his folly, or is roused out of his ignorance, he may turn to an "unselfish end." Belonging to quite a different line of causality, however, is the beneficial effect which may accrue to an individuality who used his riches for selfish ends, but at the same time did good to others, not out of love or compassion, but perhaps to satisfy his vanity. He will see the effect of such beneficial actions, but the good will of those who bless him as their benefactor, cannot do him much good, because he will not be prepared to appreciate the effect of these blessings.

A. A. W.—This query touches a point of real difficulty. When I first came upon it in M. C.'s *Blossom and Fruit*, it troubled me for long. She says of her hero: "Had he but found strength enough to decide positively for ill, he would have laid the foundations of such power as would have enabled him later on to choose positively for good in another earthly life." It seemed to me then, as it does to X., that he would only have been the more likely to choose wrong again. I think I see the answer, but put forward the view with some hesitation.

It seems to me that we must go back to the doctrine which in a sadly materialised form is known amongst our Christian brethren as conversion. In the life of the great souls, such, for example, as Buddha or St. Francis, we do find a change of the whole view of the world taking place suddenly and completely. The young Siddhartha goes forth from his luxurious palace into the streets of the city. There, for the first time in his life, he meets Death, and it becomes but a question of days how long he can restrain himself from retiring to the jungle, a half-naked ascetic, to seek the true Life. Il Francese, as his youthful companions have nick-named him in true Italian fashion, comes from their revels one dark midnight, and the stars of Heaven look down upon him the old question, "What shall it profit a man?" Forthwith, like St. Paul, he is "obedient to the heavenly vision," and the sun of next midday beholds him a stranger to parents and friends, clad in a single garment given him in charity, depending joyously like the birds on the Providence of God for food and shelter, retired to the woods to seek the Eternal Wisdom. In both cases you may call it satiety if you please; but millions of men have suffered more from satiety than they, and instead of becoming saints have slowly rotted to death in hopeless *ennui*. Nay, if satiety would do it, should not we ourselves be saints now? What is the difference?

I do not see that any answer can be given to the question except that these had (in our querist's words) previously developed the purpose and strength of character which enabled them to make this sudden change, and that we have not. That we, seeing the true end of life as well as

they, lie helplessly bemoaning ourselves for life after life, is (if we think steadily of it) a matter, not of morality, but purely of resolution—of power. There is no “grace of God” or any assistance of “convictions” that can help a man forward on the road who cannot stand on his feet. We must be *strong*, before we can, to any good purpose, even choose the good.

From this consideration it will be seen that the popular view of the necessity of a sensible conversion is mistaken because it assumes in all mankind a strength and power to choose, which as yet but few of us possess; but has its truth in connection with just such characters as our question refers to. It is quite true that the natural tendency of such a life would be to make each next one worse than the last till we come to the level where, as a Master has said, it were better for them that they had never been born at all; but, for all that, strength is strength. The keen eye for his own interest—the immitigable resolution to attain it at all cost or hazard, once turned from self to the higher goal the Path sets before us, are the most precious qualifications a man can possess, and may fairly be expected to set him forward far more quickly than weaklings like ourselves. In this way the old popular saying is justified, “The greater the sinner, the greater the saint.” But the proportion of great sinners who make great saints is but a very small one, and he would be a very rash man who should advise men (as Luther did) to sin vigorously, that grace may abound.

QUESTION 55.

Q.—What are the Pāramitās? and where are they mentioned?

A. J. W.—This is a technical term in the Buddhistic teaching to express the degrees of moral ennoblement mankind has to go through in order to escape from the troubled sea of change and birth, and to attain the bliss of union with the divine. Perhaps the Pāramitās are most concisely given in Waddell’s *The Buddhism of Tibet, or Lamaism* (London, 1895, p. 138): “To obtain the intelligence (Bodhi) of a Buddha and as a Bodhisat to assist in the salvation of all living beings, the six Pāramitās or transcendental virtues

must be assiduously practised. These cardinal virtues are:—1. Charity (skt., *dāna*); 2. Morality (*sila*); 3. Patience (*kshānti*); 4. Industry (*virya*); 5. Meditation (*dhyāna*); 6. Wisdom (*pragñā*). To which four others sometimes are added, to wit:—7. Method (*upāya*); 8. Prayer (*pranidhāna*); 9. Fortitude (*vala*); 10. Foreknowledge (? *dhyāna*.” In the *Saddharma-Pundarika* (translated by H. Kern, Sacred Books of the East Series, Vol. xxi.), the Lord Buddha is many times represented as speaking of the “six perfect virtues (Pāramitās).” Professor Rhys Davids quotes them as ten, and in a somewhat different order, in his *Buddhism, its History and Literature; American Lectures on the History of Religions*, 1894-1895. Madame Blavatsky in the third fragment from *The Book of the Golden Precepts*, translates them very beautifully as the golden keys, whose use will unlock the ever-narrowing Portals on the Path, adding to the six given in Waddell’s list, “Virāga, indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived,” which is usually given as the second stage on the probationary path. Thus the ten Pāramitā virtues would seem to be but another mode of expressing those real qualifications to be possessed by all who would become disciples. These qualifications are spoken of amongst both Hindus and Buddhists as the four stages or steps of the Path; and the six minor divisions in the third stage of “attention or conduct,” would make up the ten, thus corresponding in number to the Pāramitās. The stages are given, both in their Hindu and Buddhist form, on p. 398 of *The Ancient Wisdom*, by Mrs. Annie Besant.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR
THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

LONDON, JUNE 1, 1900.

NO. 11.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN SECTION.

Members are reminded that the financial year of the Section ended on April 30th, and that subscriptions for the year 1900-1901 are now due.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

THE CONVENTION.

The Tenth Annual Convention of the European Section will be held in London on Saturday and Sunday, July 7th and 8th.

On Friday evening, July 6th, there will be a Reception at 28, Albemarle Street, W., from 8 to 10 p.m. Owing to the comparatively small accommodation, it is necessary to limit the attendance to members of the Society, but the Executive Committee may issue a few invitations to visitors.

The Convention will meet in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, at 10.45 a.m., on Saturday, July 7th.

On the same afternoon the rooms will be open for the reception of members.

On Saturday evening there will be a Public Meeting of the Convention in the Small Queen's Hall, at 8.30 p.m.

On Sunday, July 8th, there will be a Public Meeting of the Convention in the Small Queen's Hall, at 7 p.m.

At both of these Public Meetings addresses will be given. The names of the speakers will be announced later.

It is expected that the President-Founder will be present at the Convention and will preside.

All delegates (except Presidents of branches present in person) and proxies should bring their credentials in writing.

All branches should send in a correct list of their members at least seven days before Convention for the revision of the registers.

It would be a great convenience to have all reports sent in at least ten days before Convention, to aid in the drawing up of the general report.

With this number of THE VĀHAN the account of receipts and expenditure and the Convention Agenda go to all members.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER'S CONTINENTAL TOUR.

Colonel Olcott proceeded, after his visit to Scotland and the North of England, to Belgium, leaving London on April 30th. On May 2nd, he presided at a Branch meeting in Brussels, and answered many questions respecting the past work of the Society and its progress in India, and on May 4th, at a meeting of both the Brussels' Branches, spoke in French on the same subjects, and gave personal reminiscences of Mme. Blavatsky. The next day was devoted to a public lecture, "A Historical Outline of the Theosophical Society," Mr. Brooks interpreting to the audience. The President then proceeded to Antwerp, delivering another public lecture and meeting the members of the Branch, returning to Brussels on May 7th to leave for Scandinavia on the 9th.

Colonel Olcott arrived at Gothenburg on May 12th. On the evening of his arrival some of the members of the Lodge met him at the house of the members with whom he stayed, greatly enjoying the opportunity of hearing the President relate various remarkable incidents of his life; many questions were answered by him in a way that gave evidence of his profound experience and sympathy.

On Sunday afternoon a meeting of members was held at the Lodge rooms; after having been welcomed by the President of the Lodge, Colonel Olcott lectured on "The Masters of Wisdom"; as only a minority of the members understand English well, Miss Westerlund was kind enough to act as interpreter. At 8 o'clock in the evening a social gathering was arranged at the Grand Hotel, to which visitors were admitted, and many availed themselves of this opportunity to meet the President of the Theosophical Society. Several representatives of the press were present, and all expressed their admiration and respect for Colonel Olcott and the important work he has accomplished in Asia. After supper the Colonel gave a short discourse, unfolding the main objects of the Theosophical teachings. On Monday forenoon, the 13th, the President spent some time at the Lodge rooms, receiving enquirers and interviewers from different papers. In the evening of the same day Colonel Olcott held a public lecture on "The Progress of the Theosophical Society." The audience was not very large, but seemed greatly to appreciate the interesting lecture, which contained many important facts concerning the Theosophical movement which were quite new to the Swedish public. On Tuesday morning the President left Gothenburg for Christiania.

FRENCH SECTION.

The Headquarters of the French Section have now been moved into much more suitable and commodious premises in 52, Avenue Bosquet, Paris. The formal opening of the rooms took place in April, and Countess Wachtmeister was present and gave an address. Reports also come to us from Paris, alluding to the recent visits of Mr. Leadbeater and others from the European Section, who held many meetings and gave much valuable assistance to the movement in France.

Members are received daily at the new Headquarters from 3 to 6 p.m., and members of the Society and their friends who may visit Paris are invited to call at the rooms.

THEOSOPHICAL CONGRESS IN PARIS.

The International Theosophical Congress, organised by the French Section, will take place in Paris in the latter part of June. It will open on Sunday, June 24th, at 3 p.m., at the new Headquarters of the French Section, 52, Avenue Bosquet. Colonel Olcott will preside over the Congress and Mrs. Besant, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, Mr. Chatterji, Mr. Keightley and other well-known members will be present.

The general meetings will be held at the Hôtel des Sociétés Savantes, 28, Rue Serpente, on days which will be announced at the beginning of the Congress.

All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend these meetings. Further information can be obtained from the General Secretary,

52, Avenue Bosquet, or from the office of *La Revue Théosophique Française*, 21, Rue Tronchet.

DRAWING ROOM AT HEAD-QUARTERS.

For the information of the members it is notified that Monday and Friday are the two afternoons in the week in which the Drawing Room can be engaged for receptions, etc. At all other times it is available generally to members, who may introduce visitors.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to May 20th: M. A. B., £1 10s.; E. L. F., 2s. 6d.; K. S., £1 1s.; T. I. C., £5; M. S. J., 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. G. A. W. C., £1 10s.; E. A. B., £6; A. G. B., £2; I. H., £2 2s.; F. J. B., 15s.; A. J. Mac F., 14s. 10d.; A. F. P., £6; E. P. F., £2 10s.; Hampstead Lodge, £10 10s.; S. B., 15s.; L. J., 5s.; H. de C. M., £2; London Lodge £25; E. J. G., £1 1s.; A. F., 10s.; E. K., 10s.; E. B., 2s. 6d.; N. L., £1; A. S., 15s.; B. P. M., 5s. Total, £72 3s. 10d.

Section Reference Library.

This Library is for the use of members only and is open from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., except on Sunday, when it opens at 3 p.m. The following books have been presented and are now acknowledged with thanks: *Humanitarian Essays*, edited by Henry S. Salt, London, 1897; *The New Charter*, published by the H.L.P., London, 1896; *Humanitarian Science Lectures*, London, 1897; *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, February, 1900; *Russian Apocrypha*, Vol. II., edited by N. Bihou-raoff, Moscow, 1863; *Survivals of the Ancient Cult of Nature (Universe) in White Russia*, A. E. Bogdanovitch, Grodno, 1895.

ANNIE J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Mrs. Besant's Lectures.

Mrs. Besant is delivering a course of three lectures on "The Emotions, their Place, Evolution, Culture and Use," in the Small Queen's Hall, on Sunday evenings, at 7 o'clock. The first lecture was delivered on May 27th, and the following is an outline of the lectures:

May 27th. Place of the emotions in the human constitution—existence, feeling and knowledge—the nature of feeling—the astral body—its relation with the physical—its development.

June 10th. Evolution of the feeling self—sensations, passions, emotions—the place of passions in evolution—the finer emotions—the drawing forth of emotions—challenge and answer—vibratory exchanges—power over others.

June 17th. The use of the emotions—basis of morality—family, social, national obligations—

the evolution of character by feeling—practical acceptance of evolution in life.

Admission Free. Front seats (reserved), 2s.; Second seats, 1s.; Back seats, 6d. Tickets may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W.

Countess Wachtmeister's Receptions.

Countess Wachtmeister will continue her receptions at headquarters on Monday afternoons, from 4 to 6 o'clock, during the month of June. Members and their friends are cordially invited to attend.

Mr. Leadbeater's Tour.

After a tour in Holland, in which Mr. Leadbeater was most actively engaged in meetings and conversations with members and their friends, he visited Belgium and gave a number of lectures in Brussels and Antwerp. According to the reports received on April 26th he spoke in public on "The Illusion of Death," interpreted by Mr. Brooks. The audience was most attentive and interested. On the next two days Mr. Leadbeater visited the two Brussels Branches, and answered a large number of questions addressed to him by the members. On Monday, May 30th, another public lecture was given: "What Theosophy does for us." Besides these lectures and conversations private meetings were held, including one especially for the children of members.

Mr. Leadbeater afterwards visited Paris, as noted in another column.

Blavatsky Lodge.

White Lotus Day was celebrated as usual on May 8th. Many flowers had been sent by those who desired thus to show their grateful remembrance of all they owe to one who brought so great a light to many lives. Mr. Mead delivered an address, and the General Secretary and Mr. Moore read extracts from the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the *Light of Asia*. Our President, unfortunately, had not arrived in England, so we had not, as we had last year, the privilege of listening to her.

On April 26th, Mr. Mead gave the first of a series of three lectures on *The Earliest Inner Commentary on the Original Outer Gospel*, dealing with the grand systems of Cosmogony which we owe to the great Gnostic teachers of Theosophy. On May 3rd Mr. Leadbeater was to have lectured, but, owing to his absence on the Continent, where he was engaged in lecturing and visiting the Lodges, Mrs. Hooper lectured on *Some British Saints*; the saints were St. Patrick and St. Columba, and the lecturer touched upon the question of the heresies of the early British Church. On May 10th Mr. Leadbeater gave a practical and instructive lecture on *Faith and Intuition*; and on the 17th Mr. Mead delivered the second of his course of three lectures upon the subject which he has so distinctly made his own.

S. M. S.

Rome Branch.

The Rome Branch has once more had the great privilege of welcoming Mrs. Besant, who, after a short stay in Naples, arrived in Rome with Mr. and Mrs. Chakravarti and Mr. Keightley on April 24th. They were met at the station by a large gathering of members, many amongst whom saw Mrs. Besant for the first time.

On Wednesday, the 25th, at six p.m., Mrs. Besant held a reception for members only at the Lodge rooms, 72, Via S. Niccolò da Tolentino, which had been very artistically arranged by some members for the occasion. The first greetings over, the members gathered round Mrs. Besant, who spoke to them of the great privilege they enjoyed in being members of the Theosophical Society. She showed how the Society was destined to lay the basis of a great spiritual movement of love and union.

On April 26th and 28th Mrs. Besant gave two lectures in French to crowded audiences in the same rooms. The first was, by request, on the "Proofs of Theosophy." She pointed out that in the accepted sense of the word no direct proofs could be given to the world in general—that proof was available only to those, who by special training had developed the senses necessary for the verification of the teachings it gave—and in this Theosophy did not differ from ordinary science, which might be able to prove isolated facts to all, but could prove a scientific theory, such as the continuity of species for example, only to those who had made a detailed study of the facts of Nature, and this did not lie within the reach of everyone.

On Saturday, the 28th, the subject chosen was "Ancient and Modern Science." The different methods pursued by Theosophy and modern science in the search after truth were traced, Mrs. Besant showing that whilst the one placed its starting point in the highest abstraction and worked downwards to the physical plane, the other commenced its researches in the denser forms of matter and worked gradually towards the finer. The point at which Theosophy and modern science would meet, lay in the more subtle forms of physical matter.

On Sunday, the 29th, a large reception was held at Mr. Ezekiel's studio, at which many well-known members of the Roman Society were present. Mrs. Besant spoke in a most deeply impressive manner of the different stages of the spiritual life of the soul—dwelling at greater length on the first of the three divisions she made—the stage in which man, though still living the life of the world around him, learnt to direct his powers to the carrying out of work for the work's sake—no longer for any personal benefit. She touched briefly on the two higher stages—the second, that of the withdrawal from the world to live a life of seclusion and contemplation, in which all energies were gathered up; the third stage, that in which the soul, though needing no further experience for itself, takes up life once more in the world, having

but one aim, that of helping and teaching mankind.

During the week of Mrs. Besant's stay, receptions were held every evening at Mrs. Oakley's, 78, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino. On Monday, the 30th, there was a general break-up. Mrs. Besant, Mr. and Mrs. Chakravarti, Mr. Keightley, and, later on in the day, Mrs. Oakley, left for Florence. The members of the Rome Lodge are again thrown on their own resources, until the hoped-for return of Mrs. Oakley in October. It is needless to speak of the deep gratitude felt by those whom she has helped and guided during the past months. A desire for earnest study has been awakened, and classes for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom* have been arranged on the lines laid down by her. These classes will be held during the summer months on Mondays and Wednesdays at 6 p.m. The members will also meet on Fridays at the same hour for discussion.

The Italian translation of *The Ancient Wisdom* is in the press. *The Path of Discipleship* in Italian has just appeared in print, and it is hoped that before long *The Outer Court* will follow.

M. C.

Sheffield Lodge.

The Annual Meeting of the Sheffield Lodge was held on May 2nd, all local members being present. The officers for the past year were re-elected. The Report showed that a fair amount of work had been done during the year by the members as a Lodge, though less public propaganda had been attempted than in previous years, one public meeting only being held—by the Countess Wachtmeister on December 9th, 1899. We have gained two members during the year, and the attendance of members at Lodge meetings has been good.

The chief event of the year for the Branch has been the opening of its new room on March 14th, a comfortable room fronting one of the principal streets near the centre of the city. This will be a distinct advantage, as hitherto a hired room has been used for the Lodge meetings. Colonel Olcott visited the Lodge on April 26th, and a short report of his lecture appeared in both local papers. His visit was greatly enjoyed by the members.

C. J. B.

Harrogate Lodge.

At the Annual Meeting on April 20th, the reports of the year's work were satisfactory. Mr. Hodgson Smith was re-elected President; Mr. Zossenheim, Vice-President; Mr. Goode, Treasurer; Miss Shaw, Secretary.

LOUISA SHAW,
Hon. Secretary.

The Birmingham Lodge.

In connection with the President-Founder's Tour of the Northern branches, this Lodge received a visit from Colonel Olcott on April

27th. A public lecture was announced for the evening, entitled "The Progress of Theosophy," and Colonel Olcott addressed a most attentive and appreciative audience.

On April 28th, Mr. G. Tubbs very kindly placed his house at the disposal of the members who were able to meet the President-Founder "At home."

During April four Lodge meetings were held, the average attendance being seventeen. The lecture of the month was given by Mr. B. Old, on "The Virtue of Right Thinking."

Six classes have been held for the study of the *Bhagavad Gita*, under the direction of Mr. J. H. Duffell.

H. M. C.

Naples Centre.

Mrs. Besant arrived in Naples, Friday evening, April 20th, with Mr. and Mrs. Chakravarti and their daughter and Mr. Bertram Keightley.

On Sunday, April 22nd, Mrs. Besant delivered a lecture in French, on the "Scientific Aspect of Theosophy," to a much interested audience of about 300 people, in the best hall in Naples, the "Sala Filologica."

"White Lotus Day" was duly observed by the Naples Centre. Masses of beautiful flowers were sent, and the small group assembled at 8.30 p.m. Selections were read in Italian from the *Voice of the Silence*, the *Light of Asia*, and Countess Wachtmeister's *Reminiscences of H. P. B.*

There is a small lending library at 49, Via Pace, the Headquarters of the Centre.

Miss Mac Carthy's Musical Evening.

The musical evening given by Miss Maud Mac Carthy, in the Lecture Room, at 28, Albemarle Street, on May 21st, was very well attended and the music provided by Miss Mac Carthy and Mr. Donald Tovey was highly appreciated. The programme comprised the "Kreutzer" Sonata, Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto and some old French music. The proceeds of the concert have most kindly and generously been given by Miss Mac Carthy to the General Fund of the Section.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription; three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m on Sundays, at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: June 3rd and 17th, Study of *The Ancient Wisdom*; June 10th and 24th, Lectures. *Bhagavad Gītā* class on Saturdays, June 9th and 23rd, at the Cobden Hotel, conducted by Mr. H. Duffell. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, at above address.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Yorkshire Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m. First Wednesday in the month, for members only, study of *In the Outer Court*. Other Wednesdays, open to visitors, subject, *Man and his Bodies*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at 5, Beaconsfield Road, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 7 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: May 22nd, *Lessons from "The Life of Anna Kingsford,"* A. P. Cattanach. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the second Thursday of each month.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 12, Wartenau, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Public meetings at the Hotel zur Krone once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, Clarence Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: June 3rd, *Conscience*, Hodgson Smith; June 10th, *The Lord Jesus*, H. Ernest Nichol; June 17th, *The Good Law*, W. H. Thomas; June 24th, *Christian Theosophy*, Mrs. Bell. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 8 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Some Problems of Life*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings every Monday at 8 p.m., at 97, Westbourne Avenue.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 46, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel

Allerton. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Hyde Park, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meetings are suspended during the summer. Class on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in the month. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: June 7th, *The Shadow and the Substance*, B. Keightley; June 14th, *Some Obstacles to Progress*, C. W. Leadbeater; June 21st, *Mathematics—Ancient and Modern, II.*, M. U. Moore; June 28th, *The Earliest Inner Commentary on the Original Outer Gospel, III.*, G. R. S. Mead. These lectures are open only to members of the Lodge.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: June 5th, *The Geometry of Nature*, A. M. Glass; June 12th, *The Five Gates and the Narrow Way*, Alan Leo; June 19th, *Symbology*, L. Stanley Jast; June 26th, *The Great Pyramid*, W. P. Swainson. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: June 4th, no meeting; June 11th, *The Development of Spiritual Life*; June 18th, *Proportion*, A. J. Faulding; June 25th, *The Geometry of Nature*, A. M. Glass.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: June 1st, *The Natural Philosophy of the Future*, A. P. Sinnett; June 8th, "The Law of Psychic Phenomena" (a Criticism), G. Dyne; June 15th, *Some Notes on Consciousness and the Central Nervous System*, Mrs. Betts; June 22nd, *Geometry of Nature*, A. M. Glass; June 29th, *Ibsen's "Brand" and "Peer Gynt,"* Rev. W. Charter-Piggott.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., in Room 31, York Chambers, 27, Brazenose Street. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Subject for study, *Four Great Religions*.

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 6 p.m., at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 56.

D. D.—*Was the Rāja Yoga (Science of the Soul) supposed to have been studied by the Christians of the Alexandrian School (St. Clement, Origen, etc.)?*

G. R. S. M.—The whole of Clement's efforts were directed to proving that there was a Christian Gnosis—and Gnosis is precisely a synonym for the Science of the Soul. At Alexandria Clement moved in an atmosphere of theosophy and inner instruction with regard to this holy science; it is true that he criticises his contemporaries, and imagines that his own way is the best, but at bottom he was aiming at the same goal and endeavouring along the same path. Clement is a link between the real Gnostics and Orthodox Christianity. Bishop Westcott, in his article ("Clem. of Alex." in S. and W.'s *D. of Ch. Biog.*) writes:

"Man, according to Clement, is born for the service of God. His soul is a gift sent down to him from heaven by God, and strives to return thither. For this end there is need of painful training; and the various partial sciences are helps towards the attainment of the true destiny of existence. The 'image' of God which man receives at his birth is slowly completed in the 'likeness' of God. The inspiration of the Divine breath by which he is distinguished from other creatures is fulfilled by the gift of the Holy Spirit to the believer, which that original constitution makes possible. The image of God, Clement says elsewhere, is the Word (Logos), and the true image of the Word is man, that is, the reason in man."

All of which Clement got from the Gnostics, Hermetics, and Platonists like Philo. Origen carried on and developed Clement's work; he also aimed at presenting the Christian Gnosis as an objective system. The writings of both Clement and Origen deal with precisely those subjects which have interested the mystics and religio-philosophers of all ages, and they both of them must have been acquainted with the nature of the Science of the Soul. They, of course,

boasted that they had the only correct doctrine and only directions for the Way—but they seem to have been rather theologians than mystics themselves.

QUESTION 57.

Y.—*What am I to understand by the term "spirituality"? What qualities might one expect to find in a person regarded as a "spiritual man"? It is very difficult for me to form any clear idea of the meaning of the term as applied to character.*

A. P. S.—If many answers are given to this question I should expect to find them all at variance. Spiritual growth has so much to do with the condition of the higher vehicles of consciousness which cannot be estimated from the physical point of view, that no answer would be complete which related merely to attributes of character on this plane. Within limits, men of very defective character may be more advanced spiritually than others who would be considered more spiritually minded by the casual observer. But in so far as character on this plane is a factor in making an entity ripe for a higher spiritual existence, the leading attribute to be thought about first of all is *not* that which is so often mistaken for spirituality—an inclination towards the observances of religion, a tendency to be "pious" in the commonplace signification of the term. That might be compatible with a very low development of the temperament which, in physical plane manifestation, would correspond with capacity for active consciousness on a spiritual plane. The one feeling which can find free expression in earth-life and also free expression on the spiritual plane, is the love emotion, and though that is no doubt a very different feeling on the higher plane as compared with what it is down here, if it finds no expression down here one may entertain serious doubt as to whether it can do so elsewhere. Certainly for the common run of ordinary human beings a loving nature is that which gives rise to the most vivid consciousness during the devachanic period, and capacity for a rich devachanic period must be taken as forecasting true spiritual growth.

E. L.—It should be borne in mind that there is both good and evil "spirituality." Taking the definition used here as implying the former, I should say that when one speaks of a man as being "spiritual" it means he is distinctly sensitive to higher influences, to more rapid vibrations coming from the planes beyond this one; also he would be an individual who had progressed a considerable extent in evolution, possessing the nobler elements of human nature in a marked degree, in other words, the ego would have stored up in itself power and capacity, which would manifest in striking ways in the present life. The "character" of such a person would be generous, loyal and loveable.

R. B.—The expressions, “spiritual” and “spirituality,” frequently occur in Theosophical literature without, to my knowledge, having ever been defined in a comprehensible manner. From the way in which they are used, however, we find that by a spiritual person can be understood only one whose higher qualities—which lie above the Manas—the godlike qualities of character belonging to the Buddhic and Âtmic planes—are more strongly developed and make themselves more felt in this physical life than is the case with ordinary mankind. Here below these qualities are only faintly shadowed forth to us, but to distinguish them are named, for example, unselfishness, joy in sacrifice, strict love of justice, large-heartedness, and so on.

G. L. S.—By “spirituality” is to be understood that which is neither animality nor intellectuality. Consequently the qualities one might expect to find in a “spiritual man” are those which are neither animal nor intellectual, such as: unselfish love, not love which is dependent on some sort of personal affinity or relationship; wisdom, not book learning; religious devotion, not attachment to a religion or sect, as such; compassion, not grief or personal weakness of any kind.

The signs of the man who has transcended “the three qualities,” *i.e.*, risen above his personality—in other words, attained to spirituality—are given in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, chap. xiv., v. 22-26, a truly noble passage, to which the questioner may be referred.

O. C.—It is small wonder indeed that Y. asks “What am I to understand by the term ‘spirituality?’” Surely no other word is forced to cover so wide a range of meaning? Each one who speaks of the inner life seems to use it in different fashion—never was a word so maltreated. Some consider all as spiritual that relates to any stage of existence or consciousness other than the physical; others use “spirituality,” as the equivalent of “goodness,” while others again, treating the term with greater reverence, regard it as being related to the higher aspects of the One Life, and decline altogether to degrade their conception by limiting it in terms either of the intellect or the emotions. Amongst the latter may be reckoned the great Christian Teacher—witness how he answers the question “The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, and such is everyone who is born of the spirit.” Such an answer may not be very satisfactory to the intellect, but it is suggestive nevertheless. It seems to hint that spirituality pertains to the Kingdom of Heaven which is within, and of which no man can say “Lo! here, or Lo! there!”

May it not be that the “spiritual” man, in the full sense, is the equivalent of one who is spoken of in the Buddhist teachings as having attained Nirvâna?—the final extinction of all separateness, the full identification of the consciousness with the One Life?—the first step,

the birth into the spiritual world, taking place when the aspirant has so far eliminated the personality that he can come consciously into touch with the Life, thenceforward to have but one desire, namely, to become ever a more perfect instrument for the purposes of that Life.

This also is the attainment of the Tâo, in the teaching of the great Chinese sage. In the *Tâo-teh-King* and the writings of Chuang-tze the idea may be studied, but the inner meaning can only be sensed by meditation, never in the terms of intellect. Lâotze and Chuang-tze try to suggest the Reality by means of intellectual paradox. One thing is, however, amply clear from their writings, and that is that they regard spirituality as being in itself unrelated to action, virtue, or character. All these pertain to the temporary and separated expressions of that Life, but do not inhere in the Life itself.

When, therefore, Y. says that it is very difficult to form any clear idea of the meaning of this term as applied to character, he is following closely on the idea of the Christian Teacher and the Chinese Sage, but if he is dissatisfied with this want of perception, and desires, at all costs, to formulate and classify the Spiritual Life, he parts company with their conception and invests the term spirituality with another and entirely different meaning.

A. A. W.—It is true that the word spirituality is used very loosely in ordinary conversation, but even a slight acquaintance with our literature will show that Theosophists use it with a very distinct and well-defined meaning. If the general outline given in Mrs. Besant’s *Ancient Wisdom* does not make it clear to the querist, a good deal will be found in the earlier part of her lecture, *Occultism, Semi-Occultism, and Pseudo-Occultism*. In a more recent lecture, not yet separately republished, Mrs. Besant is reported as saying: “Spirituality means the identifying ourselves with the True Self within us, by meditation and unselfish work. . .” “The life that is spiritual is the life of *giving*.” To us the Spirit means the higher portion of man, which is “like a star and dwells apart” from all the pains and pleasures which affect the lower self which acts in our mortal bodies; and as a man passes through life after life, he learns by degrees of how little consequence to his Spirit are the details of any one particular life (even of the one he is now living). Such a one becomes a “Spiritual Man” in the proportion in which he has learned to treat everything which the ordinary man cares and labours for as only helps or hindrances, as the case may be, to his spiritual growth. The vagueness of the ordinary use of the word arises from the fact that so few, even of those who call themselves religious people, have any clear idea of anything higher in them than the physical brain by whose aid they think and feel; they do not know what the Spirit is—the true self in whose life their immortality consists. As St. Paul says of them, they are yet babes—we

cannot speak to them as unto spiritual, only as unto carnal, and—"the carnal man understandeth not the things of the Spirit."

QUESTION 58.

M. D.—How many years of silence were enjoined on those seeking admittance to the inner Pythagorean Schools? Mr. Mead, in his *Orpheus*, says that silence was required of probationers during the first two stages of their probation; he says the first stage lasted two years, but does not mention the duration of the second stage. Am I right in believing that a five years' silence was imposed?

G. R. S. M.—We unfortunately do not possess any detailed information on this interesting point; it is generally stated that the strictest rule of the Pythagorean discipline enacted a five years' silence. Thus we hear that Apollonius of Tyana passed five years without opening his mouth, and that the Gnostic teacher Basilides, in imitation of Pythagoras, exacted a five years' silence from his disciples. Elsewhere we learn that Apollonius required four years to be spent in silence by his pupils; but this may be a mistake of his biographer or of a copyist, and we should read the usual five years. Whether or not the probationary degree of Hearer, during which the neophyte received instruction but without the privilege of questioning his teacher, was part of the five years is, to my knowledge, nowhere stated.

If we then are to believe that so long a period as five years of silence was originally laid down by Pythagoras himself, and if our information with regard to the two years' probationary degree is correct—seeing that after these two years the pupil could ask questions, we must conclude that there was a preliminary period of three years of silence, without any instruction.

We should, however, remember that our accounts of the discipline of the Pythagorean School are exceedingly contradictory owing to the confusion of the exoteric and esoteric rules by the classical writers. On the one hand we learn that the Pythagoreans were strictly forbidden to touch flesh or wine, on the other that Pythagoras permitted his followers to eat certain kinds of meat and to drink wine. Equally confusing is our information on several other important points. The truth of the matter is that the members of the Inner School were enjoined to abstain rigidly from wine and flesh, while the members of the General School were permitted a certain licence in this respect. So with regard to other points; the Esoterics were rigid celibates, the Exoterics were exhorted to be continent, and wise parents, for the growth of the School depended on their children. It is then to be believed that the five years were for the Esoterics only; and it may well be that before receiving a word of the inner instruction they were submitted to a three years' probation of

silence, during which they reflected on the outer teaching and strove to purify themselves. Then for two years they received the preliminary theoretical instruction of the inner science, but still bound by the vow of silence—it being thought that most of their initial difficulties would solve themselves in the course of the instruction, and that it was improper for those who had the ambition of becoming philosophers, to bombard their teacher with a fire of questions, prompted by idle curiosity or lack of attention rather than by a real desire for spiritual instruction.

It was only after these five years that they could ask questions and be received in the higher degree of the School, where they became possessed of the practical instruction (*mathesis*) in the inner way and received the name of *Mathematici*.

QUESTION 59.

M. D.—Did the Neoplatonic Schools also have this rule of silence? If so, had the probationer to keep silence for the same length of time?

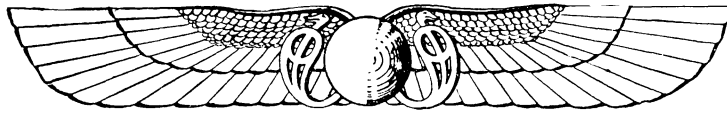
G. R. S. M.—I have never come across any direct statement to this effect. As, however, the Neoplatonic schools continued the tradition of the Orphic societies and the Pythagorean communities, it is not improbable that some of their members underwent the vow of silence. We have, unfortunately, no record of the pupils of Apollonius, who certainly kept the vow, and who continued into the second century A.D. Other links in the chain are the Gnostics of the Basilidian and Valentinian Schools, who also certainly kept the vow, and this brings us to the end of the second century. Still other precursors of the third-century Neoplatonism of Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, and Porphyry, were the disciples of the Trismegistic tradition (but in this I have so far not found any reference to the vow of silence in the Pythagorean sense, though I have in another).

On the other hand, if my memory holds good—though Porphyry and Iamblichus in treating of Pythagoras speak admiringly of the vow of silence—we have no distinct statement that any of them practised it. In all probability they did so; but history is silent on the point.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the European Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription (5s.). Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—OTWAY CUFFE, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. IX.

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NO. 12.

Edited by OTWAY CUFFE.

THE CONVENTION.

With this number of THE VĀHAN a programme of the Convention goes to each member.

It is hoped that as many members as possible will attend the reception on Friday, July 6th.

The meetings on Saturday and Sunday evenings, July 7th and 8th, are free to the public. Cards notifying these meetings are printed and can be obtained by members for distribution by applying to the General Secretary. If members will kindly do what they can to fill the hall, the success of the meetings will be increased.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

THE PARIS CONGRESS.

At the request of the Executive Committee Mrs. Besant represented the European Section at the Theosophical Congress in Paris.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

CONVENTION OF THE DUTCH SECTION.

The Dutch Section held a most successful Convention on June 3rd. The General Secretary, Mr. Fricke, gave a good report of the year's activities. More than fifty new members had been added to the roll, and new centres of work had been formed. All the officers were re-elected. The presence of the President-Founder, who acted as chairman, was much appreciated.

LETTER FROM THE SCANDINAVIAN SECTION.

The General Secretary, European Section.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

The Scandinavian Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention assembled, sends its brotherly greetings to the European Section.

May success and blessing always crown your work.

On behalf of the Convention,
Yours fraternally,
S. LILJESTRAND,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branch.

A charter was granted on June 7th to members in Naples to form the Naples Branch. The President of the Branch is Mrs. Cooper-Oakley; the Secretary, Signor G. Rinonapoli; and the Treasurer, Mrs. Lloyd.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to June 20th: Brighton Lodge, £1; H. M., £1 1s.; F. S. P.-T., £2; E. and Mrs. H., £1; E. B., 10s.; M. H., £1; A. W., £1; M. M. C., £16 10s.; F. K., £20; K. K., £1 1s.; C. E. P., 5s.; H. E. N., £5; W. J. A., £5; W. E. F., £1; C. H. P., £1; W. H. B., £1 1s.; I. B., £5; H. S. G., £2; W. B. F., 2s. 6d.; E. G., £1; P. W. G. N., £2 2s.; S. H., 5s.; E. M., £1; B. P. M., 5s. Total, £70 2s. 6d.

Closing of the Rooms at Headquarters.

Members are notified that the Executive Committee have decided to close the rooms at Head-

quarters during the month of August. The office will, however, be open for the necessary business.

OTWAY CUFFE,
General Secretary.

Mrs. Besant's Lectures.

Mrs. Besant will deliver a course of four lectures on "Thought-Power, its Control and Culture," at 28, Albemarle Street, on Friday afternoons in July, the lectures beginning at 5 o'clock.

The following is the complete syllabus :

LECTURE I.

July 6th.—The Self as Knower—Knower, Known, Knowing—The Nature of Thought—The "Creator of Illusion"—The Mental Body—Its material—Its growth—Its Improvement—Thought Transference, physical and psychical.

LECTURE II.

July 13th.—The beginnings of Thought—Memory and Anticipation—Thought-Images—Clear and confused Thinking—Stimulus from a stronger Thinker—How to read—Bad Memory and its Cure.

LECTURE III.

July 20th.—Concentration—Wandering thoughts—How to practise Concentration—Dangers connected with it—Objects of Concentration—How to rise from the lower to the higher Mind—Receptivity—Meditation.

LECTURE IV.

July 27th.—How to strengthen Thought-Power—How to exclude unwished-for Thoughts—How to secure Peace of Mind—How to help others by Thought—Can we help the "dead"?—The influence of combined Thought.

Admission to each lecture, 2s. Course tickets, 6s., can be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W.

Reception at Headquarters.

Mrs. Faulding, Miss Ward and Mrs. Hogg will be "At Home" at Headquarters on Monday, July 2nd, from 4 to 6 p.m. Members and their friends are invited to attend.

Northern Federation.

The twenty-fifth Conference of the Northern Lodges and Centres was held at Harrogate, on May 19th, under the presidency of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater. There was a large attendance of delegates and members from Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Leeds, Bradford, York, Middlesbrough, Harrogate, Baildon, Leeds, Hull and Whitley. Before the formal business of the Conference was dealt with, the Secretary spoke in sympathetic terms of the great loss the Federation had sustained in the passing onward of Mr. Corbett, their late colleague and friend, who for so long had been President

of the Manchester Lodge, and who had been present at every previous Conference; on behalf of the members he expressed the deep sympathy which all felt with Mrs. Corbett and her family.

Mr. Leadbeater, in declaring the Conference open, alluded to the absence of Mrs. Besant, who had been unfortunately unable to take the chair owing to illness; it was expected, however, that she would be present at the August meeting.

After short reports had been made of the progress of the movement in the North of England, Mr. Nichol read a very interesting paper on "The Influence of Music on the Inner Nature." A discussion followed, which was taken part in by the members who were specially interested in Music. A paper entitled "Happiness as a Factor in Theosophic Life," read by Miss Gertrude Spink, provoked a good discussion, the problem for solution being generally considered to be that of "How to be happy though evolving."

The concluding address at the evening meeting was delivered by Mr. Leadbeater on "Faith and Intuition." Needless to say all present found in it a great deal of valuable information which, if taken advantage of, could not fail to be of practical use. On Sunday, Mr. Leadbeater delivered two public lectures in the Spa Concert Rooms. At the afternoon lecture the subject was "Reincarnation," and in the evening "What Theosophy does for us."

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The Lodge has had the privilege of listening to the President on the evenings of May 24th and June 7th.

Mrs. Besant took the place of Dr. Wells on the first-mentioned date; she spoke of the meaning and purpose of the Theosophical movement which, as it were, struck the key-note and indicated the nature of the forces, unifying and spiritualising, which were to guide and mould the races of the future.

On May 31st Miss Arundale read a very thoughtful paper on the extremely difficult subject of "Free-will and Karma."

On June 7th Mrs. Besant took up the question of the nature of spirituality, showing that the spiritual man was he who perceived but One Life working in the world, and desired but to serve, though but humbly, as a means for the expression of that Life.

On June 14th Mr. Leadbeater gave some very practical advice as to the eradication of "Some Obstacles to Progress," which are to be found more especially in the West, the chief being the spirit of carping criticism so prevalent amongst us; the lecturer recommended that we use our critical faculties in discerning the good points, rather than the weaker, in all matters and persons whereunto our attention may be directed.

S. M. S.

Theosophical Lending Library.

This Library is open to all, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not.

Terms of subscription; three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been presented and are now acknowledged with thanks: *The History of Freemasonry*, Robert Freke Gould, 3 vols., London, 1885; *England and Islam*, E. Maitland, London, Tinsley Brothers, 1877.

A. J. WILLSON.

Lotus Circle.

The children will meet at 2.30 p.m. on Sundays, at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Lecture List.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: July 1st, 15th and 29th, Study Class; July 8th and 22nd, Lectures. *Bhagavad Gītā* class on Saturdays, at 8.15 p.m., July 7th and 21st, at the Cobden Hotel, conducted by Mr. H. Duffell. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, at above address.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at 1, Boscombe Chambers, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Yorkshire Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *Karma*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place on alternate Sunday afternoons at members' houses. Information can be obtained from the Librarian, Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or the Secretary, Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings at 5, Beaconsfield Road, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 7 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 67, Brunswick Street.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the second Thursday of each month.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 12, Wartenau, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Public

meetings at the Hotel zur Krone once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 12, Wartenau.

HANOVER LODGE. Meetings at the "Zukunft," Herschelstrasse, 29, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, Clarence Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: July 1st, *Brotherhood*, Members; July 8th, *Devotion*, Baker Hudson; July 15th, *An Eastern Sage*, Chas. N. Goode; July 22nd, *Socialism in the Light of Theosophy*, A. W. Waddington; July 29th, *The Life of Atoms*, E. J. Dunn. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Some Problems of Life*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at 25, William Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Hon. Sec., H. A. Vasse, of above address.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings every Monday at 8 p.m., at 97, Westbourne Avenue.

LEEDS CENTRE. Meetings on the first Monday in each month at 3, Roseville Road, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries may be addressed to Mrs. Lees, at above address.

LEEDS, ALPHA CENTRE. Meetings held on Mondays, at 46, Hawthorn Mount, Chapel Allerton. Enquiries may be addressed to W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Hyde Park, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Pomona" Vegetarian Restaurant, Kurprinzstrasse, on Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., for the study of the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

LONDON, BATTERSEA CENTRE. Public meetings are suspended during the summer. Class on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in the month. Enquiries may be addressed to P. Tovey, 28, Trothy Road, Southwark Park Road, S.E.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m. These lectures are open only to members of the Lodge.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "Glen Usk," Farquharson Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: July 2nd, *Cell Life*, Mrs. Betts; July 9th, *Ghosts*, R. King; July 16th, *The Masters of Wisdom*, Colonel Olcott; July 23rd, *The Value of Ideals*, Mrs. Leo; July 30th, Questions.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, N., on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., and at 86, Savernake Road, Gospel Oak, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WANDSWORTH LODGE. Meetings at

15, Eccles Road, Clapham Junction, S.W., on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. No meeting on July 6th.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., in Room 31, York Chambers, 27, Brazenose Street. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MARGATE CENTRE. Meetings at 39, High Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 7, Ryedale Terrace, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Subject for study, *Four Great Religions*.

MUNICH CENTRE. Meetings at 5, Lerchenfeld Strasse, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings at 10, Upper King Street, every Monday evening, at 8 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at "Oddfellows' Hall," Morley Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 6 p.m., at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ZÜRICH LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarisches Speisehaus, 26, Sihlstrasse, on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.

Death of Mrs. Parker.

A wide circle of members in Australia, New Zealand and Europe, will regret to hear that Mrs. Delia Parker passed from the physical body on May 12th. Mrs. Parker's name is more widely known in Australia, where she was an active worker for Theosophy, than among our English members, among whom she has lately lived, but all who met her held her in high esteem.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 57.

(Continued.)

Y.—*What am I to understand by the term "spirituality"? What qualities might one expect to find in a person regarded as an "spiritual man"? It is very difficult for me to form any clear idea of the meaning of the term as applied to character.*

A. H. W.—The writer understands that this term is used theosophically in the widest sense, to denote the working of the Divine Creative Energy in the human soul, no matter what form the manifestation may take. The Divine Light streaming through the buddhic plane is focussed in the ego, and there becomes the creative imagination; the class of ideas evolved, depends on the type of the individual mind thus illuminated. When it is one of the greatest, and in perfect accord with the Universal Mind, great systems of religion and philosophy are brought forth, like the Good Law of the Buddha, and the Evangel of the Christ. So

the Divine Science, the Gnosis, is revealed to men. In other Great Ones, the Force evolves stupendous allegories, like the *Bhagavad Gita*, and majestic cosmogonies, like the Stanzas of Dzyan. In saintly minds the Holy Fire awakes the psalms and hymns, the litanies and prayers which crystallise in words the piety of countless souls. In the poet the Divine Afflatus bursts into radiant beauty, lighting up the world and human nature with the glory of the Ideal. This it is that wings those deathless phrases which reach the heart of nations; those "Jewels five words long, that on the stretched forefinger of all time sparkle for ever." In the musician the Power expands in perfect harmonies and symphonies that hold us spell-bound; in the artist it is the Inspiration which drives him to translate into immortal marble, his vision of the One Perfection. From the same fount the thinkers draw those theories which transform the thought of continents; and the men of science that eternal patience which consummates their labours. It is the motive which urges the philanthropist and the missionary, misguided though they often are, to toil unthanked and unappreciated. All that is wise, heroic or devoted, all that is lovely and of good report, has its root in the spiritual world; thence too comes that unassuming quality called sweet reasonableness, too seldom cultivated in modern days. All this and more is the fruit of the Spirit, and the man who shows such qualities is by so much a spiritual man, for verily the tree is known by its fruit.

QUESTION 60.

E. M.—*Can one do anything to help a person who is about to die, and how? Is it of any use to try to help before the third day after death?*

C. W. L.—Assuredly it is possible to aid a person who is about to die. If one has access to him physically, and if his illness is of a nature which makes it possible to discuss with him the conditions of death and its after-states, a little rational explanation of these will often very greatly relieve his mind and lighten his burdens. Indeed, the mere meeting with a person who speaks confidently and cheerily about the life beyond the grave is frequently the greatest consolation to one who finds himself approaching it.

If, however, for any reason this physical communication is impossible, much may be done during sleep by acting upon the dying man from the astral plane. An untrained person seeking to give such help would simply follow the rules laid down in our books; he would fix the intention of aiding that particular person firmly in his mind before going to sleep, and he would even decide as far as possible upon the arguments which should be presented, and even the very words which should be used, for the more precise and definite the resolution is made while awake, the more certain is it to be faithfully and exactly carried out in the astral body during sleep.

The explanations to be given to the sick man

are naturally the same in both cases. The main object of the helper is to calm and encourage the sufferer, to induce him to realize that death is a perfectly natural and usually an easy process, and in no case a formidable or terrible leap into an unknown abyss. The nature of the astral plane, the way in which a man ought to order his life upon it if he wishes to make the best of it, and the preparation necessary for progress towards the heaven-world which lies beyond, all these would be gradually explained by the helper to the dying man. The helper should always remember that his own attitude and state of mind will produce even more effect than his argument or his advice, and consequently he must be exceedingly careful to approach his task with the greatest calmness and confidence. If the helper himself is in a condition of nervous excitement, he is very likely to do more harm than good.

The questioner is evidently under the impression that most persons remain unconscious for at least three days after the physical death. This is by no means always the case, and should therefore never be calculated upon. The unconsciousness at death sometimes lasts only a moment, sometimes for a few minutes or for several hours, and sometimes for many days or weeks. The trained pupil would naturally observe for himself the condition of the "dead" man's consciousness, and regulate his assistance accordingly; the untrained man would do well to offer such assistance immediately after death, and to hold himself in readiness to give it for several succeeding nights, in order that he might not fail to be at hand when his services were needed. So many diverse circumstances affect the duration of this period of unconsciousness that it is scarcely possible to lay down any general rule in the matter. Some information on this subject may be found in the revised and much enlarged edition of *The Astral Plane*, which has just passed through the press.

QUESTION 61.

R. H. R.—*To what Root-Race and what sub-race do the African negroes belong?*

C. W. L.—We usually group together under the name negro a number of races which in reality differ very widely. The negroid type always indicates the presence of at least some Lemurian blood; but there are very few peoples now left upon earth that could be taken as at all fair representatives of even the later sub-races of that third root-race. Perhaps the nearest now existing are the less developed of the Australian aborigines, the Andaman Islanders, the pygmies whom Stanley found in Central Africa, and some of the lowest of the Digger Indians.

It seems to be a curious law that the belated fragments of a dying race invariably diminish in stature; so that although the Lemurians were men of enormous size, these relics of them are all considerably below the normal height.

On the other hand, some of the inhabitants of Africa, such as the Zulus and the Masai, have a very large admixture of Atlantean or Semitic blood, and would therefore have to be classed as belonging to later races. Races are now in most cases so inextricably mingled all over the world that it is frequently exceedingly difficult to indicate with any precision their place in our lists. The nearest approach then that we can give to an answer to this question is to say that while all negroes have third-race blood in them, the proportion of that blood varies very greatly in the case of different tribes.

QUESTION 62.

F. K.—*Referring to an answer to Question 370 in THE VĀHAN of September, 1897, would it be possible to ask "the most intelligent person present in the picture" a question that may never have been actually asked of the person represented in life, and to obtain an answer? In other words, can the Ākshic record be regarded as in touch with any current consciousness?*

C. W. L.—It is obviously impossible to obtain an answer from a figure in a picture. The questioner should remember that we are dealing with a record of what has happened. One may see in the mind of the person under examination the impression of all the thoughts that passed through it during life; whether they were ever definitely formulated in words or not does not matter in the least. But it would be absurd to suppose that we can now put new thoughts into a mind the particles of which were dissipated thousands of years ago.

QUESTION 63.

T. T.—*It is said that a suicide will remain longer on the astral plane than a man who has died in a natural way. Can prayers help him—that is to say, can good thoughts sent to him help him and give him some hope that the suffering he is undergoing is not eternal? In short, can anything be done for him even after he has been dead some fifteen years?*

C. W. L.—A man who committed suicide fifteen years ago is almost certain to be still upon the lowest level of the astral plane, and well within reach of the assistance which he probably so greatly needs. Assuredly he may be helped by strong and earnest thought, whether it takes the form of prayer or not. An account of the way in which it is possible under such conditions to assist a suicide is given in *The Theosophical Review*, vol. xxii., p. 81.

QUESTION 64.

L. G.—*Referring to answers relating to materialized bodies in THE VĀHAN for August, 1898, does the process extend to the materialization of internal organs, tendons, muscles, etc.? If not how is speech and*

movement possible?—and yet i so where does the process stop short? Does it involve the materialization of blood within the form, with all its chemical complexity? And is the materialized body susceptible of pain?—of the feeling for instance of suffocation in the case of the person who went down with the sinking ship?

C. W. L.—The materializations to which the question refers are evidently not those with which we are familiar at spiritualistic séances, but special materializations undertaken by trained pupils in the course of their work. In such cases the process would extend just as far as is absolutely necessary and no further, in order that no more force might be employed than was needed. Very often what is required is simply the appearance of a body, and under such circumstances it might well be a mere shell. Even on the physical plane we can produce movement and simulate speech in a marionette, and the resources of the astral plane are enormously greater than those at our command down here.

At the same time a full materialization, which was an accurate reproduction of a physical body in every respect, both externally and internally, could quite easily be produced if necessary. I have myself on more than one occasion felt the heart of a materialization beating at a séance, through I did not investigate the chemical composition of its blood.

The body materialized for himself by a trained pupil should certainly not convey to the self any feeling of pain, and it would be entirely free from the action of what is commonly called repercussion. There are materializations in connection with which such action might take place; the difference between the two types is fully explained in *Invisible Helpers*, pp. 56-59.

QUESTION 65.

L. W.—*Are there epochs in the cycle when children inherit and express more of the good qualities of their parents and forebears, and other epochs when they are more liable to inherit the evil ones?*

A. B. C.—This question embodies an assumption which appears to be at variance with the whole of the theosophical teaching on the subject of heredity, unless, indeed, the questioner means to confine his interpretation of the term good (or evil) qualities to the physical plane strictly. If this be so then one can only say that just as there are periods when physical conditions generally are not so favourable to vital statistics, so there may be periods when, because of these less favourable conditions, the children of diseased parents may more easily develop the germs of disease than at other periods of more advantageous physical environment. But this is a broad general assumption which cannot easily be proved or disproved by any *statistics* within our reach. If, however, the idea in the questioner's mind is that of the inheritance of mental or moral qualities he may

dismiss it at once, as neither Theosophy nor the most advanced modern science teaches that mental and moral qualities are inherited from parents—Theosophy going, of course, further than science and stating that these are inherent in the ego and the cumulative result of his past thoughts, desires, and experiences.

E. L.—The questioner seems to have in mind the statements regarding the bright and dark fortnight in Eastern books, which no doubt correspond in some way to the greater cyclic periods. I should think (though I am not aware of any definite information existent on the subject) that there must certainly be periods when the higher influences were dominant, and *vice versa*. Probably astrology would offer some suggestions here. But it should be remembered that the karma of the reincarnating ego would above all determine the period in which it would take birth, drawing it, as has often been said, to the parents who could provide the type of body and surroundings necessary to that incarnation kârmically; in other words, the epochs would not so much rule the man's prospects as the man himself would rule those epochs.

QUESTION 66.

S. C.—*Can anyone explain why the order of the five elements is given differently in Four Great Religions, p. 30, and in Evolution of Life and Form, p. 124, etc. In the latter Agni is given as the middle one, and the whole argument is founded on its position as the central element. In the former Vayu is given as the middle one, and this occurs twice on the same page, so it does not seem likely to be a mistake.*

A. B.—The order of evolution is as given in the *Evolution of Life and Form*. The point urged in the *Four Great Religions* was that the elements were form-aspects of Beings, and the order was not important. But it would have been better had they been placed in their right succession.

QUESTION 67.

H. D.—*In "Esoteric Christianity" (Lec. II.), Mrs. Besant, speaking of the Hindoo and Christian Trinities, tells us that Shiva corresponds to the Father, or first Logos, Vishnu to the Son, or second Logos, and Brahmâ to the Holy Spirit, or third Logos. Nevertheless, Madame Blavatsky tells us in her Theosophical Glossary (Trimurti, p. 340), that the three persons of the Trinity are simply the three qualitative gunas, and that Brahmâ is made the personified embodiment of Rajoguna, Vishnu of Sattvaguna and Shiva of Tamoguna. How is it to be explained? It seems, at first sight, that, Sattva being the highest, and Tamas the lowest of the gunas, Shiva, or the Father, ought to correspond to Sattva, Vishnu, or the Son, to Rajas and Brahmâ, or the Holy Spirit, to Tamas?*

A. B.—The relation of the gunas to the Trimurti has been often discussed, and involves

problems hard to solve. The connection given above from Mme. Blavatsky is the one that is generally accepted, though I could not agree that the Trimūrti are the guṇas. Tamas is the first of the guṇas to appear, and for many reasons is attached to Shiva; Rajas belongs to the creative activity of Brahmā, and Sattva to the joy-giving quality of Viṣṇu. The guṇas should not be regarded as "high" and "low" in themselves. Tamas is only "low" when out of place.

QUESTION 68.

D.—In Notes on "Nirvāṇa," by G. R. S. Mead, this sentence appears: "Universes, Systems, Planets, Globes, and the rest are all within our own nature, all contained in us." I should be glad to have an explanation of this.

G. R. S. M.—"The Kingdom of God is within you." This Kingdom is the ideal eternal universe, the thought of the Logos. It is a state out of time and space, and therefore is now and within, if we can use such terms of time to express realities that transcend it. There is Only one Reality, the old books teach—Brahman, the secondless, the Logos, the One and Only one. The "many" are but partial reflections in time and space of the One. "In Him we live and move and have our being"; and not only we but all globes, planets, systems, and universes. "That art thou," again says another great logion of the Wisdom. Therefore all universes, systems, planets and globes are within us, if we could but realise it, for our ultimate goal in time and space is to become one with the Father. This stupendous conception lay at the back of one mode of yoga—perhaps the most difficult—in the ancient world. It was the method of ecstasis of Plotinus and those of the great revival of the Wisdom-tradition called Neoplatonism. The "philosopher" of that school strove by every means in his power to think himself the universe; that is to say, to think into his aura the type of the ideal world, with its harmonies and powers, its beauties and virtues, its spheres and energies; and then, having prepared a temple fit for the God, having made himself like unto the great cosmos or order, out of his previous chaotic or disordered state—and thus having placed himself in "sympathetic vibration" with the "whole"—the body of the Heavenly Man—he prayed for the God, the Logos, to descend into the shrine. This was ecstasy.

QUESTION 69.

D. D.—"The glyph of the Magdalene, out of whom seven devils were cast, has yet to be understood and the mystery of Christ and the Seven Æons, Churches, or Assemblies (ecclesia) in every man, will not be without significance to every student of Theosophy. These data are common to all Gnostic æonology."—Mead, Simon Magus, p. 39. What does this mean?

G. R. S. M.—The Magdalene out of whom seven devils were cast is, in my opinion, a relic of the Mystery-teaching of inner Christianity. It is the glyph of the Sophia transferred to the historical plane. One of the synonyms of the Sophia was Prunicus, the "lustful one" or harlot, that is to say the soul lusting after things of matter; the same cycle of ideas lies at the back of the inventions of the Church Fathers concerning "Simon Magus," who they said travelled about with a harlot called Helen. Helen was the soul imprisoned in matter, the "lost sheep," for whose salvation the Christ (Simon), the Good Shepherd, descended. Simon (Shemesh) is, in another range of symbols, the sun, and Helen (Selene) the moon. The "seven devils" are presumably the seven powers of the soul turned towards matter, the seven "vices"; when the soul "repents" (repentance in Greek signifying literally "change of mind"), the powers turn towards the Light-world, the things of spirit, and the "vices" are transmuted into "virtues." The seven Churches or Assemblies are, from one point of view, the hierarchies of atoms composing the seven "principles"; they are the seven-fold veil of Isis (Sophia and Mother-nature), the world-soul; the coat of many (seven, and its permutations and combinations) colours. Osiris (the Christ, the Logos) is the "Æther," the threefold spiritual substance, the "robe of glory," the "coat woven without seam throughout"; thus making up the number ten, the perfect number of the "principles"; three of which are in all but the "perfect" still latent.

QUESTION 70.

W. I. E.—In an old edition of The Voice of the Silence, I find the word *Narjol*, whereas, in a later edition the word is spelt *Naljor*. Which way is right and what is the literal meaning of the word?

J. v. M.—*Narjol* is a mistransliteration for *naljor*, this being the pronunciation of the Tibetan word *rnal·hbyor*.

Rnal·hbyor means rest, especially of the mind, tranquillity, also the absence of passion.

Hbyor is the root of the verb *hbyor·ba*, which means to stick to, adhere to, also mentally.

Thus the signification of *rnal·hbyor* is:

(1) Meditation (*i.e.*, yoga).

(2) A contracted form of the word *rnal·hbyor·pa*; one who meditates (*i.e.*, yogin, yogāchārya), further, devotee, saint, sage, miracle worker, holy man, sinless man, glorified adept, etc.

Rnal·hbyor is the equivalent of *yogāchārya* only in the meaning of "a teacher of yoga"; in its meaning of a designation of "a mystic school" the equivalent of *yogāchārya* in Tibetan is: *rnal·hbyor·spyod·pa* (pronounced *naljorchodpa*).

The meaning of the letters in italics at the commencement of some of the above given Tibetan words is that they are written but not pronounced—at least by the common people, for Mr. Cunningham in his *Ladak* (p. 389) asserts that the most learned lamas (*bla·ma* = the higher one, superior),

but these only, pronounce all initial letters in rapid succession.

See also a note as to the spelling of this word in *Lucifer*, vol. xvi., May, 1895, page 180.

QUESTION 71.

E. B. G.—How does it benefit a man to pass into the hells on the lower astral plane so long as he does not get rid of his vile passions and desires. See *Ancient Wisdom*, p. 92.

E. L.—The entities mentioned on the page referred to are of various types, and those who belong to the "hells" spoken of, exist there (when out of the physical body) simply because they have chosen to do so, and are treading the darker paths. I do not think the question of "benefit" comes in, unless it be where such a person suddenly exhausts the bad karma that in past lives may have brought him there, and so becomes free to pass on to and appreciate some higher level. You *must* pass into the sphere you have fitted yourself to respond to, whether it be a "hell" or a "heaven." If the former, it certainly would not benefit him to pass into the latter, even supposing it possible, and it would not be heaven to him. He has worked to gain entry elsewhere. In the case of an ordinary human being after death, who might have some karma to work off on the lower levels, this process would be distinctly beneficial, in that it would be for him one of necessary purification, a stepping-stone to higher regions. He must get rid of his infirmities there, or else he remains bound. His the choice always, but if he choose to remain evil, he certainly does not benefit himself, but the reverse.

A. B. C.—The page in *The Ancient Wisdom* to which *E. B. G.* refers deals not with man's inevitable passage through the astral plane after physical death, but with the various persons who may be found consciously functioning on the levels of the astral plane while still in the possession of a physical body. The query thus resolves itself into this: "What good can it do a man to possess psychic powers so long as he does not get rid of his vile passions and desires?" And I think we may answer with strong conviction: "No good at all." On the other hand, the man who increases his power, whether intellectually or psychically, enormously increases his responsibility, and if such increase is not accompanied by greater moral rectitude he builds for himself a mountain of evil karma which it may take many, many incarnations to work off. If we may venture to paraphrase a well-known Scripture we might well ask "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole astral world and lose his own soul?"

A most important fact to remember in this con-

nection is that the higher the plane on which a force is generated the greater the energy with which it works. A man may consciously do great mischief on the astral plane, and may make his future karma in this way infinitely worse than by an action confined to the physical plane. Good and sufficient indeed are the reasons which make those who know refrain from recklessly placing the keys of occult knowledge in the untried hands of every aspirant who says how he or she should "love to go on the astral plane."

A. A. W.—I do not find it easy to follow the querist's thought. Why *should* we expect going to hell to benefit a man? The statements given to us on this matter are, shortly, that a man such as the query refers to is found after passing from the physical body to retain an astral body full of evil desires and largely made up of the coarsest astral matter, such as these evil desires have wrought into it during his earth life. He should not have had such matter in his body at all; his natural course now is to shake it off and to rise above the surroundings which the querist calls his hell. But this takes time, and the furious desires which drew it together in life are still in all their vigour, and hold on desperately to what they have gathered. Until their force is abated and they let go he cannot pass forwards. If he knows what he is about he may do much to quench these desires; but usually he does not, and lets them continue unchecked, striving to hold together the coarse body which Nature wishes dissipated, the struggle against Nature and Law causing him suffering for which Hell-fire is often not at all an extravagant term. But when it is ended he is simply where he should have been at first. The only benefit he can possibly derive from his suffering is that perchance in his next life a dim remembrance of it may help to keep him from similar degradation of his new astral body and thus to spare him a new waste of time and suffering when he returns to the kâmaloka. But that is all. He has done wrong in life, and has suffered the consequences—no more; and so much of his life has gone in pure waste as far as his spiritual progress is concerned. It is a misfortune, not a benefit.

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