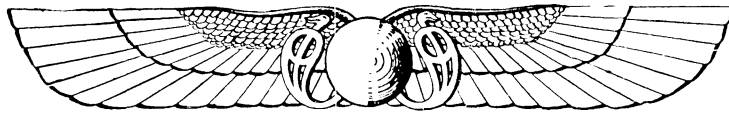


# THE VĀHAN.



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.—G. R. S. MEAD, *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. VI.

LONDON, AUGUST 1, 1896.

NO. 1.

Edited by G. R. S. MEAD.

### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

At a Council meeting held at 19, Avenue Road, London, on July 4th, the President-Founder in the chair, the reports of all the Sections of the T. S. on the Rules were carefully considered, and the following was adopted and ordered to be issued.

#### RULES OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

##### CONSTITUTION.

1. The title of this Society, which was formed at New York, United States of America, on Nov. 17th, 1875, is the "Theosophical Society."
2. The objects of the Theosophical Society are :
  - (i) To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
  - (ii) To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
  - (iii) To investigate unexplained laws of Nature, and the powers latent in man.
3. The Theosophical Society has no concern with politics, caste rules and social observances. It is unsectarian, and demands no assent to any formula of belief as a qualification of membership.

##### MEMBERSHIP.

4. Every application for membership must be made on an authorised form, and must be endorsed by two members of the Society and signed by the applicant ; but no persons under age shall be admitted without the consent of their guardians.
5. Admission to membership may be obtained through the President of a Branch, the General Secretary of a Section, or the Recording Secretary, and a certificate of membership, bearing the signa-

ture of the President and the seal of the Society, and countersigned by one of the above named officers, shall be issued to the member.

##### OFFICERS.

6. The Society shall have a President, a Vice-President, a Recording Secretary, and a Treasurer.
7. The President-Founder, Colonel H. S. Olcott, holds the office of President of the Theosophical Society for life, and has the right of nominating his successor, subject to the ratification of the Society.
8. The term of the Presidency is seven years (subject to the exception named in Rule 7).
9. The President shall nominate the Vice-President, subject to election by the Society. The Vice-President's term of office shall expire upon the election of a new President.
10. The appointments to the offices of the Recording Secretary and the Treasurer shall be vested in the President.
11. The President shall be the custodian of all the archives and records of the Society, and shall be one of the trustees and administrators for property of all kinds, of which the Society as a whole is possessed.
12. The President shall have the power to make provisional appointments to fill all vacancies that occur in the offices of the Society, and shall have discretionary powers in all matters not specifically provided for in these Rules.
13. On the death or resignation of the President, the Vice-President shall perform the presidential duties until a successor takes office.

##### ORGANIZATION.

14. Any seven members may apply to be chartered as a Branch, the application to be forwarded to the President through the Secretary of the nearest Section.
15. The President shall have authority to grant or refuse applications for charters, which, if issued,

must bear his signature and the seal of the Society, and be recorded at the Headquarters of the Society.

16. A Section may be formed by the President of the Society, upon the application of seven or more chartered Branches.

17. All Charters of Sections or Branches, and all certificates of membership, derive their authority from the President, and may be cancelled by the same authority.

18. Each Branch and Section shall have the power of making its own rules, provided they do not conflict with the general rules of the Society, and the rules shall become valid unless their confirmation be refused by the President.

19. Every Section must appoint a General Secretary, who shall be the channel of communication between the President and the Section.

20. The General Secretary of each Section shall forward to the President annually, not later than the first day of November, a report of the work of his Section up to that date, and shall at any time furnish any further information the President may desire.

#### ADMINISTRATION.

21. The general control and administration of the Society is vested in a General Council, consisting of the President, Vice-President, and the General Secretaries.

22. No person can hold two offices in the General Council.

#### ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

23. Six months before the expiration of a President's term of office, his successor shall be nominated by the General Council, and the nomination shall be sent out by the Vice-President to the General Secretaries and Recording Secretary. Each General Secretary shall take the votes of his Section according to its rules, and the Recording Secretary shall take those of the remaining members of the Society. A majority of two-thirds of the recorded votes shall be necessary for election.

#### HEADQUARTERS.

24. The Headquarters of the Society are established at Adyar, Madras, India.

25. The Headquarters and all other property of the Society, including the Adyar Library, the permanent and other Funds, are vested in the Trustees for the time being of the Theosophical Society appointed or acting under a deed of Trust dated December 14th, 1892, and recorded in the Chingleput District Office, Madras, India.

#### FINANCE.

26. The fees payable to the General Treasury by Branches not comprised within the limits of any Section are as follows: charter, £1; for each certificate of membership, 5s.; for annual subscription of each member, 5s., or equivalents.

27. Unattached members not belonging to any

Section or Branch shall pay an annual subscription of £1 to the General Treasury.

28. Each Section shall pay into the General Treasury one-fourth of the total amount received by it from annual dues and entrance fees.

29. The Treasurer's accounts shall be yearly certified as correct by qualified auditors appointed by the President.

#### MEETINGS.

30. The Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held at Adyar in the month of December.

31. The President shall also have the power to convene special meetings at discretion.

#### REVISION.

32. The rules of the Society remain in force until amended by the General Council.

The following Executive Notice has been sent out to the General Secretaries, with a copy of the above Rules :

#### EXECUTIVE NOTICE.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE,

LONDON, *July 9th*, 1896.

The undersigned hereby publishes, for the information of the members of the Society, the text of the Rules as revised and adopted by the General Council at its meeting this day.

The following members were present, *viz.*, the President, the Vice-President, the General Secretaries of the European and Indian Sections, Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, as proxy (under specific instructions) for the General Secretary of the Scandinavian Section, and Mrs. Annie Besant, as proxy for the General Secretary of the American Section. The Australasian Section's views were represented in the official report of the General Secretary, and the New Zealand Section had been so recently chartered that it had not had time to submit its wishes for the consideration of the General Council. Every change suggested by any Section and General Secretary was carefully considered in the light of its bearing upon the peculiar circumstances of the whole Society, and in several instances the Members of Council yielded their own preferences to the apparent wish of the majority. When several amendments touched the same clause, the various improvements were incorporated in the form finally adopted. Only one important recommendation was rejected—that for removing the President and Vice-President of the Society for cause shown. On mature consideration it was decided that no rule could be of use if such an emergency arose. If a majority or even a strong minority desired to dispossess one of these officers, while he retained the confidence of a large number of members, a split in the Society would result, let the rule be what it might. It was therefore thought better to leave the Society free, under the powers vested in the General Council, to deal with

any serious case, if unfavourable circumstances should arise.

The undersigned takes this opportunity of correcting the mistaken idea, which prevails in some quarters, that the T. S. Rules and the wording of its "Objects" are substantially what they have been from the commencement, and therefore entitled to some special immunity from change. So far is this from true that the "Objects" have been restated and the Rules altered several times, as the growth of the Society and its altered conditions rendered the same necessary. The version now adopted is, apparently, the best and most comprehensive that we have had for years, and in the expression of the "Objects" the line traced out in the minds of the Founders is strictly followed. The form given to the second object has been adopted to meet an almost general view that *all* religions, etc., deserved study as being based on the same general principles. In this, in her *Isis Unveiled*, Madame Blavatsky led the way, which is now traced out for all future students of Theosophy, and sympathizers with our work.

The Revised Rules go into force at once, but the undersigned will use his discretionary powers, so as to meet the reasonable wishes of all of his colleagues with respect to details not specifically herein covered.

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

## LITERARY NOTES.

July and August are slack months with the publishers, and even the torrent of Theosophical literature lessens its flow in deference to popular prejudices.

*Lucifer* for July is a very varied number, and again presents a vigorous article from the pen of H. P. Blavatsky; it deals with phallicism in relation to Buddhism and Christianity. The Watch-Tower notes tell the story of the Convention, comment on the various claimants from Spookland who pose as H. P. B., and then plunge into science—Keely, carbides, finger-nails, Reichenbach and Dr. Baraduc being all laid under contribution. Mr. Mead concludes the life of Plotinus and gives an interesting sketch of Porphyry. "The Spirit of the Age" is courteously entreated by Mr. Fullerton, and Mrs. Hooper writes feelingly on "The Helping of the People." The Hon. Otway Cuffe concludes his interesting essay on Sūrism, while Mr. Leadbeater sights harbour in "Devachan." Mr. Bertram Keightley has a very interesting article on "Animal Reincarnation," and Mrs. Besant writes on the "Unity underlying all Religions." Some extracts from Chinese Alchemists and the usual Activities and Reviews complete the number.

Mrs. Besant's *Path of Discipleship* (T. P. S., 2s. net) is now on sale, and is a suitable sequel to the *Outer Court*. The first lecture, entitled "First Steps" expounds Karma Yoga—Yoga by action, suitable for men and women of the world—and deals with purification. In the second, "Qualifications for Discipleship," the subjects studied are

control of the mind, meditation and building of character. In "The Life of the Disciple" our attention is fixed on the Probationary Path, the stages of which are carefully traced; then the four Great Initiations are spoken of, and an interesting parallel is drawn as to the teaching on these of the Buddha and Shankarāchārya. The last lecture sketches "The Future Progress of Humanity," describing the upward evolution of the race. Those who are in earnest in their efforts to lead a higher life than the ordinary one will find many suggestive and practical hints in this little volume.

Mr. George Redway is issuing some useful reprints that will be welcomed by students. Dr. Gregory's famous work on *Animal Magnetism, or Mesmerism and its Phenomena* (6s. net) has long been difficult to obtain, yet it is a classical work on Mesmerism. The learned doctor, who was Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh University, was a most painstaking observer and experimenter, and his records of his own studies cannot fail to remain full of interest. He deals *inter alia* with methods for producing the mesmeric sleep, with clairvoyance, trance, the action of magnets, crystals, etc., suggestion, magic mirrors, and Egyptian magic. *The Tarot of the Bohemians*, by Papus, translated by A. P. Morton, is issued as a remainder at a reduced price (5s. net), and will attract lovers of the Occult Arts.

The longest article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (12s.), is devoted to "The Army of the Indian Moghuls," and may be interesting to specialists. More attractive to the scholar is the paper on "Pāli Elements in Chinese Buddhism," in which Mr. J. Takakusu discusses the question whether any of the Chinese Buddhist books are translated from a Pāli original, and decides it in the affirmative, after studying a Commentary on the Vinaya, by Buddhaghosa, his *Introduction to the Samanta-pāsādikā*. Mr. Takakusu has not yet had time to complete his examination, but gives a fair idea of the points which support his contention. Mr. St. John gives an interesting Jātaka, relating some adventures of the Buddha when he was incarnated as Vidhūra. The extracts from Chao Ju-kua's Ethnography, presented by Dr. F. Hirth, are interesting.

## ACTIVITIES.

### The Convention.

On July 3rd country delegates and friends were welcomed at the Blavatsky Lodge, the President-Founder—who had arrived from Paris on the 1st—being the central figure of the evening. The business meetings of the Convention were held on the mornings of the 4th and 5th, at the Cavendish Rooms, the delegates gathering in the afternoons at 19, Avenue Road. The photograph was taken there on the lawn as usual. The public meeting was held in the small Queen's Hall, and was addressed by the President-Founder, the General Secretaries of the European and Indian Sections,

and Mrs. Besant. The full report of the Convention is passing through the press and will shortly be in the hands of members.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following sums have been received since the acknowledgment in last month's VĀHAN: Miss Wheaton, 1s.; Miss Bowring, £1; M. U. Moore, £1; C. C. J. van der Klaan, 5s.; Miss B. Cust, 5s.; Max Gysi, 2s. 6d.; Dr. A. Gysi, 4s.; R. Bourke, 15s.; Mrs. Wilkinson, £1; Mrs. Brown, £1 1s.; Mrs. Nettleton, 5s.; Miss Stewart, 1s.; Gilbert Graham, £1; Miss Bowring, £1; Dr. Nunn, £1; Bernard Old, 10s.; Mrs. Holmes, 5s.; O. Firth, 10s.; Miss C. B. Webster, 5s.; R. E. Baker, 5s.; Miss Claxton, 2s. 6d.; A. Fullerton (for American Section), £10 5s. 4d.; Mrs. Atkinson, 2s. 6d.; I. H. £1 10s. Total, £22 14s. 10d.

#### Headquarters' Lending Library.

The subscription to the Circulating Library, at 19, Avenue Road, is:—one year, 10s.; six months, 6s.; three months, 3s. 6d.; postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian.

#### The Lotus Circle.

The meetings are discontinued during August.  
A. J. W.

#### Lecture List.

AMSTERDAM, DUTCH LODGE. Meetings at 34, Amstel Dijk, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Avenue House, Avenue Road, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings at the Royal Hotel, Darley Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Astral Plane*.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Public meetings are discontinued for the present. Lodge meetings at 25, Hanover Square, alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place every alternate Sunday afternoon 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 48, Queen's Road, Clifton (near the Museum), on alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m., and Fridays at 8 p.m., informal meetings for enquirers.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 35, High Street, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m. Discontinued during August and September.

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

HARROGATE LODGE. Meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: August 2nd, *Karma*, Hodgson Smith; August 9th, *Some False Concepts of Occultism*, Oliver Firth; August 16th, *What is Man?* J. A. Jones; August 23rd, *Theosophy*, Miss Shaw; August 30th, *Purgatory*, Baker Hudson. Lodge meetings, Fridays, 8 p.m., at 1, James Street.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at "Glaisdale," Herne Bay, on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 72, Prospect Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at 31, Great George's Street, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hackins Hey, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings at the Buckingham Temperance Hotel, 40, Strand, W.C. (entrance in Buckingham Street), on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m. All meetings discontinued during August.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., on alternate Mondays, at 8 p.m.: August 10th, *The Platonic Doctrine of Ideas*, W. C. Ward. On the other Mondays, at 8 p.m., class for study of *The Perfect Way*.

LONDON, EAST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 68, Pigott Street, Limehouse, E., on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for study of *The Voice of the Silence*, and discussion on general subjects.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at Myddelton Hall, Almeida Street, Upper Street, Islington, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m. During August the meetings will be devoted to general discussion. Class for study at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 29, Grosvenor Chambers, 16, Deansgate, on Thursdays, 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.

MIDDLESBOROUGH LODGE. Meetings at Co-operative Hall, on alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m. On the other Tuesdays, study of *Man and his Bodics*. Sundays at 6.30 p.m., study of *The Secret Doctrine*.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings are held at 41, Exchange Street, every Friday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at the Co-operative Hall, on first and third Mondays in each month.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Mrs. Bestwick's, Cambridge Arcade, every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m.

THE HAGUE CENTRE. Meetings on alternate Sundays.

#### Propaganda Fund.

The following sum has been received for supplying books to libraries, etc.: A. E. W., £3 10s.

**Mrs. Cooper-Oakley.**

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley desires to notify her correspondents that she is out of England and will not return to Headquarters until September.

**Mrs. Besant's Lectures.**

The last of Mrs. Besant's lectures in the small Queen's Hall will be given on August 2nd, on "Building a Kosmos": the Logos; the Builders; the general scheme of our Kosmos; its outcome. (The lectures during July have all been one Sunday later than was announced on the syllabus, in consequence of Mrs. Besant's illness.)

August 16th: Effra Hall, Brixton. "The Power of Thought.

August 29th: Liverpool.

August 30th: Manchester (three lectures).

August 31st: Bradford.

September 1st: Leeds.

September 2nd: Sheffield.

September 3rd: Blavatsky Lodge, London.

On September 13th, Mrs. Besant takes the P. and O. steamer *Khedive* from Brindisi to Bombay, and she hopes to visit Amsterdam and Paris on her way.

**Drawing-room Meetings.**

A drawing-room meeting was held at 36, Sinclair Road, Kensington, on July 6th, in the afternoon, Miss Simon kindly offering her drawing-room for the purpose. Mrs. Hooper gave a brief address on the outlines of theosophical teachings. During the discussion that followed, considerable interest was shown. Mrs. Hooper, Mrs. White and Mr. King were kept employed for the remainder of the afternoon in answering groups of questioners. Similar meetings were held by Mrs. Besant at the houses of Mrs. Jacob Bright and Miss Stewart.

**Blavatsky Lodge.**

Notwithstanding the sometimes excessive heat of the past month, the Lodge has on every occasion been well filled. On the last Thursday in June Mr. Mead lectured upon "The Platonic Discipline," emphasizing the very important point that in ancient days, in the West as well as in the East, certain very definite "qualifications" were demanded of students before they were admitted into the Schools which taught a deeper knowledge than mere book-learning.

On July 2nd Mrs. Besant spoke, taking as her subject, "Evolution as seen by the Occultist," and it is sufficient to give the title of this lecture to suggest its extreme importance. On the following Thursday the Lodge had the pleasure of listening to Svāmi Vivekānanda; and his eloquent address upon "Bhakti Yoga" was followed with great interest and appreciation; while on July 16th, Mr. Bertram Keightley gave a very clear and full sketch of "Indian Philosophies."

Besides the ordinary Thursday evening lectures, the Lodge, on Friday evening, July 3rd, held a reception for the purpose of welcoming the delegates from other Lodges, who had arrived in order to be present at the Convention, and an extremely pleasant evening was spent.

S. M. S.

**Mrs. Besant's "At Homes."**

These, held on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month, have been very largely attended during July, and seem to give much instruction and pleasure to those attending them.

**ENQUIRER.**

(Second Series.)

**QUESTION I.**

*G. L.—How far back in history is it possible to trace the beliefs of Karma and reincarnation? Are they to be found in the earliest religions of which we have any knowledge?*

G. R. S. M.—This is a question that demands considerable research. The oldest known religions are the Hindu, Egyptian and Chaldean traditions. The dates of these traditions are absolutely so far indeterminate. It is denied that reincarnation is to be found in the mantras of the Rig Veda, the oldest document of Hinduism. The Egyptians undeniably taught this doctrine. The records of the Chaldeans, so far as I am aware, have not disclosed a belief in the tenet. The doctrine of Karma, as at present understood, without the doctrine of reincarnation, is unthinkable. But all these traditions teach the doctrine of "destiny" in some form or other. It is, however, to be believed that these doctrines go back to remote antiquity among the informed of mankind; but this is a question entirely apart from historical research. One thing is certain, that too much care cannot be exercised in making assertions on the subject. Vague and unverifiable statements based on tenth-rate evidence are not only reprehensible, but display an utter lack of responsibility and love for truth.

**QUESTION II.**

*S. T. R.—Is there such a thing as sleep or periodical rest for entities on the astral plane? Are there any alternations in the conditions, such as day and night on this earth?*

C. W. L.—So far as has at present been observed, no sleep or periodical rest is experienced upon the astral plane, nor does it seem to be needed, for the moment the physical body is left behind all sense of the possibility of fatigue vanishes. It appears probable that to entities existing entirely upon the astral plane, life is one long day, and to them the sense of weariness would mean the approach of dissolution.

The physical changes of day and night make no difference that is readily perceptible on the astral plane, except that night populates it with a large number of semi-unconscious beings whose physical bodies are asleep. Changes in the conditions are produced by various planetary and other influences, and these are, of course, cyclical in their action on that plane as on this; but they cannot be said to correspond in any way with day and night.

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QUESTION III.

*L. N.—In seeing astrally at a great distance without leaving the body, how are the impressions obtained?*

C. W. L.—There are various ways in which this may be done. First we may mention that much-abused phrase, the “astral current,” which is so often written of and so little understood. Without endeavouring here to give an exhaustive disquisition on astral physics, we may just state that it is possible to make a definite connecting-line in astral matter which shall act as a telegraph-wire to convey vibrations by means of which all that is going on at the other end may be seen; such a line being established, be it understood, not by a direct projection through space of astral matter, but by such action upon a line of particles of that matter as will render them capable of forming a conductor for vibrations of the character required. Even this preliminary action can be set up in two ways—either by the transmission of energy from particle to particle until the line is formed, or by the use of a force from a higher plane which is capable of acting upon the whole line simultaneously.

Another method would be the projection to the desired spot of a thought-form—that is to say, an artificial elemental moulded in the shape of the projector and ensouled by his thought. This form would receive whatever impressions there were to be received, and would transmit them to his maker, not along an astral telegraph-wire, but by sympathetic vibration. Yet another way would be to send either an ordinary artificial elemental or a nature-spirit, and simply let them see for themselves, and either bring back their report as a whole or transmit it fragment by fragment as their observations were made. Of course all these are astral methods, and are quite independent of the use of that devachanic sense to which the other side of the world is as much present as this.

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QUESTION IV.

*B. D.—In some of the early mystical writings it is said that the soul does not enter a child's body until it is seven years old. This has been repeated in theosophical literature. What does the statement mean in reality?*

F. A.—The statement “that the soul does not enter a child's body until it is seven years old” is somewhat misleading. In the first place the soul

can hardly be said to be *in* the body at any time. The Higher Self of any individual, even of the lowest in development, is always in touch with its own plane of consciousness, even while manifesting in physical life through the personality. It is evident, therefore, that in no case are we to conceive of the soul, or Higher Self, as solely centred in the body. In the case of the ego coming into a new incarnation we have been told that the mould according to which the etheric double is formed, is supplied by the Lipika in accordance with the Karma of the entity seeking incarnation. Bit by bit the physical frame is built up till it forms a suitable vehicle for the requirements of the incarnating ego. It may be before birth, but certainly at birth, the connecting link between the ego and its new physical manifestation is established and it has to begin its work. But it must be evident that the feeble life of an infant or even of a young child offers but little scope for the full manifestation of the entity, and when seven years is given as a limit it may be *inferred* that it generally takes that time before the entity can be said to manifest as an individuality through the new organism. Of course, the time will differ in different cases. For the developed it may be less than seven, with many it may be more, but in all cases there is a period in which it may be said that the soul is not fully manifest in its new vehicle.

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QUESTION V.

*W. B.—Can the astral body be solidified? and if so, would it be possible for a person to visit the antipodes in his astral body, solidify it, and spend say a week there, working in it, afterwards returning and taking up his physical life in the ordinary way?*

C. W. L.—It is certainly possible temporarily to solidify the astral body; in point of fact to do so is only to produce in another form the phenomenon of materialization, which is frequently seen at ordinary spiritualistic séances. There would, however, be a difference in the method employed. The controlling entity at a séance usually draws the materials for his materialization from the etheric double of the medium, probably in many cases also borrowing from his physical body some of its gaseous and liquid particles—for the medium is sometimes found to weigh less by many pounds during this part of the séance than he does before and after it; and there is little doubt that the sitters also are heavily taxed to provide the necessary power and matter. The material so drawn, being already specialized, is more easily arranged into human form and more readily moulded and condensed than free ether would be; and the task of working with the latter would probably be quite beyond the power of the ordinary “spirit,” though it presents no difficulty to a trained occultist, who indeed would be very unlikely to use any other method. No one connected with any school of white magic would think it right to interfere with the etheric double of any man in order to produce a materialization, nor would he disturb his own if he wished to make himself visible at a distance.

He would simply condense and build into and around his astral body a sufficient quantity of the surrounding ether to render it visible or tangible as the case might be, and would hold it in that form by an effort of his will as long as he needed it for the work he was doing.

It must, however, be remembered that materialization of any sort always means this sustained effort of will. It may be said, indeed, to be a temporary opposition of one's own will to the great Cosmic Will—a holding of some portion of matter by force in a condition unnatural to it. Just as one may for a time support a great weight with the hand and prevent it from falling, thus resisting the law of gravity, so one may for a time hold in a condition of extreme compression that which is naturally free ether; but in both cases the ceaseless pressure of natural law will in the end tire out and overcome all human opposition. The controlling entity at a séance having usually no trained will worth speaking of, the materializations given rarely persist more than a few seconds, or at the most a few minutes at a time. An experienced occultist could easily hold together for a very much longer time any form which he called into existence, but here there comes in another consideration which is well worthy of careful attention.

Each man has only a certain definite amount of strength on the astral or devachanic plane as well as on the physical, and it is his bounden duty to endeavour to make the best possible use of it—to apply it where it may do the greatest amount of good service to others. In addition to such strength as he himself possesses every pupil of our Masters is entrusted with some portion of the immense reserve of power stored up by the efforts of the Nirmānakāyas, but this also, it is needless to say, must be applied with the very greatest care and used to the best advantage. Practically no circumstances are conceivable which could justify such an expenditure of force on mere materialization as would be necessary in order to sustain it for a week, though it has not infrequently to be done for a few minutes or perhaps an hour or so, in the course of the pupil's ordinary work on the astral plane, when it happens to be requisite for some business confided to him that he should show himself to physical eyes at a distance. The answer to the second part of the question, therefore, would be that while perhaps such a proceeding might be possible, it could never be allowable, unless indeed it were undertaken under the direct orders of a Master.

#### QUESTION VI.

*B. S.—People have often been known to see their own doubles, and this is sometimes supposed to be a sign of impending death. What is it that is seen on such occasions?*

*C. J.—The cases of people actually seeing their own doubles are very few. The large number of instances are where they see other people's doubles, and then it very often proves to have happened at the moment of death of the visiting entity*

or just before it. But when the former do occur the explanations might surely be many. The most probable one would be that some person had unconsciously made a thought form of another by dwelling on the latter's image very vividly and had then sent it to the person in question, who happened to see it. If it really turn out to have been a sign of impending death it might be some astral entity who, foreseeing the death about to take place and desiring to communicate the fact for the person's benefit, manifests himself in that person's form so as to make a vivid impression. There is an authenticated case where a gentleman saw his own double sitting in a chair, but on further investigation and enquiry by some theosophic students, it was found that for some hours previously, being extremely tired and weary, he had looked forward to sitting down and taking some rest after finishing the work he had had to perform. This then would seem to be a case of the formation of a thought elemental, and certainly this did not foretell the gentleman's death, as it happened some years ago, and he is still living.

#### QUESTION VII.

*V. O.—How far will devotion alone take a person who desires to advance in occultism? Can he develop himself on such lines without having evolved a good intellect on ordinary lines?*

*F. A.—In the words of the question there is a most important assumption. It is asked: "how far will devotion alone take a person who desires to advance in occultism?" Now it seems to me that this desire to advance in occultism must necessitate a great deal that is outside of "devotion alone." In the first place it pre-supposes a certain knowledge of the scope and aim of occultism, and this certainly can hardly be acquired without "having evolved a good intellect on ordinary lines." In the case therefore of a person desiring to advance in occultism we can hardly consider devotion as the only factor, for it must in the nature of things be accompanied by a certain amount of intellectual capacity. The question may then take this form—Given a certain intellectual appreciation of occultism, will devotion alone advance an individual who desires to progress? But again the question arises, devotion to what? because the word itself implies an object or aim of devotion. We must infer that this aim is the individual's ideal in occultism, and the answer therefore will be that single devotion to an ideal will certainly carry an individual to the utmost possibilities involved in that ideal, and as any conception of occultism implies the development of our nature in its highest aspects it is evident that development on the lines of devotion cannot be carried on apart from intellectual progress. This does not however mean the attainment of mathematical or scientific knowledge, but that in every question either of conduct or belief the individual will be influenced by his highest reason and judgment as well as by love and devotion.*

*A. B.—The study of occultism is a pursuit that*

can only be effectively taken up when the ego has passed through a very large number of births and is approaching the end of his pilgrimage. During these births he will necessarily have developed his intellect "on ordinary lines," and will have built up a mature and well-formed thought-body. The very power of realizing that there is such a thing as occultism, and of regarding it as desirable, implies the presence of mental capacity. But it is not necessary for the pursuit of occultism that the lower mind—*i.e.*, such portion of the intellect as is afforded basis for manifestation by the physical organism—shall have been, in the incarnation in which occultism is first followed, crammed with the accumulation of facts which in the West stands for education. A man need not be a "learned man" in order to become an occultist, but he must be an experienced ego, and one who has profited by his experience, thus becoming wise. Again, the devotion that is needed is not the kind of devotion which expresses itself in vague yearnings after a crudely conceived ideal, seeks post-mortem happiness as the recompense for its services, or occupies a heart in common with various of her feelings and ambitions. It is a devotion that is intense, irresistible, complete, and that cannot be turned aside from its object by any lower love; it has in itself the seed of wisdom, for its sole desire being to become a channel for the divine will and an instrument of the divine law, that intense desire gives insight into the nature of things and "love makes wise." Also it brings about extreme purity, as such devotion cannot tolerate any uncleanness in the heart and the life that it offers as sacrifice to its Lord. A person who is full of such devotion, and in whom devotion has extirpated all the lower desires, may rise high on the Path in an incarnation in which very little external knowledge has been acquired. But it must be remembered that devotion of such quality as has been described is rare, far rarer than intellectual ability, and far more difficult to evolve, for it implies the evolution of Buddhi while the intellectual implies only the evolution of Manas. Nor can this devotion be developed until the ego has by long experience grown weary of all earthly objects and is "athirst for God," turning aside from all beautiful things to That which is Beauty itself. Those who would develop it in the future must begin by unselfishly loving and serving the highest they can now conceive, performing every action as a sacrifice without thought of reward. Such love and service gradually evolve into true devotion, the highest and noblest of human qualities, and that which finally unites man and God.

In some notes of H. P. B.'s oral teaching, the following passage appears:—

"The white Adept is not always at first of powerful intellect. In fact, H. P. B. had known Adepts whose intellectual powers were originally below the average. It is the Adept's purity, his equal love to all, his working with Nature, with Karma, with his 'Inner God,' that give him his power. Intellect by itself alone will make the Black Magician. For intellect alone is accompanied with pride and selfishness: it is the intellectual *plus* the

spiritual that raises man. For spirituality prevents pride and vanity."

#### QUESTION VIII.

*P. U.*—*Is there any means of estimating the total number of egos concerned in our evolution, and the proportion of those which will probably be successful?*

B. K.—It has, I believe, been stated by those in a position to know at first hand that the total number of human egos included in our evolution is, in round numbers, about sixty thousand millions (60,000,000,000). Of these it is at present expected that three-fifths will successfully pass the critical period at the middle of the Fifth Round, and will complete their evolution in the remaining one and a-half Rounds of this Manvantara. These three-fifths, then, will form the "successful" portion of the egos now engaged in evolving on this chain of globes; but of course there will be very wide differences of level among these, even when the end of the Seventh Round has been reached. Some, the most advanced, will have attained that perfected culmination and efflorescence of human evolution which is now represented by the Asekha Adept; others, falling short of that highest achievement, will have developed to Arhat levels; while others again will have attained only to stages of perfection answering to the lower grades of initiation. But all, it is said, who pass the critical period of the middle Fifth Round and so attain to the Seventh, will ere that Round closes find themselves definitely upon the Path.

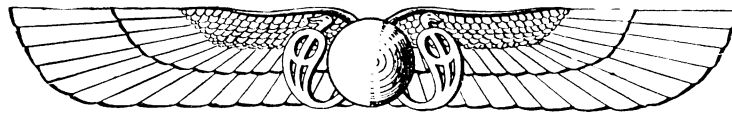
The consideration of what befalls the failures—the two-fifths or thereabouts of the sixty thousand millions who are left behind at the middle point of the Fifth Round—would lead us too far. It must suffice to state generally that these "failures" resume their evolutionary career in the next chain of globes, or, more accurately, in the new chain of globes which will be the reincarnation of our present earth and its companions, just as our present earth and the other globes of our chain are reincarnations of the moon, and the other globes of the lunar chain. It is these "failures" who will there play a part analogous to that of the third class Pitris in our chain; to them will fall the earlier and coarser work of building and formation, so that they may acquire the experience and development they lack, and thus become fitted to participate in that higher and more perfect evolution of which the new chain of globes will be the theatre.

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, 26, Charing Cross, S.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.—G. R. S. MEAD, *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. VI.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1896.

NO. 2.

Edited by G. R. S. MEAD.

### LITERARY NOTES.

*The Path of Discipleship*, by Annie Besant. (T.P.S., 2s. net). Mrs. Besant's contributions to the literature of Theosophy, are always among the most valuable we have, and in this new volume from her pen she treats of one of the most important subjects with which Theosophy is concerned. We hear and read a great deal about occultism, initiations, chelâship and so forth ; but most people have, as a rule, exceedingly vague and misty ideas of what these words mean. To some they mean astrology, palmistry, geomancy and all the various occult arts ; to others they stand for psychic powers, getting out the body, clairvoyance in space and time, and the rest ; to still others they suggest gorgeous millinery, robes, temples, mysterious colleges and much ceremonial. All such especially, and indeed every earnest student of Theosophy, will do well to read this book of Mrs. Besant's in conjunction with her earlier one on the same subject, *The Outer Court*. So doing, they will gain at least a clear and sober insight into what the path of occultism and its initiations really are ; they will realize to some extent the magnitude of the task which those set before themselves who aim at the goal of adeptship ; and they will be less likely to be led astray and diverted from the real task before them by all the specious attractions and delusive glammers of the pseudo-occultism of which there is so much in the world just at present.

The titles of the four lectures which compose this volume are : "First Steps," which deals mainly with the training and purification of man's nature by karma-yoga ; "The Qualifications of Discipleship," setting forth the specific attainments demanded of the aspirant as the condition *sine qua non* of his real admission and recognition as a direct disciple or chelâ of the White Lodge ; the "Life of the Disciple," in which are indicated the four great stages which mark his progress along the Path ; and the fourth lecture shows how this Path

is really the immensely rapid anticipation of the whole course of evolution which the successful members of the human race will slowly and toilsomely accomplish in the course of the unnumbered ages which lie between the present and the final stage of the evolution of our planetary chain. [B. K.]

*Psychic Photography. (L'âme humaine, ses mouvements, sa lumière et l'iconographie de l'invisible fluidique, par Dr. H. Baraduc. Paris : Georges Carré, 3, Rue Racine).* The idea of obtaining on a sensitive plate an impression of that which is invisible to the physical eye, is a step so directly suggested by well-known investigations in physical science, that it is no wonder students of the psychic should have time and again tried to avail themselves of it to obtain permanent, lasting and ocular evidence of the existence of "soul" in man and its survival after the death of the body. But hitherto, though many and great claims have been made by various experimenters, little or no impression has been produced on the mind of the scientific world. In this work of Dr. Baraduc's (of which we have received a forward copy) we have a somewhat new line of investigation opened up, in so far as the object aimed at is not what one may call spirit-photography but rather to obtain impressions on a sensitive plate of the subtler elements present in the human constitution. It is thus rather an attempt to prove the presence in living man of super-physical elements, than to follow the departed soul after its separation from the body. And certainly the numerous plates in this work give ample evidence of no inconsiderable measure of success in Dr. Baraduc's work. But unfortunately his method of exposition is very defective. His account of the conditions under which the various plates were obtained is lamentably deficient ; he has encumbered himself with a mass of new and by no means lucid terminology derived from an elaborate and complicated theory into the garb of which he insists on thrusting all his results, so that the reader finds himself quite unable to judge how far these results warrant the doctor's theory, and has

extreme difficulty in ascertaining even what these results in themselves really are, apart from the theory in which he has wrapped them up. Still the book is a valuable one, and the gratitude of students is due to Dr. Baraduc for this, the first serious systematic attempt along the lines of physical experiment to throw light upon the psychic constitution of man. [B. K.]

*The Growth of the Soul: A Sequel to Esoteric Buddhism*, by A. P. Sinnett (T. P. S., 5s. net). We have already given a very full summary of the contents of this new and most valuable work, and as space prevents the VĀHAN notice of any book from extending to the length of a systematic review, we shall confine ourselves to very briefly calling attention to its most salient features. In the first place, the work is primarily addressed to the general reading public and hence has a special value for those first entering upon a systematic study of Theosophy; next, the amount of perfectly new information which it contains and the flood of light which it throws upon many of our familiar topics, make it a book which no serious student can afford to be without; thirdly, it co-ordinates and systematises a very large proportion of the theosophical information which has come into our hands since the publication of the *Secret Doctrine*. Among the chief subjects upon which actually new information is here given, are the Human Aura, many of the details of the Astral Plane and post-mortem existence, the Elemental Worlds, Devachan, the Solar System and its Planetary Chains, the Path of Initiation, and irregular psychic development. A list such as this gives but a very poor idea of the importance of the information here given; but any earnest student will at once recognise the topics named as those on which our knowledge has hitherto been very fragmentary. The book is very nicely bound in the style of the first edition of *Esoteric Buddhism* and contains some 450 pages of profoundly interesting reading. We are glad to hear that it is having a great success with the general public for whom it was especially intended, and in writing it Mr. Sinnett has largely increased the already so heavy debt which all Theosophists owe to him.

[B. K.]

*Lucifer* for August is a bright and varied number, and like its predecessor it is distinguished by a contribution from the pen of H. P. Blavatsky.

Dr. Wells once more indites an epistle to his friend the Catholic Priest; Mr. Mead treats of Porphyry and Jamblichus; Mr. Leadbeater concludes his most valuable and remarkable sketch of devachanic existence; and Mrs. Besant terminates her helpful contribution to the demonstration of the central fact of religion in "The Unity underlying all Religions." "An Important Letter" received in 1886 by H. P. B. is reprinted, in which the true object of the Theosophical Society is stated; and Mrs. Hooper writes interestingly on "Occultism in English Poetry." We are also glad to see the marked improvement in the method of treating "Theosophical and Mystic Publications,"

the matter is far more readable now that the contents-catalogue method has been put on one side.

Volume II. of Messrs. Mead and Chattopādhyāya's translation of the Upaniṣhads is nearly ready for the printers; it will include the Taittiriya, Aitareya and Shvetāshvatara Upaniṣhads.

The sheets of the Gnostic Gospel *Pistis Sophia*, translated by G. R. S. Mead, have been run and the volume is ready for the binders; the translator proposes to devote the winter months to writing a commentary.

## ACTIVITIES.

### The Rules.

WITH this number of THE VĀHAN all members will receive a copy of "The General and Sectional Constitution and Rules." The Sectional Rules have undergone some slight verbal alterations owing to the carrying into force of the revised General Rules, such as the substitution of the word "member" for "fellow," "certificate" for "diploma," etc. The new copy of the General and Sectional Rules brings out most clearly the simplicity and practical nature of the revised General Rules, and the cumbersome, complicated and diffuse nature of the Sectional Rules based on the old order of things. It was impossible, however, to amend the Sectional Rules before the revised General Rules were passed, and the amendment of the Sectional Rules must, therefore, keep till next Convention, when it is to be hoped that these will be reduced to at least one-third of their bulk.

### Information for Enquirers.

With this number of THE VĀHAN a copy of the new "Information for Enquirers" goes to every member. It contains the list of branches and centres in Europe, a well-arranged course of reading, and information as to the objects, organization and officers of the Society. The General Secretary, on receipt of a postcard, will be happy to supply branches and members with as many copies as they may reasonably require of this "Information for Enquirers" *without* the list of branches. The "Information for Enquirers" including the list of branches is too cumbersome for ordinary use, whereas the abridged form is handier both for distribution to visitors to branches, meetings, etc., and for enclosing in correspondence. Five thousand copies have been run.

### Donations to the General Fund.

The following sums have been received since the acknowledgment in last month's VĀHAN: Mrs. Terrell Garnett, £1; Dr. Harris, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Orchard, 4s. 2d.; Miss Bowring, £1; John Petrec, 10s.; Miss E. Johnson, 2s. 6d.; G. Graham, £1.; Miss "M. C.," 5s.; Selby Green, 5s.; the Hon. Mrs. Fox Powys, £5; Mrs. Murphy, 15s.; "S.," 5s.; Miss B. H., 5s. Total, £10, 14s. 2d.

G. R. S. MEAD, *Gen. Secretary.*

## Headquarters' Reference Library.

The following books have been received : *Miracles during the Exhibition of the Holy Coat at Trèves*, 1891, Dr. M. F. Korum, Bishop of Trèves; *The Municipal Elections Act, 1887*, J. Renwick Seager; *The Local Government Act, 1888*, W. A. Holdsworth; *Code of Regulations and Instructions for the Guidance of Managers and Teachers, 1880*; *The Christian Mythology Unveiled*; *The Principles of Light and Colour*, Edwin D. Babbit, M.D., L.S.D.; *Demonology and Devil-Lore* (2 vols.), Moncure D. Conway, M.A.; *Nineveh and its Remains* (2 vols.), Austen H. Layard; *L'Âme Humaine*, M. le Dr. H. Baraduc; *A Scientific Demonstration of the Future Life*, T. J. Hudson; *Orpheus*, G. R. S. Mead; *The Jubilee of the Chemical Society of London, 1800*.

A. J. WILLSON, Librarian.

## Headquarters' Lending Library.

The subscription to the Circulating Library, at 19, Avenue Road, is:—one year, 10s.; six months, 6s.; three months, 3s. 6d.; postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian.

## Lecture List.

AMSTERDAM, DUTCH LODGE. Meetings at 34, Amstel Dijk, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Avenue House, Avenue Road, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings at the Royal Hotel, Darley Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *Devachan*.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Lodge meetings at 25, Hanover Square, alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place every alternate Sunday afternoon 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 48, Queen's Road, Clifton (near the Museum), on alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m., and Fridays at 8 p.m., informal meetings for enquirers.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 35, High Street, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m. Discontinued during August and September.

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

HARROGATE LODGE. Meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Sept. 6th, *Thought Control*, William Bell; Sept. 13th, *The Sorrows of Satan*, W. H. Thomas; Sept. 20th, *The Astral Plane*, C. Corbett; Sept. 27th, *Vedic Theosophy*, G. R. S. Mead. Lodge meetings, Fridays, 8 p.m., at 1, James Street.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at "Glaisdale," Herne Bay, on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 72, Prospect Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at 31, Great George's Street, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hackins Hey, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings at 8, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. (3rd floor), on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m. Sept. 3rd, *The Basis of Brotherhood*, Mrs. Besant; Sept. 10th, *Invisible Helpers*, C. W. Leadbeater; Sept. 17th, *A Mystic of the Last Century*, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley; Sept. 24th, *Some Points of Interest in Vedic Theosophy*, G. R. S. Mead.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., on alternate Mondays, at 8 p.m. On the other Mondays, at 8 p.m., class for study of *The Perfect Way*.

LONDON, EAST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 68, Pigott Street, Limehouse, E., on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for study of *The Voice of the Silence*, and discussion on general subjects.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at Myddelton Hall, Almeida Street, Upper Street, Islington, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Sept. 2nd, *Platonic Discipline*, G. R. S. Mead; Sept. 9th, *Theosophy and Practical Life*, A. J. Faulding; Sept. 23rd, *Occult Chemistry*, M. U. Moore; Sept. 30th, *Man in Relation to Animals*, Mrs. Mallet. Class for study at 10, Park Street, Upper Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 20, Grosvenor Chambers, 16, Deansgate, on Thursdays, 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.

MIDDLESBOROUGH LODGE. Meetings at Co-operative Hall, on alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Sept. 15th, *Theosophy*, Miss Shaw; Sept. 29th, *Some Points of Interest in Vedic Theosophy*, G. R. S. Mead. On the other Tuesdays, study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Sundays at 6.30 p.m., study of *The Secret Doctrine*.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings are held at 41, Exchange Street, every Friday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at the Co-operative Hall, on first and third Mondays in each month.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Mrs. Bestwick's, Cambridge Arcade, every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m.

## Middlesborough.

Beginning in September a series of public lectures will be given, extending over the winter season.

The Lodge library has been made available to non-members (*id.* per vol. per week), attendance Tuesday evenings 7.45 to 8 p.m.

## Bradford.

The Annual Meeting of the Athene Lodge was held on August 18th. During the year an able series of papers have been read before the public meetings held under the auspices of the Lodge, both these and those set apart for private Lodge study have been well attended. In January Mr. Leadbeater delivered an interesting address upon "The Development of Consciousness."

In the forthcoming year it was decided to meet weekly for study of *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Secret Doctrine*.

The following officers were unanimously elected for the year : President, Henry Saville ; Treasurer, Albert Saville ; Secretary and Auditor, Archibald J. White ; Librarian, Mrs. Atkinson.

A. J. WHITE.

## ENQUIRER.

## QUESTION CCXCIX.

S. L.—*In the Astral Plane much mention is made of "elemental essence" from which the thought builds "elementals," and on p. 15 it is said that on looking at a stone there can be seen its astral counterpart, the Jiva flowing through it, its aura and its appropriate elemental essence. In what way is the latter distinguished from the rest? Is it astral or other matter?*

C. W. L.—The elemental essence is very readily distinguishable from the rest by those who are able to see it, but it is not so easy to make the distinction clear in a verbal description on the physical plane. First, let it be understood that elemental essence is merely a name applied during certain stages of its evolution to monadic essence, which in its turn may be defined as the outpouring of Ātmā-Buddhi into matter. We are all familiar with the idea that before this outpouring arrives at the stage of individualization at which it ensouls man, it has passed through and ensouled in turn six lower phases of evolution—the animal, vegetable, mineral, and three elemental kingdoms. When energizing through those respective stages it has sometimes been called the animal, vegetable, or mineral monad—though this term is distinctly misleading, since long before it arrives at any of these kingdoms it has become not *one*, but *many* monads. The name was, however, adopted to convey the idea that, though differentiation in the monadic essence had already long ago set in, it had not yet been carried to the extent of individualization.

Now when this monadic essence is energizing through the three great elemental kingdoms which precede the mineral, it is called by the name of "elemental essence." Before however, its nature and the manner in which it manifests can be understood, the method in which Ātmā enfolds itself in

its descent into matter must be realized. Be it remembered then, that when Ātmā, resting on any plane (it matters not which—let us call it plane No. 1), wills to descend to the plane next below (let us call that plane No. 2), it must enfold itself in the matter of that plane, that is to say, it must draw round itself a veil of the matter of plane No. 2. Similarly, when it continues its descent to plane No. 3 it must draw round itself the matter of that plane, and we shall then have, say, an atom whose body or outer covering consists of the matter of plane No. 3. The force energizing in it—its soul, so to speak—will, however, not be Ātmā in the condition in which it was on plane No. 1, but will be that Ātmā *plus* the veil of the matter of plane No. 2. When a still further descent is made to plane No. 4, the atom becomes still more complex, for it will then have a body of No. 4 matter, ensouled by Ātmā already twice veiled, in the matter of planes 2 and 3. It will be seen, that, since this process repeats itself for every sub-plane of each plane of the solar system, by the time the original force reaches our physical level it is so thoroughly veiled that it is small wonder that men often fail to recognize it as Ātmā at all.

The two higher elemental kingdoms exist and function respectively upon the rūpa and arūpa levels of the devachanic plane ; but the question probably does not refer to them. It should however be remembered that in speaking of this phase of evolution the word "higher" means not, as usual, more advanced, but *less* advanced, since here we are dealing with the monadic essence on the downward sweep of its arc, and progress for the elemental essence therefore means descent into matter instead of ascent towards higher planes. Unless the student bears this fact constantly and clearly in mind, he will again and again find himself beset by perplexing anomalies.

## QUESTION CCC.

L. W.—*What is the basis of the theory that the Buddha denied the existence of "soul"? Are there any definite teachings of his on this point?*

J. C. C.—The absurd idea that Buddha preached the non-existence of anything like soul, rests chiefly on later and non-canonical books such as the Questions of King Milinda and so on. So far as the direct teachings of Buddha himself are concerned—teachings which are to be found in the Sutta and Vinaya Piṭkas—I do not think there are any passages which can be brought forward in support of the nihilistic view. Those who maintain that theory of negation, generally refer for their authority to what is known as the Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta ; and as far as I know this is the only discourse in which Buddha speaks definitely of what is the "Self" (ātman) but not of the "soul," that is the reincarnating ego.

This Sutta is a continuation of or a supplement to Buddha's first sermon known as the

“Foundation of the Wheel of Law.” We find both the first sermon and its supplement fully recorded in the introduction to the Mahāvagga of the Vinaya Piṭaka (Mahāvagga I. 6, 38-46, Oldenberg's Edition, trans. Sac. B. East, Vol. XIII. pp. 100-101). The Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta itself again appears in the Saṃyutta-Nikāya of the Sutta Piṭaka. The meaning of the title of this Sutta is “The Discourse on the Indication of Non-self” (erroneously translated by Orientalists as the “Sutta of not having the Signs of Self.”) Here Buddha first clearly mentions, exactly in the manner of the Upanishads, what is not the Self. For it is only by excluding what is Non-self that we can know the Self which, as the Upanishads say, can only be described as “not this, not this.” Here Buddha clearly tells us that rūpa (body or form) is not the Self (attā or ātmā); nor is vedanā (sensation or that part of our nature which has to do with sensation); saññā (perception); saṅkhārā (impressions, presumably that part of our mind which receives and is guided by mere impressions; the “impulsive mind”); nor viññāna (buddhi, “rational mind”); that is, the Self is not any of the five skandhas. We find here no mention whatever that the Self is *not*; but that the body and the rest which are generally mistaken for the Self, are not the Self. Self is something beyond them all. This Self, when it recognizes itself as different from all else, divests itself of all attachment (rāga) and “by absence of attachment he is made free.” Such is the conclusion. If the Self does not exist who is to be made free?

Western minds untrained in the ideas of the Hindus to whom Buddha addressed his sermons see nothing but nihilism when reading that even “reason” is denied as the Self. Few can comprehend the idea that mind, reason and much beyond, no matter how sublime it be, are *essentially* the same as “body,” that is to say, so-called “matter.” But ātman or the Self transcends them all. Failing to grasp this thought many of the non-Indian Buddhists and unqualified persons who joined the Saṅgha in later times reduced the sublime teachings of Buddha to nihilism. The sublime teachings of the sages are ever the most abused when treated by the unfit; and here comes in the importance of the different āshramas or stages in religious life as recognized by the Hindus.

The western scholars who are brought up with the idea that “mind” is the man and his soul and self, see darkness and materialism in Buddhism, when they find mind and reason spoken of as non-self, or as a subtle form of “matter.”

This is the whole basis of the misconception regarding the Self which Buddha not only did not deny, but which he ever taught men to seek. The sole aim of his teaching was to destroy “attavāda” or egoism (ahaṅkāra), but not the attā or ātman itself. As regards his teaching about the soul, or the persisting ego which is the Self as related to the individually differentiated subtle body and is born again and again; we find abundant evidences in his direct teachings which absolutely contradict the theory that Buddha denied any persisting ego.

I will refer here only to one instance in the Sāmaññaphala Sutta of the Dīgha-Nikāya. After first mentioning the condition and training of the mind that are necessary for success in yoga, Buddha describes how a man can recover the memory of his past lives, and how he sees all the scenes in which he was in any way concerned passing in succession before his mind's eye. He illustrates it by saying: “If a man goes out from his own village to another and thence to another, and from there again comes back to his own village, he might think thus: I indeed went from my own village to that other. There I stood thus, I sat in this manner. Thus I spoke and thus I remained silent. From that village again I went to another and I did the same there. *The same* ‘I am’ (so 'mhi), returned from that village to my own village. In the very same way, O king, the ascetic, when his mind is pure, knows his former births, one, two, three, and many. He thinks, ‘In such a place I had such a name, I was born in such a family, such was my caste, such was my food, and in such and such a way I experienced pleasure and pain, and my life extended over such a period. The same I thence removed (so tato *cuto*), was born in some other place, and there also I had such and such conditions. Thence removed, the same I, am (now) born here.’” (Sāmaññaphala Sutta, 93-94).

The above quotation shows clearly the teaching of Buddha, with regard to the re-incarnating ego. He illustrates also very beautifully in the same Sutta how a bhikṣu can know the past births of others, and how he can see men dead in one place, and after the sorrows and joys of hell and heaven, the same born somewhere else.

I do not think he ever denies the persisting ego. But this has been misinterpreted on the strength of a statement in the Brahmajāla Sutta, where Buddha, after mentioning all the various aspects of soul, says that they do not really *absolutely* exist because their existence depends on “contact,” *i.e.*, relation. (Brahmajāla Sutta, III. 58, and Buddhaghōṣha's commentary on it). Buddha denies only the absolute reality of the soul, and so does every other great teacher. The existence, not only of the soul, but even of the Logos is true only *relatively*. Untrained persons here again have misunderstood the idea.

#### QUESTION CCC1.

*B. T.—Does Theosophy teach that you cannot judge an occultist by the ordinary standards of right and wrong, because what appears direct falsehood to others may be recognized by him as the highest good? When a Theosophist believes himself to be under the guidance of a Master, should he be ready (when occasion arises) to tell what strikes him as a direct falsehood, on the ground that good and evil are merely relative terms? Or, must he ever refuse to believe that any command of dubious morality can proceed from a pure source?*

A. B.—Speaking generally, occult morality is far

more exacting than "ordinary morality," and the occultist not only tries to fulfil the duties laid down by every noble ethical code, but recognizes claims of duty to which the ordinary moralist would be blind. But the questioner speaks of "what *appears* direct falsehood to others"; the occultist is concerned with what is, not what appears to be, true, and others, judging by limited and imperfect power of observation, might easily in complicated cases be deceived as to his actions. He sees the whole where they see only a part, and his true answer might appear to them to be a lie. The point is that he must speak and act truth, no matter what may be the appearance presented, though he will try to avoid misconception wherever possible, in order not to confuse the ignorant. No occultist of the Right Hand Path could "recognize the highest good" in what was really a falsehood, for all that is false is poisonous, and corrupts everything into which it is thrown. No Theosophist should, under any circumstances, tell what appears to him to be a direct falsehood; he may feel perfectly certain that no White Master would direct him to tell a lie, or what appears to him to be a lie, and that if he imagines such a command to come from his "guide," either he is deluded by a false appearance or his "guide" belongs to the ranks of the black or grey. Apart from the question of morality, it is peculiarly expedient for the occultist, be he white or black, to practise truth so far as he himself is concerned, however he may try (if he belong to the dark school) to make other people practise deceit. For it is of vital importance on the astral plane to escape glamour and to pierce through deceptive appearances, and this is only possible for those in whose nature there is no taint of falsehood. Truthfulness alone is not an entire protection against deception, but the man who is not truthful is certain to be deceived. It is scarcely necessary to add that no one who believes in karma can commit the absurdity of "doing evil that good may come." As well sow thistles that wheat may come. The morality in the one case is as ludicrous as the agriculture would be in the other.

A. R.—Theosophy does not teach that what appears as the highest good, to the occultist, may be direct falsehood to others. The moral law as held by the true occultist differs from the ordinary ideas of right and wrong in that it is more exacting and far-reaching in regard to truth and morality: it admits of no compromise, for compromise means self-deception, and self-knowledge is at the basis of all true occultism.

The Theosophist who believes himself under the guidance of a Master, and at the same time is prompted to acts of deception or acts of dubious morality on the ground that good and evil are merely relative, may be quite sure that he has fallen a victim to some low entity masquerading under false colours; this is why the power of discernment is so strongly insisted on as absolutely necessary before the doors of the mind are opened to psychic impressions. Light proceeding from a

pure source is in its essence pure, and cannot involve questions of dubious morality and falsehood.

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QUESTION CCCII.

L. M.—*There are apparently no references to the doctrine of reincarnation in the writings of the early Church Fathers, is this also the case with regard to the other early Christian Sects which were subsequently condemned as heretical?*

G. R. S. M.—In the Gnostic Gospel *Pistis Sophia* frequent reference to the idea of rebirth is to be found. Thus Mary (p. 296) interprets a saying of Jesus as follows:

"O Master, thou has said unto us aforetime, 'Agree with thine enemy whilst thou are in the way with him, lest at any time thine enemy deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison: thou shalt not come out thence till thou has paid the uttermost farthing.'

"Manifestly is thy word concerning this, 'Every soul which shall come forth from the body, and shall go on its way with the counterfeit of the spirit, and which hath not found the mystery of breaking all the seals and all the bonds, that it may be set free from the counterfeit of the spirit which is bound unto it; well, then, that soul which has not found the mystery of light, and hath not found the mystery of detaching the counterfeit of the spirit which is bound to it within; if, then that soul hath not found it, the counterfeit of the spirit bringeth that soul unto the virgin of light, and the virgin of light, the judge, handeth over that soul to one of her receivers, and her receiver casteth it into the spheres of the æons, and it is not set free from transmigrations into bodies, until it giveth signs of being in its last cycle.'

The embryonic stages of reincarnation and the workings of the karmic law are suggested in the following (p. 345):

"And the rulers give commandment to the workmen saying, 'This is the type which ye shall set in the matter of the world. Set ye the compound of the power which is in the soul within all of them, that they may hold together, for it is their support, and outside the soul place the counterfeit of the spirit.'

"Following this plan the workmen of the rulers bring the power, the soul, and the counterfeit of the spirit, and pour them all three into the world passing through the world of the rulers of the midst.

"The rulers of the midst also inspect the counterfeit of the spirit and also the destiny. The latter, whose name is the destiny, leadeth on a man until it hath him killed by the death which is destined for him. This, the rulers of the great fate have bound to the soul. . . .

"All this I will tell unto you and the class of every soul, and the type whereby they come into bodies, either as men, or birds, or cattle, or wild

beasts, or reptiles or any other species that existeth in the world."

The method of the workmen is further explained in relation to karmic compulsion (p. 346) :

"Now, therefore, when the workmen of the rulers have cast one part into the woman and the other into the man, even though the pair be removed a great distance from one another, the workmen compel them secretly to be united together in the union of the world. . . . And forthwith the workmen of the rulers enter into her, to take up their abode in her."

Then follows a description of the way in which the workmen impress the organism, and build the different members into the body.

Finally, the inviolability of the karmic law is most clearly set forth in the following remarkable passage (p. 350) :

"Amen, I say unto you, every jot that is set down in the account of every man by the fate, be it every good or be it every evil, in a word every jot that hath been set down, will be worked out."

Many other passages could be adduced, for the whole of the mystic narrative turns on the two great facts of karma and reincarnation, but sufficient has been quoted to give the reader an idea of the unequivocal statements supplied to us by the teachers of the Gnosis. But Bhakti (devotion) gained the upper hand, and Gñana (gnosis, wisdom) was condemned, and so the western world has had an unintelligent faith and a *credo quia absurdum*.

#### QUESTION CCCIII.

M. C.—Mrs. Besant in *Man and His Bodies*, speaking of the astral body (*kāmic body*) says :—  
 "Without the general action through the astral body there would be no connection between impacts made on the physical senses and the perception of them by the mind. The impact becomes a sensation in the astral body, and is then perceived by the mind. The astral body, in which are the centres of sensation," etc. Is the unconsciousness to pain which comes by the use of an anæsthetic caused by the withdrawal of the inner sheaths down to the astral body from the physical and its etheric double? In sleep an impact on the physical would quickly recall the inner sheaths. Does the use of an anæsthetic make some barrier which cannot be crossed by the inner sheaths?"

A. B.—The unconsciousness resulting from the use of an anæsthetic—taking ether and nitrous oxide as examples which have been watched in their action—differs from that of sleep. These anæsthetics expel the etheric double with the higher principles and thus very much diminish the amount of vitality in the body.

In sleep the etheric double is left with the dense body and the vital currents play through both in the regular way. The body is thus much more alive and responds quickly to impacts, at the same time notifying its owner of any attack made on his property. A violent shock will, however, often recall the conscious entity even when it is forcibly expelled by an anæsthetic. A person under nitrous

oxide (laughing gas), will sometimes re-enter his body with inconvenient promptitude if much violence be used by the dentist.

B. K.—Very little is as yet known, from the occult standpoint, with respect to the action of anæsthetics, and hence no very definite answer can as yet be given to the question. With regard to chloroform no observations, made with the help of the higher senses, are as yet available. Indeed the only anæsthetic whose action has so far been thus observed, appears to be laughing gas or nitrous oxide; and in respect to this even the observations seem a little discrepant, or rather they seem to imply that its action differs in respect of different individuals. In the best observed case thus far known, the effect of the gas was to set up an exceedingly violent, hammering vibration, throughout the body, which forcibly caused the separation of the *etheric* body for the gross body. An obviously sufficient reason for the interruption in the perception of the current of physical sensation.

In another case the man was forced out of the body by the action, but it is not certain whether he was in the astral body only or in the astral *plus* the etheric. At present these are all the facts within my knowledge, and they are at least sufficient to show that the question cannot be answered from theoretical considerations alone, but demands an extended and careful series of observations by those able to use with accuracy the astral senses at least.

#### QUESTION CCCIV.

B. T.—In "*The Theosophy of the Upanishads*" it is stated on p. 80 that—"Selfishness, self-assertion, whether of bitterness or of self-righteousness, is a greater violation of law than of drunkenness or evil-living." This is repeated on p. 105. Kindly explain this statement.

B. K.—All evil and all suffering are ultimately due to selfishness and ignorance; all violation or breach of law, on whatever plane, in whatever way, results in suffering and pain. In relation to this phenomenal world and to our limited human consciousness, however, there must always be a sort of scale or standard according to which men estimate and value good and evil in terms of happiness or suffering to the individual or to the race. On the basis of this conception we are in the habit of speaking of greater and lesser sins, of serious and venial offences. The only measure by which we can mete out a moral scale to correspond to these expressions will be defined in terms of happiness and suffering from the worldly, or in terms of the furthering or hindering of evolution from the theosophical standpoint. On these lines we should call an action (of the mind, heart, or body) whose effects were far-reaching and prolonged suffering or serious hindrance to the onward course of evolution a "greater sin" than one whose consequences in these respects were smaller and more restricted. Now the higher the plane on which any action occurs the greater the dynamic effect of the energy liberated and the larger and more far-reaching the effects.

that will ensue from it. Hence a sin of the mind or heart must be considered as a much "greater" sin than one of the body, and that not only because its direct efforts are more far-reaching, but also because such a sin will generally become the prolific parent of manifold sins both on the physical as well as on higher and subtler planes. These, I think, are the grounds upon which the statements in the question are based; for careful analysis will show that selfishness is the parent both of evil-living and drunkenness. For what does a drunkard or sensualist seek in those vices? The gratification of self—of his own desire for sensation—regardless of the harm done to others in the gratification. And such special forms of selfishness as "self-assertion whether of bitterness or of self-righteousness," show in the man the presence of the root of evil—selfishness—which unless eradicated will most surely work out in manifold forms of evil, far-reaching and terrible in their consequences in proportion to the stage of development at which the Ego has arrived; for it is not the mere outward, physical action which is the most dynamic, but the inner subtler force impelling to action, and sure sooner or later to express itself in many physical actions, which is the really important factor to be considered.

A. B.—An evil quality is a far more serious matter than an evil action, for it has the reproductive power, whereas the action is but a single outer result of the inner defect in the nature, the manifestation of the inner wrong. Selfishness is a relatively permanent set of the character, and may show itself in hundreds of ways; it is a root, sending up a stem which gives forth many branches, while the act of drunkenness is a single branch. To correct actions only is like cutting off the tops of weeds; nothing is extirpated and the work is endless. Therefore, every wise gardener pulls up the root, and then the stem and branches wither and no more are produced. So every wise moralist aims at removing the underground root of vicious practices, sure that the practices will disappear when the fault in the mind is eradicated. Selfishness is the root of all evil, and is therefore the worst of faults; it is putting the little self up as an object of worship instead of the Great Self, and the whole character is by this set in the wrong direction and is developing along the wrong line. It is the opposition of the separated human will to the cosmic Will, and this ramifies ceaselessly and is an unending source of wrong thinking and wrong doing. It is further the more dangerous because the less obvious; no one can defend drunkenness or evil living—they are open, palpable, naked sins. But selfishness can cloak itself in many respectable garments, and can even pretend to be a virtue with very fair success in its more subtle forms. Hence it cajoles while vice disgusts. Once more, selfishness is a fault of the mind, while drunkenness and evil living are faults of the passion nature, and as said in the preceding answer, the higher the plane of action the greater the dynamic effect of the energy liberated.

## QUESTION CCCV.

P. A.—What is meant by the phrase "thought coalescing with an elemental?"

B. K.—When a thought is said to "coalesce with an elemental," the phrase may mean either of two things: (a) the formation *de novo* of a "thought form" either in rūpa-mānasic, or in astral matter; or (b) more strictly, the coalescence of a fresh thought, just generated in someone's mind, with an already existing thought-form created either by the same or another person. I am using the term "thought-form," in its generalized sense to include (1) a thought clothed primarily in *mānasic* matter which may or may not have further encased itself in *astral* matter; and (2) an emotion or feeling which may be either *mānasic plus astral* or else purely *astral* in character.

Taking these various cases *seriatim*, we can say:

(a.) The thought is *always* the ensouling principle. It clothes itself in the appropriate kinds of elemental essence belonging to the *mānasic* plane as its primary expression, and may then further clothe itself in corresponding orders of *astral* elemental essence in addition. In the first case we have a thought-form on the *mānasic*, in the second one on the *astral* plane. The thought is the soul, the elemental essence the body. Such thought-forms whether on the *mānasic* or *astral* planes are sometimes called "artificial elementals," *e.g.* in Mr. Leadbeater's *Astral Plane*.

This would also apply to the form created by an emotion or feeling, the emotion would be the soul, the clothing of elemental essence the body.

The process here described may be spoken of as "thought coalescing with an elemental," though perhaps the use of the word "an" is liable to mislead, in spite of the fact that each of the two thousand and odd kinds of elemental essence in each kingdom has a definite unity of its own, and so might be called "an" elemental. But the expression describes still more accurately the second case, which we will now consider.

(b.) In this case the process we have just been considering has already taken place. The artificial elemental has already been formed, built up as to its body of perhaps many different kinds of essence, corresponding to the often extremely complex system of vibrations which are the objective expression of motive, and all the complex elements of thought, intention and feeling which entered into the original impulse which gave it birth. Now a thought or feeling arises in someone's mind, the essential chord of which is composed of the same fundamental vibrations as those which have already called into existence this thought form. The latter is at once attracted—by the law of sympathetic vibration—to the new centre, the new thought-vibrations strengthen and reinforce the corresponding vibrations in the old "artificial elemental" and in actual fact we have a thought "coalescing with an elemental."

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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, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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### LITERARY NOTES.

*The Upanishads*, translated by G. R. S. Mead and J. C. Chattopādhyāya, Vol. II. (T.P.S., cloth, 1s. 6d., paper, 6d.). We are glad to be able to announce that Vol. II. of this useful undertaking is in the binder's hands. The get-up and binding will be precisely the same as those of Vol. I., in spite of the criticisms of numerous reviewers who apparently have never seen a Sanskrit text or palm-leaf MS. in their lives. Perhaps these criticisms might have been obviated by a short explanation in the Preamble to Vol. I., and then newspaper critics would have spoken as intelligently of the get-up of the edition as they have of the scope of the Upanishads as set forth in the same Preamble.

The three Upanishads chosen for translation in this volume are the Taittiriya, Aitareya and Shvetāshvatara, so that nine of the eleven great Upanishads will now be in the hands of lovers of Theosophy. The remaining two, the Chhândogya and Bṛihadāraṇyaka, will be attempted as time serves, but their length is such that each will make two of the small volumes of this edition. In addition there are several of the many minor Upanishads (Upa-upanishads) that are of exceeding great beauty and importance, so that this particular store of Indian wisdom is very, very far from being exhausted.

The Taittiriyopanishad is particularly important as containing the ethical instruction to be observed by one who follows out the ordinary life of a citizen, and also for its exposition of the five vestures of man. It is perhaps the most difficult of all to turn into readable English.

The Aitareya is the shortest of the three; it deals with the creation of the Universal Man (the living universe) and man the miniature of the Great Man; the mantras on the karmic relation between father and son are of great interest. Finally the Upanishad declares that all is based on wisdom transcending all consciousness.

The Shvetāshvatara will probably have more numerous admirers in the West than the preceding. It is, indeed, a most beautiful treatise, and is the most admirable exposition of the Logos doctrine in any scripture. This is pre-eminently the Upanishad of Devotion, and is instinct with the spirit of love for that Great Soul who guides the destinies of our system. Here will you find a dignity of expression and fitness of phrase which is sadly lacking in the majority of treatises dealing with Bhakti. It would be too long to cite the many verses in which the praises of God are hymned with the wise enthusiasm of the purified soul; but here is a mantra that we cannot refrain from quoting in order to give the reader an idea of the monotheistic character of the treatise:

"Him may one know the over-lord supreme of lords, the god supreme of gods, the king of kings, supreme of the supreme, lord of the universe, the God to be adored."

This Upanishad is also of great importance for its clear exposition of the law of karman, and for its teaching as to yoga.

But where every line is of such importance how is it possible to give more than the vaguest of indications of the contents of these admirably theosophic treatises? It is sufficient to know that the present attempt to give an honest and sympathetic version of the old familiar words has already met with its reward in that a number of men and women in the West have found a scripture by which to live. The books are small, the contents are mighty; the translators are nothing, the teachers are sages.

*Pistis Sophia* (T.P.S., cloth, 7s. 6d.). The subtitle is long, and runs as follows: "A Gnostic Gospel (with Extracts from the Books of the Saviour appended), originally translated from Greek into Coptic, and now for the first time Englished from Schwartze's Latin Version of the only known Coptic MS., and checked by Amélineau's French version, with an Introduction by G. R. S. Mead." By the time the present number of the VĀHAN reaches our readers this important

work will be on sale. Here again, as in the case of the Upaniṣhads, it is the value of the book itself which is important. All students of Theosophy are well aware that every tendency towards the wisdom-religion was mercilessly chased out of Christianity by the orthodox faction which has held the ground even unto this day. The most heterogeneous sects of diametrically opposed tendencies and moral life were all indiscriminately classed under the opprobrious title of "knowledge falsely so called" by the stalwart orthodox defenders of the faith, and devoted to universal execration. Until 1850 we had nothing but the invectives of the Fathers from which to derive any information concerning the early Christian Theosophists. In that year a MS. was unearthed from Mount Athos which, in addition to invectives, contained a few quotations from the works of the heretics, and put a new face on the matter. Two years later the Coptic *Pistis Sophia* was translated into Latin, and since that time has been kept well in the background as giving a flat denial to countless aspersions of the Church Fathers. This *Pistis Sophia* was written by Valentinus, a genuine Gnostic and Theosophist, in the second half of the second century. It was written originally in Greek and translated into Coptic. The only copy of this Coptic MS. which is known to exist, was brought to England at the end of the last century, and is now in the British Museum. Mr. Mead's Introduction deals fully with the documents and general literature of Gnosticism; the method of the best Gnostic doctors; the description and criticism of the MS.; general analysis of contents; the date and authorship of the Greek original; the Books of the Saviour; the probable history of the treatise; and after an apology for being compelled to publish the translation of a translation, concludes with a chronological sketch of all the work which has previously been done on this precious document.

The translation is interestingly broken up with very numerous inset summaries, which serve as such an elaborate table of contents that the need of an index is obviated.

The translation is further responsible for breaking up the narrative into short paragraphs, the original text running on in very long unbroken paragraphs. Further, the natural breaks in the MS. are clearly marked, and so are the lacunæ.

The book itself is admirably printed in large bold type, and tastefully bound in dark green cloth with gold lettering; in this respect the T. P. S., its printers (the Aberdeen University Press) and binders are to be heartily congratulated.

For the many admirable things in *Pistis Sophia* the theosophical student must be referred to the book itself. It is, however, curious to remark that the incident from which the treatise has its name is the most uninteresting of the whole contents of the MS. But apart from this all is of great interest, and some things the most admirable of their kind in mystical literature. We would especially select such subjects as the three glorious light-robcs of initiation which are given to Jesus;

the reincarnation of the disciples and Elias; the day "Come unto us"; the emanation of the pleroma and its ascension; the mysteries and their efficacy; of karma and occult embryology; the mystic sacrament; the method of reincarnation; the hells, heavens and kingdom of peace.

Perhaps some readers will regret that a commentary has not been printed with the translation; but that is really not at present of first importance for the mystic or ordinary reader belonging to that innumerable class which knows nothing, say, of the Bible, except what it can glean from the text itself. It is perhaps as well that *Pistis Sophia* should appear naked and unadorned (or undisfigured) when she is first introduced to us. Nevertheless as the majority of unaided Bible readers, in spite of their independence, know very little of what they read, so the majority of readers of *Pistis Sophia* will perhaps some day be not unthankful for a few explanatory notes on some of the main points. And this the translator promises to attempt.

Those who are interested in the literature of Yoga will be glad to hear that the smaller Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha has just been translated by our colleague, Mr. R. Nārāyan Svāmi Aiyer, and is on sale at the T. P. S., price 4s.

There are three forms of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha; the large work which has already been translated by Bābu Vihārīlāla Mitra makes two fat volumes; the smaller (Laghu) which is a condensed form of the large work; and a still smaller summary which has not yet been translated.

The Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha puts forward the abstract teaching of the Vedānta under the form of concrete images and stories, and deals with the preliminaries of the great science of the soul. In the present translation the English reader must not look for a high standard of idiomatic English, and the Sanskrit scholar must be prepared to pardon the utter absence of any attempt at correct or consistent transliteration.

M. Émile Burnouf's *Le Vase Sacré* (Paris, 1896; price 5 francs) is remarkable for the number of texts bearing on this subject gleaned from the scriptures of India, Persia, Greece and Christianity, and from the Graal legend. At the end of a long life of research M. Burnouf has arrived at the conclusion that the Āryan religions have come from a primitive doctrine elaborated in the centre of Asia. It is possible to distinguish two successive periods in the spread of this tradition. The earlier period embraces (1) the Vedic tradition, which later became Brāhmanism; (2) the Persian or Mazdean tradition; and (3) the Græco-Latin polytheism. In this period must also be included the polytheistic traditions of the north and extreme west. The later period embraces (4) Buddhism and (5) Christianity. These two religions were originally almost identical. The Christ was the Buddha of the west, the Buddha had already been the Christ of the east. The latter appeared at the apex of the Brāhmanical, the former at the apex of the Græco-Roman civilization. Buddhist ideas, modified by Mazdean, produced Essene. When

the Essene doctrines spread beyond the Galilean and Egyptian communities into the Greek and Roman world, they contacted Pagan polytheism and Semitic monotheism, and hence arose Christianity.

*Lucifer* for September is remarkable for an exceedingly interesting article on "Thought-forms" by Mrs. Besant, which is embellished by four pages of coloured representations of such forms, reproducing twelve examples. Those who are unable to see for themselves may thus get a dim idea of the nature of one small class of the things which are to be seen in the inner realms of being. Of course it goes without saying that no physical colours can at all represent the brilliancy of the original forms, but nevertheless *Lucifer's* lithographers are to be congratulated. H. P. B. is again a contributor, writing in her own inimitable style "The Mind in Nature." India supplies a learned disquisition "On Dreams" and a careful and lucid exposition of "The Sāṅkhya Philosophy" from Mr. Bertram Keightley. Mr. Mead continues his "Lives of the Later Platonists," the most remarkable being that of the accomplished lady, Sosipatra. Dr. Wells and Mrs. Hooper also lend their aid to make this number one of excellence.

The third edition of Mrs. Besant's translation of the *Bhagavad Gītā* is in the hands of the printers. The new edition will be considerably revised by the translator, so that the English garb of the Master's Songs may be as beautiful as possible.

Mr. Leadbeater's somewhat belated manual on Devachan should be on sale by the first of October.

## ACTIVITIES.

### Lecture List.

AMSTERDAM, DUTCH LODGE. Meetings at 34, Amstel Dijk, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 1st, *Theosophy, the Source of all Religions*, A. M. Glass; Oct. 8th, *Cremation*, Mevr. C. M. Perkjoosten; Oct. 15th, *Māyā*, F. T. S.; Oct. 22nd, *Theosophy, a Scientific System*, L. J. Cliquant; Oct. 29th, *What use is Theosophy in Daily Life?* Mevr. E. Windust.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Avenue House, Avenue Road, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings at the Royal Hotel, Darley Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *Devachan*.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Lodge meetings at 25, Hanover Square, alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place every alternate Sunday afternoon 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 48, Queen's Road,

Clifton (near the Museum), on alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m., and Fridays at 8 p.m., informal meetings for enquirers.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 35, High Street, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m.

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

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Oct. 4th, *What is Religion?* Members; Oct. 11th, *Ancient Egyptian Religion*, Hodgson Smith; Oct. 18th, *The Religions of India*, Miss Shaw; Oct. 25th, *Buddha's Message to the World*, F. Johnson. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 8 p.m., at No. 1, James Street, for study of *Man and His Bodies*.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at "Glaisdale," Herne Bay, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., especially for the study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 72, Prospect Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at 31, Great George's Street, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hackins Hey, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 1st, *Form*, A. E. Jones; Oct. 8th, *The Teachings of Zoroaster*, Jean B. Gillison; Oct. 15th, *The Linga Deha* (Part 3), J. H. Duffell; Oct. 22nd, *The Self* (Part 1), F. S. Pitt-Taylor; Oct. 29th, *The Will*, W. B. Pitt-Taylor.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings at 8, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. (3rd floor), on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m. Oct. 1st, *The Aura*, C. W. Leadbeater; Oct. 8th, *American Poets*, Mrs. Hooper; Oct. 15th, *The Law of the Universe*, G. R. S. Mead; Oct. 22nd, *Early Christian Views of the Soul*, A. M. Glass; October 29th, *Spiritualism*, C. W. Leadbeater.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., on alternate Mondays, at 8 p.m. On the other Mondays, at 8 p.m., class for study of *The Perfect Way*.

LONDON, EAST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 68, Pigott Street, Limehouse, E., on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for study of *The Voice of the Silence*, and discussion on general subjects.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at Myddelton Hall, Almeida Street, Upper Street, Islington, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 29, Grosvenor Chambers, 16, Deansgate, on Thursdays, 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 LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at No. 29, High Street.

MIDDLESBOROUGH LODGE. Meetings at Co-operative Hall, on alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings are held at 41, Exchange Street, every Friday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at the Co-opera-

tive Hall, on first and third Mondays in each month.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Mrs. Bestwick's, Cambridge Arcade, every Thursday, at 7.30 p.m.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following sums have been received since the acknowledgment in last month's VĀHAN:

Mrs. Midgley, 5s.; Stanley C. Bright, 15s.; J. W. Frings, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. L. Williams, £2; H. S. Green, £1; Mahā-Bodhi Society, £1; Miss Bowring, £1; E. J. Dunn, 10s.; Miss Evelyn Wright, 10s.; G. R. S. Mead, £1; W. H. Thomas, £1 1s. Total, £9 3s. 6d.

G. R. S. MEAD, *Gen. Secretary.*

#### Headquarters' Reference Library.

The Library has acquired the valuable series of the publications of the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology (1879-1891) owing to the generosity of A. J. V. R. (£6), H. E. N. (£6), and the Hon. Mrs. Fox Powys (£3) in answer to Mrs. Besant's appeal in *Lucifer*. As the price of the volumes was only £6, the handsome surplus will be used for the acquisition of other needed books.

#### The General Secretary's Tour.

By the time THE VĀHAN is issued the General Secretary will have paid a brief visit to the north. His programme is: Harrogate—Lodge lecture on "A Gnostic Gospel," Sept. 25th; North of England Federation (Eleventh Conference), lecture on "The Lessons of the Past," Sept. 26th; public lecture "The Wisdom of the Vedas," Sept. 27th. Middlesborough—public lecture, "The Law of the Universe," Sept. 28th, 29th. Bradford—Lodge lecture, "A Gnostic Gospel," Sept. 30th, Oct. 1st.

#### Holland.

Our winter session of work was opened by Mrs. Besant, Sept. 7th, with a lecture on "Yoga for the Man of the World," Mynheer W. B. Fricke acting as translator. The rooms were inconveniently crowded, and the lecture was followed with deep attention. The following afternoon Mrs. Besant received a number of visitors, members and friends interested in Theosophy, and in the evening lectured in the Vrije Gemeente (Free Church), which the committee had kindly placed at our disposal for the evening, on "The Evolution of the Soul the Object of Life."

There was a large attendance notwithstanding the fact that the lecture was in a foreign tongue and not translated. The orator's line of argument was followed with deep attention, and reports of the lecture appeared in all the daily papers, most

of them giving a very fair idea of the train of thought followed by the speaker.

Mrs. Besant's visit, though all too short, has, we trust, given an impulse to the work which will make itself felt all through the year. This impulse was still further strengthened by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley's lectures. We were fortunately able to keep one friend a little longer on Dutch soil than Mrs. Besant, so that she was able to deliver lectures in Rotterdam, the Hague, the Helder, and Haarlem, and to make the personal acquaintance of the members there. The lectures were translated into Dutch by Mynheer Fricke for the benefit of non-English speaking members, and also the lecture on "Atlantis" before the Amsterdam Lodge. Mrs. Besant's lectures and two by Mrs. Oakley ("Atlantis" and "The Book of Life") were taken down in shorthand and will shortly be published in Dutch as pamphlets.

So that our year of work has opened well after the long summer vacation, and we hope and trust it may prove the beginning of a more active year of real work than any that have gone before. We are looking forward to the long-promised visit of the President-Founder, and after that we settle down to our usual winter routine. Monday evening the committee receive enquirers and any persons interested in Theosophy; Wednesday evening, Sanskrit class for beginners; Thursday evening, Lodge meeting; Friday evening, Sanskrit class for students; Saturday evening, *Secret Doctrine* class.

E. W.

#### Blavatsky Lodge.

The Lodge was closed throughout August, and therefore there have been only three of the usual weekly meetings since the issue of the last VĀHAN. On September 3rd Mrs. Besant gave her final lecture before leaving for India, her subject being "The Basis of Brotherhood," and it is needless to add that she made it most interesting and impressive. The following week Mr. Leadbeater spoke upon "Invisible Helpers," a subject which could not fail to be of the deepest interest to all (and they were many), who had the pleasure of listening to it. Mr. Leadbeater gave an account of some events which have occurred comparatively recently, by way of illustration of the fact that there are helpers and protectors all around us, although we may be unaware of their presence; and, moreover, that in time we may become such helpers ourselves.

Mrs. Oakley lectured on September 19th. Having only a few days previously returned from abroad, she had been unable to prepare the subject put down for her upon the list—"A Mystic of the Last Century"—so that she gave the Lodge in its place a "Study from *The Secret Doctrine*," dealing especially with the Lipika and the four Mahārājahs.

Many readers of the VĀHAN will be glad to know that the Sunday evening meetings held throughout last winter will before very long be resumed.

S. M. S.

## Herne Bay.

The Herne Bay Centre has greatly benefited by Col. H. S. Olcott's visit to the town, where he stayed with Mr. F. J. Johnson at Glaisdale for about a week, returning to London on the 13th ult.

Meetings were held nearly every evening, attended by both members of the Centre and enquirers, all of whom feel very grateful for the teaching and advice they received, and for the many difficult problems that were solved for them.

On Sunday, the 12th ult., a final meeting was held, when, in addition to the members of the Herne Bay Centre, there were present the President and Secretary of the Margate Lodge, a member of the Blavatsky Lodge and three enquirers. Mr. F. J. Johnson presided, and gave a short discourse upon the fundamental principles of Karma and Reincarnation, after which many questions were kindly answered by the Colonel.

A very friendly feeling has arisen with the Margate Lodge, and several visits have been made on both sides, especially during the President's stay at each of these towns, and it is expected that much good work will be the result.

It is sincerely hoped that by the Colonel's next visit to England Herne Bay will possess a full Lodge instead of a Centre.

During the ensuing winter meetings will be held at Glaisdale, Beltinge Road, on Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m., instead of Thursdays as formerly; a special study will be made of *Esoteric Buddhism* with notes on *The Secret Doctrine*.

H. A. VASSE.

## City of Liverpool Lodge.

During the summer this Lodge has been engaged in *The Secret Doctrine* study, with occasional readings from Theosophical literature. The attendance has been smaller than during the winter, but this has been compensated by increased regularity, so essential to progress where a class is concerned.

On Saturday, Aug. 29th, Mrs. Besant gave a lecture at the Picton Lecture Hall on "The Power of Thought" to one of the largest and most appreciative audiences that has ever been gathered together in Liverpool. A number of people were deeply interested in the way the lecturer treated her subject, and numerous enquiries have been made for further information from members of the Lodge.

A syllabus for the winter session has been drawn up. In order to make the weekly meetings of more benefit to occasional visitors who may be interested in Theosophy but do not know very much about it, it has been determined to precede each lecture by a short reading. It is hoped that in this way some of the elementary teachings of Theosophy will be presented at each meeting, so that even those to whom the subject is entirely new will have something which they can take away with them.

W. B. PITT-TAYLOR, *Hon. Sec.*

## Comings and Goings.

A good deal of movement has been taking place lately at our Headquarters. The President-Founder, after honouring us with his presence for a week, left for Amsterdam on the evening of the 19th, intending to spend a day or two with our Dutch brothers before going on to Paris, where he was due on the 22nd. He embarked at Marseilles on the 26th for India.

Mrs. Besant and Mr. Bertram Keightley left England on the 6th, taking Amsterdam and Paris on their way exactly as Colonel Olcott did, but starting from Brindisi instead of Marseilles by the Peninsular and Oriental steamer *Khedive*. An account of their work in Holland will be found under another heading.

Dr. Richardson, who has given up an exceedingly good position in the west of England in order to devote his life entirely to the service of Theosophy, left Newcastle for India on the 14th, by the s.s. *Albion*, and hopes to reach Benares in time for the coming Convention of the Indian Section.

Mrs. Oakley left us on the 25th to commence a tour among our brethren in Sweden and Norway, which will probably occupy a fortnight or three weeks; and on the same day the General Secretary started to visit some of the Northern Branches—an expedition from which he will return on the 2nd. Our talented young Bengali friend, Mr. J. C. Chattopadhyâya, who assisted Mr. Mead in the translation of the Upanishads, has departed for America, there being reason to fear that his health would not enable him to face the rigours of a second English winter. It is hoped that on the Pacific coast he will find a climate sufficiently mild to suit him, and may return to us in the spring with renewed vigour, ready to collaborate in further valuable work.

Mr. Dhammapala Hevavitharana, the Secretary of the Mahâ-Bodhi Society—who by the way has recently adopted the brilliant orange-coloured robe of the Indian ascetic, and consequently makes a magnificent spot of colour in our dusky London streets—has also gone to America, where he is staying at Chicago with our valued colleague, Dr. Mary Weekes Burnett.

## ENQUIRER.

## QUESTION CCCVI.

W. S.—"L. M." in Question CCCII. states that "there are apparently no references to the doctrine of reincarnation in the writings of the early Church Fathers": surely this is a very exaggerated statement?

G. R. S. M.—This ever-recurring question among Theosophical students can only be settled by the production of evidence from the writings of the Fathers themselves. In order to show the state of affairs we will append two quotations, the first from the pen of an untrammelled enquirer who was remarkably free from prejudice for the

time at which he wrote, and the second from the lectures of a cleric who by the very conditions of the lecture trust, had to defend certain dogmas. Beausobre and Burton were both without the faintest sympathy for the doctrine of reincarnation, and therefore we cannot expect from them a really intelligent treatment of the subject itself, but they are useful to us in the present question, since the former distinctly asserts with regard to Origen that he was a reincarnationist, while the latter quotes a number of passages to show that this was not the case.

In Beausobre's *Histoire Critique de Manichéisme et du Manichéisme* (Amsterdam, 1734), we read in Volume II., pp. 492 sqq., as follows :

"It is certain that Origen believed that souls animate several bodies successively, and that these transmigrations are regulated according to their merits or demerits. If we believe the anonymous author, of whom Photius has given an extract, the learned Origen, must have stated that the soul of the Saviour was the same as the soul of Adam. He had apparently taken this idea from the Jews. However that may be, there is no doubt that he admitted the transmigration of souls. The only question to determine is whether rational souls could be so far debased as to pass into the bodies of animals. Saint Jerome bears witness that this error was to be found in the [Greek original of the] first book of Origen's *Principles* ; but it is no longer to be found in the [Latin] translation which we possess, a fact which shows that it is one of the passages which the translator Ruffinus cut out. Saint Jerome is worthy of our credence. Origen who enters largely into philosophical questions in his works, supposed that it was possible for the souls of great sinners to be sent into the bodies of animals, there to expiate their crimes. I say that he believed that that was *possible*, for he does not affirm it as a dogma ; it is only a probable conjecture, as Saint Jerome agrees. All that can be said is that Origen did not believe that this opinion would in any way damage the foundation of the Faith.

"Several other Christian philosophers, who have not been treated with such severity as Origen, permitted themselves to be led astray into the error of the transmigration of souls. Nicephorus Gregoras was right in attributing it to Synesius. It is to be found in several passages of the works of this Father, and especially in the following prayer which he addresses to God : ' Father, grant that my soul, mingling with the Light, may no more be plunged in the delusion of Earth.' Let us add to Synesius another Christian philosopher [Chalcidius], of an earlier date, who gives his unqualified consent to the same error, when writing : ' Souls who have failed to unite themselves with God, are compelled, by the law of destiny, to begin a new kind of life, entirely different from their former [existence], until they repent of their sins.'

"I should have imagined that this ' new kind of life, entirely different to their former [existence], ' means that vicious souls pass into the bodies of animals, but that cannot be the idea of Chalcidius,

for I have already remarked that he endeavours to give an allegorical interpretation of what Plato said on the subject, in order to relieve him of an opinion which has the appearance of too great absurdity.

"Thus then it was not only the Simonians, Basilidians, Valentinians, Marcionites, etc., and in general those who are called Gnostics, who abandoned themselves to the error of metempsychosis, but also Christian philosophers of great merit and high virtue, the error being exceedingly seductive on account of its antiquity and universality, and because of the principles of which it was believed to be the consequence."

We thus see that in the case of Origen, Beausobre's main evidence depends on a quotation of Jerome, which has been apparently removed from Origen's *Principles* by the orthodoxy of Ruffinus, and in support of his several assertions he refers solely to Huetius (*Origeniana*, L. II. Quæst. vi. no. 17, p. 102).

For the rest of Beausobre's quotations in support of his other statements I must refer the reader to his work.

Burton, in his Bampton Lectures, entitled *An Inquiry into the Heresies of the Apostolic Age* (Oxford, 1829), traverses the opinion of Beausobre, writing as follows on pp. 427, 428 :

"It has often been said that some Christian writers, and particularly Origen, believed in a transmigration of souls. Jerome asserted it of Origen ; and Huetius, Beausobre and others, have made the same statement. That Origen believed in the pre-existence of souls cannot be denied, and Gregory of Nyssa has shewn that the two doctrines are connected together ; but I cannot help doubting whether the charge was not brought against Origen by inference and implication, rather than by positive proof. There is no passage in his existing writings which shews a belief in the transmigration of souls. On the contrary he seems to be decidedly opposed to it : he speaks of using the doctrines of Christianity ' to heal those who are suffering from the foolish notion of the *metensomatosis* ' : he says of Celsus, ' If he had been aware what awaits the soul in its future eternal existence, he would not have so violently attacked the notion of an immortal being coming into a mortal body ; not according to the *metensomatosis* of Plato, but by another and sublimer method.' Speaking of those words in Matt. xi. 14 : ' This is Elias, which was for to come,' he observes, ' From this passage, which stands almost alone, some persons have introduced a *metensomatosis*, as if Jesus himself had thus confirmed the notion : but, if this were true, we ought to find something like it in many passages of the prophets or evangelists.' In another place he speaks of persons, ' who are strangers to the doctrine of the church, supposing that souls pass from human bodies to the bodies of dogs according to their different crimes.' But the most remarkable passage is where he is again speaking of Elias, as mentioned in Matt. xvii. 10, and says, ' In these words it appears to me that *Elias* does not mean the soul, lest I should fall into the

doctrine of the *metempsychosis*, which is not held by the Church of God, nor handed down by the apostles, nor does it appear anywhere in the scriptures.' He then argues at considerable length against the notion; and upon the whole I cannot but conclude that the charge which has been brought against Origen is entirely groundless. This was shown formerly by Pamphilus in his *Defence of Origen* (c. 10); and Huetius professes the same opinion in the work to which I have already referred (§ 19, etc.), though Beausobre quotes him as if he had charged Origen with agreeing with Pythagoras and Plato."

For the references I must refer the student to Burton's notes.

We thus see that (a) Beausobre and Burton take a diametrically opposite view of the passages from Origen's works quoted by Huetius; that (b) Beausobre bases himself upon a passage which he asserts has been in translation wilfully expunged from Origen's works; that (c) Origen believed in pre-existence, but denied *metempsychosis*; that (d) Burton skilfully confines his argument to Origen, and omits all reference to Synesius and Chalcidius, and with regard to Origen passes over in silence the charge of mutilation of the original made against Ruffinus.

With regard to Origen, therefore, the question resolves itself into (a) whether or not he held the idea of reincarnation, though denying the possibility of the degradation of the human soul to the animal kingdom; (b) whether his idea of reincarnation was that of renewed embodiment on earth in human form, or re-embodiment in some ascending scale of spheres. This question is still undecided, and will remain obscure until we can discover what difference, if any, Origen made between the terms "*metempsychosis*" and "*metempsychosis*."

In any case, students of Theosophy, from their fuller information on the subject, will be able to assign each scrap of information to its proper place in the psychological scheme.

The doctrine is that rebirth normally takes place here on earth. It is only when a soul is so irretrievably vicious that reincarnation in human form is no longer possible, that it may pass back into an inferior kingdom; though this is a very rare event fortunately, the terrible possibility has been exaggerated into a frequent occurrence by didactic moralists in India and Greece as an incentive to virtue and a deterrent from vice, just as the eternal hell doctrine has been used in Christianity. The idea of reincarnation, not on earth, but in other spheres, is a dim echo of the planetary chain doctrine, and also of the passage of the soul from plane to plane in the *post-mortem* state.

It goes without saying that as the real facts were guarded with jealous secrecy in antiquity, the garbled versions of the doctrine and superstitious glosses upon it that were in public circulation have always to be received with the greatest possible caution. Christian apologists invariably use the term "*metempsychosis*" to mean the passage of the soul into the bodies of animals and nothing

else, thus at the very outset exaggerating an exceedingly rare detail into the full sum and substance of the whole teaching.

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QUESTION CCCVII.

W. B.—*When will the Lord Buddha reincarnate?*

C. W. L.—He will not reincarnate in this world at all. The Buddhahood is not only one of the highest offices in the great Adept Hierarchy, but it also represents a certain exceedingly lofty initiation, after taking which it is in the nature of things impossible that a physical body should again be assumed. In the ordinary course of events a Buddha, having preached the eternal truths of His Law in whatever form seems to Him best suited to the exigencies of the time, passes away altogether from this world to other and far grander fields of activity. But it is said that this, the general rule, was not exactly followed by the last Buddha, Gautama, who enjoys the distinction of being the first member of our humanity to attain that magnificent position, the previous Buddhas having been the product of a much older and far more advanced evolution. It has been hinted that He has remained sufficiently in touch with this world to be able to shed down at intervals from its higher planes streams of spiritual force and blessing for the aid of the Adept Brotherhood in their work.

C. J.—In the *Questions of King Mîlinda*, iv. 5, 8, occurs the following:—

"It was said by the Blessed One: 'A Brahman am I, O Brethren, devoted to self-sacrifice, pure-handed at every time; this body that I bear with me is my last.'"

It is the belief of the Buddhists that the Buddha Gautama will never be born again on earth, as the very fact of His attaining Buddhahood freed Him from the necessity of rebirth. The above quotation also shows that Buddha Himself declared that He would not reincarnate again. There are many other statements of His to the same effect, a translation of one of which will be found in Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*, at the end of Book VI.

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QUESTION CCCVIII.

W. B.—*It has sometimes been said that the Masters of Wisdom inhabit the same physical body for periods considerably exceeding the span of ordinary life; is this the case?*

C. W. L.—This statement has constantly been made by those who are in a position to know something of such matters, and it seems a reasonable one. The physical body of an Adept is first of all always in absolutely perfect health, and the conditions under which it exists are naturally of the most favourable description. We are told that but little food, and that only of the simplest and purest kind, is usually taken by these great ones. But what is of far greater importance than these physical conditions in promoting longevity is the

entire freedom from all anxiety and mental disturbance which is one of the most prominent characteristics of the Adept; his face is stamped always with a holy calm, a joyous serenity, the peace which passeth all understanding. This mental and spiritual state reacts even upon the physical body, and reduces its wear and tear to the minimum. So that even apart from testimony it would seem likely that the body of the Adept would endure much longer than ours do. Many Indian stories proclaim that this, which seems so probable, is really so; and I have heard Madame Blavatsky say that her Master as he appears now does not look a day older than when she first saw him in her childhood sixty years ago.

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QUESTION CCCIX.

H. L.—When a thought “coalesces with an elemental,” is the thought the ensouling principle, and the “elemental essence” the substance, or is the elemental analogous to the soul, and the “thought form” to the body?

C. W. L.—To speak of a thought as coalescing with an elemental when referring to the formation of a new thought-form, as this question apparently does, is perhaps more a poetic conception than a scientific description of what really occurs. It should be clearly understood that until what is here called coalescence takes place there is no such thing as an elemental. There is a vast sea of living elemental essence of many and various kinds, but nothing like an individual existence until the action of thought upon that sea separates a small portion from the rest and gives it a distinct, though temporary life of its own. Mrs. Besant, in an article in the September *Lucifer*, has given a definition of a thought-form which will afford a satisfactory answer to the question:

“A thought-form, then, is a shape caused by the vibrations set up in the mental body by the activity of the Ego, clothed in the elemental essence of the mental plane, and possessing an independent life of its own with freedom of motion, but its consciousness being limited to the thought of which its essence, or informing soul, consists. It may or may not have—but generally has—an additional coating of astral elemental essence. Elemental essence is a name used to cover a vast variety of combinations respectively of mental and of astral matters, ensouled by *Atmā-Buddhi*—technically called the monad—in its evolution *downwards*. So the thought-form is a shape whose *body* is of elemental essence and whose *soul* is a thought.”

There is indeed a case in which the expression “coalescence” may not be entirely inappropriate; and that is when a new thought is sent out to strengthen an artificial elemental which already exists. Even then, however, it would be more accurate to speak of the new stream of thought as poured into and strengthening the elemental than as coalescing with it. But in every possible case the thought is the ensouling principle of the temporary entity, and the elemental essence the body.

QUESTION CCCX.

J. P. M.—What corresponds to the *Tattvas* in the teaching of the Secret Doctrine?

I. C. O.—In the *Secret Doctrine* the elements in nature, and the principles of man, are given as the corresponding terms for *Tattvas*. The forces are the same, the terminology only is different.

See *Secret Doctrine*, vol. i., pp. 355-357, and vol. ii. p. 606, N. E.

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QUESTION CCCXI.

M. L.—Why should a body which has been reduced by will-power to an etheric condition return, when the force is removed, to its original shape, and not simply to an irregular mass of the material of which it is composed?

C. W. L.—The questioner further elucidates his meaning by putting forward as an example the fact that if a key be melted and raised to a vaporous state by heat, when the heat is withdrawn it will certainly return to the solid state, but it will be no longer a key, but merely a lump of metal. The point is well taken, though as a matter of fact the apparent analogy does not hold good. The elemental essence which informs the key would be dissipated by the alteration in its condition—not that the essence itself can be affected by the action of heat, but that when its temporary body is destroyed (as a solid) it pours back into the great reservoir of such essence, much as the higher principles of a man, though entirely unaffected by heat or cold, are yet forced out of a physical body when it is destroyed by fire. Consequently when what had been the key cooled down into the solid condition again, the elemental essence (of the “earth” or solid class) which poured into it would not be in any way the same as that which it contained before, and there would be no reason why the same shape should be retained. But a man who disintegrated a key for the purpose of removing it by astral currents from one place to another would be very careful to hold the same elemental essence in exactly the same shape until the transfer was completed, and then, when his will-force was removed, it would act as a mould into which the solidifying particles would flow, or rather round which they would be re-aggregated. Thus, unless the operator’s power of concentration failed, the shape would be accurately preserved.

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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, 26, Charing Cross, S.W. No back numbers can be supplied.

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*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.—G. R. S. MEAD, *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. VI.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1, 1896.

NO. 4.

Edited by G. R. S. MEAD.

### LITERARY NOTES.

Theosophical students who have been interested in Professor Draper's well known work (*The Conflict between Religion and Science*), will be pleased to learn that a far more elaborate contribution to the same subject has just appeared from the pen of the veteran Dr. Andrew Dickson White, late President and Professor of History at Cornell University. *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1896, 2 vols., 8vo.) is a monumental undertaking, crammed full of facts, the result of a long life of study.

The latest contribution to apocryphal literature is to be found in Vol. IV. No. 2, of *Texts and Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 1896), in which Mr. Forbes Robinson gives us the text and translation of a number of the Coptic fragments. The most important of these deal with "The Life of the Virgin," "The Falling Asleep of Mary" and "The Death of Joseph." Such literature is useful as pointing to the utter unscrupulousness of pious forgery.

The latest work on the Mysteries is Anrich's *Das antike Mysterienwesen in seinem Einfluss auf das Christentum* (Göttingen, 1894). The author regards the Mysteries as an important factor in the hellenizing of Christianity, which he states to have been "a long, refining, unconscious process of transformation."

To students interested in the history of the great Alexandrian schools which preceded Gnosticism and Later Platonism, Professor Mahaffy's *Greek Life and Thought* (London, 1887), may be recommended. A new edition, with seventy pages of additional matter, and an elaborate index, will be shortly issued.

Bousset's *Antichrist Legend* has just been trans-

lated into English from the German, and is crammed full of information gleaned from the obscure sources of myth, folklore and heresy. Bousset shows how legends are adapted and made to fit in with the political events of various epochs, and how traditions from the past are re-adapted to a person who is a centre of interest to his age, and finally come to be accepted as real facts and incidents in the life of that person. Thus is "history" written, especially in things religious, and this is true not only of the Antichrist but also of the Christ legend.

The inner thoughts of a man of genius, accurate habits of mind, and deeply religious temperament are always of interest to Theosophical readers. The posthumous work of the late George John Romanes, *Thoughts on Religion*, which has just appeared, should therefore be a welcome publication; and though we may know of another haven for the wave-tossed bark of religious doubt than the "bosom of the Church," we nevertheless can sympathize with the mariner, who for a time lost his bearings in the fog of orthodox Theology and Science.

Colonel Conder's *Bible and the East* may prove of utility to some as giving a handy summary of the latest discoveries in the study of the monuments. The old soldier fights for his Bible throughout, and seems incapable of drawing a logical deduction. But the German school is there, and Assyrian and Egyptian records are dangerous things to meddle with, and the next generation will regard as orthodox what Col. Conder regards as rank heresy—a position which Theosophical students have already fortunately arrived at, and so "shortened the times" somewhat.

*The Religions of India* is the title of a recent work (1895), by Dr. E. W. Hopkins, published at Boston, and all that can be said of it is that it is orthodox. It is useful as giving a *résumé* of the external aspects of the religions of India, past and present, but (though free from religious bias) is entirely lacking in real insight. It reproduces

many of the mistakes of Western Orientalism ; Nirvāṇa is annihilation, etc.

It is well known to students of Theosophy, that the Tamil language contains a number of valuable works on religious, philosophical and occult subjects. Those who are interested may be referred to the *Sivagnana Botham* of Meikanda Deva, translated by Mr. J. M. Nallasawmi Pillai (Madras, 1895 ; price 5s. 6d.). It is claimed, with that stupendous assurance which characterizes the religious devotee, that this treatise is the sublimation of all the Vedic tradition ; nevertheless there is much of interest in the volume. It is of course, as is usual with ninety-nine English works written by Indians, out of a hundred, marred by imperfect phraseology and by that sublime indifference to accurate transliteration and philology which characterizes such productions. Nevertheless the student of ideas can forgive the poverty of the garb in which they are clothed ; and Theosophists are above all such students of ideas and not mere philologists.

Mr. Redway, the publisher, has been exceedingly busy lately, though we cannot congratulate him on all the books he has turned out.

Out of a batch of half-a-dozen we may mention Eckhartshausen's *Cloud upon the Sanctuary*, translated by our colleague Mme. Isabel de Steiger, with a preface by our well known contributor Mr. J. W. Brodie-Innes (price 3s. 6d. net). The next number of *Lucifer* will include a lengthy notice of this interesting work by Mrs. Sinnett.

Mr. Waite has translated *The Turba Philosophorum, or Assembly of the Sages* (price 6s.), an alchemical treatise of greater obscurity even than the generality of alchemical "jargon."

Our colleague W. W. Westcott, has translated and edited a hitherto unpublished MS. of Eliphas Lévi, which was given to Mr. Maitland by Baron Spedalieri, the literary legatee of Eliphas. It is embellished with eight coloured plates, and its price is 7s. 6d. But whether *The Magical Ritual of the Sanctum Regnum interpreted by the Tarot Trumps* will find any but a most select body of readers, is highly doubtful.

A second edition of Mr. C. G. Harrison's *Transcendental Universe* (price 2s. 6d.) only shows that a trumpery hodge-podge sells more readily than serious books.

*Lucifer* for October is remarkable for an article by Mrs. Besant on "The Light and Dark Sides of Nature," and one by Mr. Leadbeater on "The Steps on the Path." The rest of the articles are quite up to the usual standard and make a very good number.

The November number will contain a curious article on "Jujitsu," the art of conquering by yielding, also some valuable information on the newly discovered Gnostic MSS. Mr. Leadbeater will write on "Invisible Helpers," a subject which has aroused immense interest. Miss Arundale will contribute a paper on "Power, Knowledge and Love,"

## ACTIVITIES.

### Lecture List.

AMSTERDAM, DUTCH LODGE. Meetings at 34, Amstel Dijk, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 5th, *The Etheric Body*, W. B. Fricke ; Nov. 12th, *Theosophy and Spiritualism*, Mevr. P. C. Meuleman ; Nov. 19th, *Ether*, W. Eymael ; Nov. 26th, *Theosophy and Materialism*, M. A. J. van Manen.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Avenue House, Avenue Road, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings at the Royal Hotel, Darley Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *Devachan*.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Lodge meetings at 25, Hanover Square, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The usual open meeting for study and interchange of thought takes place every alternate Sunday afternoon 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 48, Queen's Road, Clifton (near the Museum), on alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m., and Fridays at 8 p.m., informal meetings for enquirers.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 35, High Street, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 6th and 20th.

GLASGOW CENTRE. Meetings at Holton's Hotel, Glasgow Street, on Sundays at 11.30 p.m.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Nov. 1st, *Zoroastrianism*, A. Osborne Eaves ; Nov. 8th, *Religious Teachers of China*, C. N. Goode ; Nov. 15th, *Mahomet and his Mission*, Miss Shaw ; Nov. 22nd, *What is Christianity?* Members ; Nov. 29th, *Our Relation to Children*, C. W. Leadbeater. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 8 p.m., at No. 1, James Street, for study of *Man and His Bodies*.

HELDER LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays, at 10 a.m., and on the first Tuesday of each month at 8 p.m.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at "Glaisdale," Herne Bay, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., especially for the study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 72, Prospect Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at 31, Great George's Street, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hackins Hey, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 5th, *The Occultism of Tennison*, Mrs. Gillison ; *The Sublime Vedānta*, J. H. Duffell ; Nov. 19th, *The Self*, F. S. Pitt-Taylor ; Nov. 26th, *The Synthetic Philosophy*, W. B. Pitt-Taylor.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings at 8, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. (3rd floor), on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19,

Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m. Nov. 5th, *Among the Gnostics*, G. R. S. Mead; Nov. 12th, *Some Women Mystics*, Mrs. Hooper; Nov. 19th, *A Mystic of the Last Century*, Mrs. Cooper Oakley; Nov. 26th, . . . A. P. Sinnett. On Sunday evenings at 7 p.m., beginning on Nov. 8th, a series of meetings will be held, conducted by Mr. Leadbeater. The syllabus is in course of preparation.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., on alternate Mondays, at 8 p.m. Nov. 9th, *Pythagoras*, J. M. Watkins; Nov. 25rd, *Thought Transference*, Miss Ward.

LONDON, EAST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for study of *The Voice of the Silence*, and discussion on general subjects.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at Myddelton Hall, Almeida Street, Upper Street, Islington, on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Nov. 4th, *Atomic Consciousness*, M. U. Moore; Nov. 11th, *Theosophy and Social Problems*, Miss Ward; Nov. 18th, *Symbols and Ceremonies*, A. M. Glass; Nov. 25th, *A Great Teacher*, Alan Leo.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 29, Grosvenor Chambers, 16, Deansgate, on Thursdays, 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 LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at No. 39, High Street.

MIDDLESBOROUGH LODGE. Meetings at Co-operative Hall, on alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Nov. 10th, *Purgatory*, Baker Hudson; Nov. 24th, . . . C. W. Leadbeater. On the other Tuesdays, study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Sundays at 6.30 p.m., *Secret Doctrine* class.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings are held at 41, Exchange Street, every Friday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at the Foresters' Hall, The Octagon, on Fridays at 8 p.m.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Mrs. Bestwick's, Cambridge Arcade, every Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following sums have been received since the acknowledgment in last month's VĀHAN: Stanley C. Bright, 10s.; Miss Lowthime, 5s.; Miss Bowring, £1; Hon. O. F. S. Cuffe, £2; Mrs. Wylde, 5s.; A. F. S., 10s.; Miss K. Spink, 5s.; Gilbert Graham, £1; Mrs. Jay, £5; F. G. Bristowe, £1 1s.; Mrs. Wilkinson, £3; Mrs. Ball, 5s. Total, £15 1s.

#### Headquarters' Reference Library.

The following books have been acquired for the Library during the month: *The Magical Ritual of the Sanctum Regnum interpreted by the Tarot Trumps*, translated from the MSS. of Eliphas Lévi, and edited by W. Wynn Westcott, M.B., London, 1896; *Cosmic Ethics, or the Mathematical*

*Theory of Evolution*, W. Cave Thomas, F.S.S., London, 1896; *The Biological Problem of To-day*, Prof. Dr. Oscar Hertwig; *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, Diogenes Laërtius, translated by C. D. Yonge, B.A., 1891; *A Handbook to the History of Philosophy*, Ernest Belfort Bax, 2nd ed., London, 1888; *The Cloud upon the Sanctuary*, von Eckartshausen, translation and notes by Isabel de Steiger, London, 1896; *Three Lectures on the Vedānta Philosophy*, Prof. F. Max Müller, K.M., London, 1894; *Hindu Philosophy*, Ram Chandra Bose, A.M., 1884; *The Religions of India*, Edward W. Hopkins, 1895; *The Transcendental Universe*, C. G. Harrison; *A Blank Page*, "Pilgrim"; *Christianity Before Christ*, Charles J. Stone, F.R.S.L.; *The Antichrist Legend*, W. Bousset, translated by A. H. Keane, F.R.G.S.; *The Dervishes, or Oriental Spiritualism*, John P. Brown, London, 1868.

A. J. WILLSON, Librarian.

#### Headquarters' Lending Library.

The subscription to the Circulating Library, at 19, Avenue Road, is: one year, 10s.; six months, 6s.; three months, 3s. 6d.; postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian.

#### The Lotus Circle.

The Lotus Circle is again in full working order after the holidays, and children are gladly received at 19, Avenue Road, on Sunday afternoon, punctually at 2.30.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

#### New Dutch Branch.

A charter was issued under date September 23rd, 1896, to F. W. Filarski, P. Pieters, T. van Zuijlen, C. over de Linden, F. Boers, H. Witsenburg, and S. Gazan, to be known as the Helder Branch of the Theosophical Society.

G. R. S. MEAD, Gen. Sec.

#### Mrs. Oakley's Visit to Sweden.

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley arrived at Christiania in the morning, Monday, Sept. 28th, after a very rough voyage. The first two days were spent with rest and conversation upon Theosophical subjects. The newspapers had noticed her arrival, and on Wednesday morning she received an interviewer, who gave a short report of his visit. In the evening a meeting was held at the Branch room, when Mrs. Oakley gave a lecture upon "The Book of Life" translated by the President. Thursday evening she gave a public lecture in the Hall of Students upon "Theosophy, the Science of Life and Death." The audience listened to her with great attention and evidently much interest was aroused. Most of the newspapers reported her

lecture, and one of the most prominent had a very sympathetic report covering almost a column. Friday was spent in conversation with members and visitors, and Saturday morning she left for Gothenberg, arriving by the evening train, and took up her quarters at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Sjöstedt.

On Sunday, October 4th, she met several members of the Society, and on Monday night gave a public lecture. On Tuesday morning enquirers were received at the Branch room, and in the afternoon the Branch had a meeting for the first time in its new rooms. As the audience wished to hear something about the early history of the Society, Mrs. Oakley spoke on that subject and related several interesting details.

On Wednesday, Stockholm was reached, and the next day members were met, and a lecture to the Lodge was given in the evening, followed by discussion. For the next two or three days there was a continuous series of private interviews and meetings of members, varied by a public lecture in the Hotel Continental.

On Monday Mrs. Oakley delivered a lecture to the English Society at Upsala, receiving visitors the next day and then returning to Gothenberg, where the last days of her visit were spent in meeting members and giving Branch and public lectures. The whole time of the tour was fully occupied, and it has done much to unite the Swedish members.

As members of the Society will probably be aware, a minority of the Swedish Section has left the Theosophical Society to join the followers of the late Mr. Judge, this action doing much to relieve the pressure which had hitherto been felt owing to the variety of opinion on important matters connected with the crisis of two years ago. The great mass of the Section remains and will go on as before, but with renewed energy and greater freedom.

#### Among the Gnostics.

Mr. Mead will deliver a course of six lectures entitled "Among the Gnostics, The Wisdom Schools of Early Christendom," at the Pioneer Club, 22, Bruton Street, Berkeley Square, W., on Friday afternoons from 5.30 to 6.30. The following is the complete syllabus :

November 6th.—The Literature, Documents, and Sources of Gnosticism—the Wisdom-Tradition and the Mysteries ; the Method of the best Gnostic Doctors.

November 13th.—The Chief Schools of the Gnosis, and their Teachers.

November 20th.—The Essenes ; the Ophites ; the Legend of Simon the Magician.

November 27th.—The Wisdom of the Egyptians ; Basilides and Valentinus.

December 4th.—The Main Doctrines of the Gnostic Gospel *Pistis Sophia*.

December 11th.—A Review of the Methods and Doctrines of the Leaders of the Gnosis.

Tickets for the course 10s. 6d., and for a single lecture 2s.

#### The Northern Federation.

The eleventh Conference of the North of England Federation of the Branches of the Theosophical Society was held at Harrogate on Saturday, September 26th. At the Council meeting held previous to the General Conference, Mr. W. H. Thomas, the Hon. Secretary, reported that since the last Conference a very successful lecturing tour had been undertaken by Mrs. Besant in the North of England. The places visited were Liverpool, Manchester, Bradford, Leeds and Sheffield, at all of which very large audiences were secured. Mr. G. R. S. Mead, the General Secretary of the Section, had consented to preside over the present Conference, and to visit the Harrogate, Middlesbrough and Bradford Branches. Arrangements were also pending for Mr. C. W. Leadbeater to visit the Northern Branches in November. It was also reported that the former Sheffield Centre had become a Lodge, and that the Hull Centre had signified its intention of joining the Federation. The Council then took into consideration a proposal by the Bradford Lodge to hold four meetings per annum instead of two, and after some discussion it was unanimously decided to adopt the proposal. The next Conference was fixed for February next at Harrogate.

The General Conference was commenced at 3 p.m., under the presidency of Mr. G. R. S. Mead, who opened the proceedings with an instructive and learned discourse on "The Lessons of the Past." A short discussion followed in which Messrs. Firth, Corbett, Thomas and Miss Shaw, took part. At the evening meeting a general discussion took place on the subject "How best to introduce Theosophical Teaching to different classes of minds, *e.g.*, say to (a) a Materialist, (b) a Christian, (c) a Spiritualist." This was followed by a discussion on "Is right belief essential to right conduct ?"

Altogether the Conference proved as successful and enjoyable as these meetings always have been, and the members left with a feeling of regret that it was so soon over. Representatives and members were present from the Manchester, Bradford, Athene, Leeds, Middlesbrough, Sheffield, Harrogate and York Branches.

A large number of members remained over the Sunday in Harrogate, and were present at a public meeting which was addressed by Mr. Mead. The subject of his discourse was "The Wisdom of the Vedas," and all present were deeply interested in his presentation of it. Mr. Mead also addressed meetings at Middlesbrough and Bradford later in the week.

W. H. THOMAS,  
Hon. Sec. N.E.F.T.S.

## Blavatsky Lodge.

The following lectures have been given during the past month: on September 24th, Mr. Mead gave "Some Points of Interest in Vedic Theosophy," on October 1st, Mr. Leadbeater spoke upon "The Aura," while the following week Mrs. Hooper read an interesting paper upon three American poets, selecting Emerson, Lowell and Whitman. On October 15th, Mr. Mead again lectured, taking for his subject on this occasion, the "Law of the Universe," and treating it, it is needless to say, in a most interesting way. A larger number of questions resulted from Mr. Leadbeater's lecture than from any of the other three, as was perhaps natural; but on each occasion the Hall was well filled.

Members are reminded that the annual business meeting will take place on Saturday evening, November 7th, at 8 o'clock, when it is hoped that all who are interested in the Lodge will make an effort to be present.

S. M. S.

## The Bradford Lodge.

The Bradford Lodge has decided during the winter months to hold public meetings fortnightly at 7.30 p.m. The first of these meetings was held on September 30th, when Mr. Mead lectured on the *Pistis Sophia*. There was a fairly good audience, which was deeply interested in the discourse.

On October 14th the Lodge read *Qualifications for Discipleship* by Mrs. Besant.

The Bradford and Athene Lodges have together formed a private class for the study of *Devachan*.

## The Helder Branch.

This new Dutch Branch, chartered at the end of September, is in full working order, and holds fortnightly meetings on Sunday mornings, as well as a monthly meeting on Tuesday evenings, visitors being introduced and announcements made in the local papers. The secretary also receives visitors every Sunday afternoon at his residence, various Theosophical subjects being discussed. Besides seven members the Branch also includes eight Associates, some of whom will soon join the Society.

## Plymouth Centre.

The first meeting of the winter session was held in the Foresters' Hall, The Octagon, on Friday, Oct. 23rd. A lecture on the "Creative Power of Thought" was delivered by Mrs. Hooper. The Rev. John Baron of Tavistock presided. There were about seventy people present. Several questions were clearly answered, and great interest in the subject was shown by the audience. Meetings will be held in the Foresters' Hall, every Friday evening throughout the winter, at 8 p.m. Mr. A. Weekes, President, Rev. J. S. Mathers, Hon. Sec.

## ENQUIRER.

## QUESTION CCCXII.

*N.*—What is the length of the emanation of the aura of an average man—six or eight feet or so many inches? According to Zoroastrianism "three steps" at least are considered enough to prevent defilement under certain conditions.

C. J.—Trained psychics seem to agree that the aura of an "ordinary person" extends about a foot and a half all round. Then about three feet from a person might just prevent the two auras from touching, but would not prevent intermingling of their emanations; while the "three steps" or their equivalent of seven feet mentioned in Zoroastrianism would certainly ensure freedom from "pollution."

This it must be remembered is only in the case of the average man; as people progress the size of their auras increases, and we have it actually stated in the sacred books of the Buddhists that the aura of Gautama Buddha extended three miles on either side, that is, that those who could see astrally knew of His presence at that distance by the appearance of the peculiar and characteristic colours in His aura among them.

## QUESTION CCCXIII.

*H. J. A.*—Is astrology (1) a true means of obtaining a foreknowledge of future events; and (2) if so, would such foreknowledge be advisable in the case of educated persons?

ALAN LEO.—True astrology being one of the keys to wisdom would give a foreknowledge of future events. Pure astrology, through the nativity, represents the environment, character, the mental and physical conditions of the manifesting ego, or the web which he had woven in his previous physical existence as the result of his thoughts, acts, etc., thus reproducing karma, happening at certain periods according to law as shewn by the planetary positions, etc., remembering always that the ego at the back of such manifestation may alter or change the direction of the forces set going previously by a knowledge of the higher wisdom, which is power, thus generating new forces under the guidance of the Higher Self.

If by an educated person the querent means moral also, then the foreknowledge would be advisable, as it could then be applied to the service of humanity and also be a means of perfecting the condition of evolution. In this way one could also find the easiest means of understanding his lower nature with a view to controlling and transmuting it, thus becoming a better channel for service.

## QUESTION CCCXIV.

*H. P. W.*—Is Theosophy for the masses?

G. R. S. M.—Theosophy is for all men and all minds undoubtedly, just in proportion as they can

understand its sublime message and its magnificent liberty. Theosophy knows no classes and no masses as the world understands such things; nevertheless it calls to all men to come out of the indistinguishable mass of souls and set forward on the path which leads through ever-ascending classes and hierarchies of wisdom and purity to the supreme of the supreme. The ethics and the simplest teachings of Theosophy are for all as the history of religion bears witness; but beyond that it depends on the individual himself. Ignorance will not bring us near to wisdom nor vice to virtue, and the perfect man is he who is perfected in every department of his nature. The higher problems of Theosophy require as great an understanding as the most abstruse doctrines of theology or the most advanced researches of science, or rather a greater understanding, for in Theosophy it is not solely a question of intellect, but of that which transcends intellect and exhausts the most fertile resources of the mind. From this point of view Theosophy is not for the masses of souls, just as the higher problems of Christianity, Brāhmanism or Buddhism, are not for the masses of souls, simply because they cannot understand them. We should, however, never lose sight of the fact that there are numbers of souls among the so-called masses in the external world which belong to the classes within, and numbers of souls among the classes here which belong to the masses of unprogressed souls in that world over there.

The question, however, seems to suggest that Theosophy is some new thing. This is not so; it is the old, old wisdom taught by the great founders and teachers of religion. Each of these suited his instruction to his listeners, following the rule of common sense.

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QUESTION CCCXV.

*H. L.—Is it possible to kill or to destroy “astral images” of an evil character coming to us from the outside, so that they can do no further harm to ourselves or others?*

*C. W. L.—Undoubtedly it is possible to dissipate an artificial elemental by an exertion of will-power, if that is what is meant by the questioner. It is also possible on the physical plane to kill a poisonous snake in order that it may do no further harm; but neither course of action would commend itself to an occultist except under very unusual circumstances. It is perfectly justifiable for a man to defend himself or others from either the snake on the physical plane or the evil elemental on the astral; but in nearly all cases this can be done without employing any of the forces of destruction. In the case of the elemental the simple expedient of forming a shell round oneself or round anyone whom one is engaged in protecting will at once prevent the possibility of any unpleasant consequences.*

In dealing with a matter such as this there are two points which must never be forgotten—first, that the elemental essence evolves through its

connection with thought, and that unless circumstances absolutely compel us to do so we shall do wrong to interfere with that evolution. Whether the thought ensouling it is evil or good makes no difference to the essence; all that is required for its development is to be used by thought of some kind. The difference between the good and the evil would be shown by the quality of essence which it affected, the evil thought or desire needing for its appropriate expression the coarser and denser matter, while the higher thought would require correspondingly finer and more rapidly vibrating matter for its covering. There are plenty of undeveloped people always thinking the coarser, lower thoughts, and their very ignorance and crassness are made use of by the great law as evolutionary forces to help on a certain stage of the work that has to be done. It is for us, who have learnt a little more than they, to strive ever to think the high and holy thoughts, which cause the evolution of a finer kind of elemental matter, and so to work in a field where at present the labourers are all too few.

Secondly, we must remember that an astral image of an evil character can never affect anyone unless they have in themselves something corresponding to it upon which it can fasten. Upon the aura of a pure and noble-hearted person these evil influences make absolutely no impression; they are unable to find any entrance there, and they simply rebound from it like a missile from a dead wall. Most of all is this the case with a man who is full of loving thought, for he is ever pouring out from himself a constant stream of good wishes and benevolent feelings—a stream so strong that nothing evil can withstand it, but is swept far away before its outward rush. Thus it is plain that everyone may defend himself (and others) from evil by a method better far than any in which the idea of destruction has place.

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QUESTION CCCXVI.

*P. B. N.—In spiritualistic papers we read of well authenticated instances of living persons being bodily transported from one place to another through the air. Is this possible, and how can it be explained according to Theosophy? Has not its possibility been denied in some Theosophical books?*

*M. L.—It is quite possible for people to be transported from one place to another by levitation, and this may be accomplished by “spiritual” agency or by the neutralizing or reversing the attraction of gravity. (See *Astral Plane* by Mr. Leadbeater, p. 90.)*

Mr. Leadbeater in his lecture on “Our Invisible Helpers” mentioned an instance of transportation. A member of the Theosophical Society was removed by this means from a position of considerable danger during a street disturbance, and found herself, it seemed immediately on realizing her peril, in a quiet spot removed from the turmoil, without realizing by what means she had been conveyed there.

C. W. L.—We must of course presume that the questioner means transported by phenomenal means—not by a balloon or flying machine. But even if this be so, there is still no difficulty in conceding the possibility of such transit. I have myself been lifted by invisible hands at a spiritualistic *séance*, and held suspended in the air for a minute or so ; and I have no doubt that the power which so held me could if intensified have carried me to any distance desired. One of the stories of the life of the Lord Buddha tells how he once crossed a broad river simply by rising to a considerable height in the air, and floating majestically over it, and many other similar tales testify to the belief of the ancients that such transport was possible. Levitation is by no means an uncommon phenomenon, and the power which levitates could also carry through the air.

But it seems probable that the questioner means more than this, and wishes to ask whether a person can be so transported invisibly. This again is perfectly possible for those who know how to do it, and it can be managed in more ways than one. For example, occult science is acquainted with a method of bending the rays of light which is as yet undiscovered by the physicists of the West ; and by means of that power alone any object may at once be rendered invisible, since the rays can be bent round it so that it will apparently cause no obstruction to them. If the number of spectators is small, a still simpler method would be to throw what is technically called a *miyá* over them—a collective hallucination—so that they would for the time be in the condition of mesmerized subjects, and would see only what the operator wished them to see. By either of these methods a person might be temporarily rendered invisible, and could then be removed in any way that seemed most convenient.

The possibility of this has never, so far as I am aware, been denied in Theosophical literature ; what *has* been said is that no method of completely disintegrating a living person and then restoring him to his previous condition is as yet known to any of our students. Therefore if the physical body of a man suddenly appears in a room to which it would have been impossible for it to obtain access in any ordinary way, supposing the phenomenon to be an absolutely genuine one, it is most probably not the human body that has been disintegrated, but a part of the wall or the ceiling to permit its passage.

QUESTION CCCXVII.

R. T.—*What are the sattvic, rājasic and tāmasic qualities of food spoken of by Mrs. A. Besant in her Building of the Kosmos, when dealing with Yoga : how do they act on the body, and what kinds of food have them ? Can treatises dealing with this subject be found among Theosophical writings ?*

E. G.—The characteristics of these different kinds of food are given in the seventeenth discourse of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. Thus we read in Mrs. Besant's translation, page 147 : "The foods that augment vitality, energy, vigour, health, joy and

relish, savoury, oleaginous, solid and agreeable, are dear to the Sattvic.

"The Rājasic desire bitter, sour, saline, over-hot, pungent, dry and burning foods, producing pain, grief and sickness.

"That which is stale and tasteless, putrid and corrupt, leavings also and filth, is the food dear to the Tāmasic."

I do not know any special treatises on this subject, but in the Appendix to Professor Dvivedi's translation of the Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali there is reference made to the food that should accompany the practice of Yoga. "Bitter, acid, pungent, saltish and hot things, as well as green vegetables, oil, intoxicating drugs, animal food of every description, curds, whey, etc., are to be strictly avoided. Wheat, rice, barley, milk, ghee, sugar, butter, sugar-candy, honey, dry ginger, the fine vegetables, beginning with Patel oats (muga) and natural waters, are most agreeable."

All roots, I believe, such as potatoes, etc., have the tāmasic quality, also fungi, such as mushrooms. Animal food is characterized by the rājasic quality. All fruits are of a sattvic nature.

The question of pure food in connection with preparation for Yoga practice is dealt with by Mrs. Besant in her last manual, *Man and his Bodies*.

QUESTION CCCXVIII.

E. M.—*I suppose that a person who visits the astral plane during life, sees both astral and physical matter simultaneously, because he is still connected with the physical plane through his physical body. But in what way is that so ?*

M. L.—It depends on the development of the person's inner faculties whether, when on the astral plane, he sees both astral and physical matter simultaneously. One in a trance sees on the astral or physical planes according to the will of the hypnotizer. One on the astral plane during sleep sees on that plane only, unless he is so far developed as to be able to function consciously there.

A person whose astral sight is developed sees, while on the physical plane, the astral also (see *Astral Plane*, pp. 11, 12) in the same way that the greater comprehends the less, that capacity of the fourth dimension comprehends the third and second.

QUESTION CCCXIX.

H. L.—*On which plane of the universe are the ākāshic mental images recorded ?*

C. W. L.—If they are ākāshic, and if they are mental, they must be upon the devachanic plane, since that is the plane of the mind, and it is to its matter that the term ākāsha has generally been applied in our literature—though sometimes it has been used in the sense of primordial matter, which is of course at an infinitely higher level still.

But the questioner probably wishes to know on what plane is kept the permanent record or impression of every event which takes place—that

which has been spoken of as the memory of Nature, and is in our books called indifferently the ākāshic record or the record of the astral light. In the present very elementary condition of our knowledge it is impossible to say upon how many planes this record is made, or whether it has any special habitat at all. This much is known—that upon the astral plane all that can be seen is a reflection of the record, sometimes fairly perfect, but also sometimes quite fragmentary and misleading; while the record upon the devachanic plane is clear, perfect, and impossible to be mistaken. But since the record can be read with, if possible, even more instantaneous facility on the buddhic plane, it is evidently not in any way confined to that level upon which we first come definitely into touch with it; and as the consciousness upon higher planes must obviously be still more extended, it seems certain that it must always include these records.

It must be noted however that a person who reads the record upon the devachanic plane, and therefore sees it fully and accurately, may nevertheless distort the recollection of it in bringing it down into the physical body, unless he has been specially trained to avoid this danger.

Be it understood that in everything written above I am referring to the planes of our own solar system; of the far vaster planes of the universe mentioned in the question I know nothing whatever.

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QUESTION CCCXX.

*E. T.*—*Has the spread of Theosophy in India resulted, so far, in the amelioration of the conditions of the native women, and is it true that all the members belonging to that Section of the Theosophical Society are men?*

*L. Ll.*—The following extracts from the *Theosophist* will answer this question:

(1) "Colonel Olcott, the President, and Madame Blavatsky . . . bade good-bye to Calcutta on the 20th of April. . . . They leave behind them . . . a small new branch—the Ladies' Theosophical Society, composed of native ladies—the first regularly formed in India."—Vol. iii. No. 9, June, 1882.

(2) "Sreemutti Swarna Kumari Devi Ghosal, F.T.S., formally applied for a charter for the Ladies' Theosophical Society at Calcutta, as the requisite number of members required to make a branch has been made up by fresh accessions of ladies to the cause of Theosophy. . . . The example of female education set by our brothers in Calcutta will, we trust, be followed more generally in India."—Supplement, Vol. iv. No. 7, April, 1883.

"The Negapatam Theosophical Society was formed by the President-Founder during his tour. Considering the importance of the town it is a matter of great satisfaction that in one day a considerable number of good and influential men should have joined our Society. And what is still

more gratifying is the fact that two ladies have applied for membership. In this part of India this is the first time ladies have actually sent in applications. It was Bombay that was the first to take the lead in this direction; then came Bengal, and lastly we have Madras."—Supplement, Vol. iv. No. 12, Sept., 1883.

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QUESTION CCCXXI.

*H. P. W.*—*How does Theosophy explain the sudden conversions of immoral and low types of men to a crude form of religious enthusiasm? For example, the Salvation Army appears often to effect a complete change in the moral character of many persons.*

*M. L.*—The Salvation Army certainly seems to supply the need felt by the confused awakening spiritual consciousness of low types of humanity.

The evil living of such persons is caused by the predominance of the lower principles, the kāmīc and kāmā mānāsīc; by desire for sensation, ignorance and non-responsiveness to any higher sensation than that sensed by these lower principles.

The methods of the Salvation Army offer sensation as violent, but of a different nature, as those previously indulged in, and at the same time, the ethics of Christianity touch and awaken into fuller life the germs of desire after purer living and of devotion or affection that have hitherto been lying latent; such persons probably having never before come across anyone or any ideal capable of arousing such feelings.

The conversion may appear sudden to others, even to the man himself unaware of his own slow inner development.

Crude methods are suited to the undeveloped nature which can respond to such, but which would be untouched by any more refined influence, as we are insensitive to subtle vibrations to which we are not attuned.

*E. A. B.*—A crude form of religious enthusiasm such as that of the Salvation Army is often the only kind that can appeal to a man of low type, because in a mind but poorly developed there is nothing that can respond to a more delicate touch, it would simply pass unrecognized. As it is, the impression made, like that of a sharp blow, is not always deep or lasting in its effects, though in some cases such impression may be the first awakening of higher perceptions which will make the man capable of nobler ideals.

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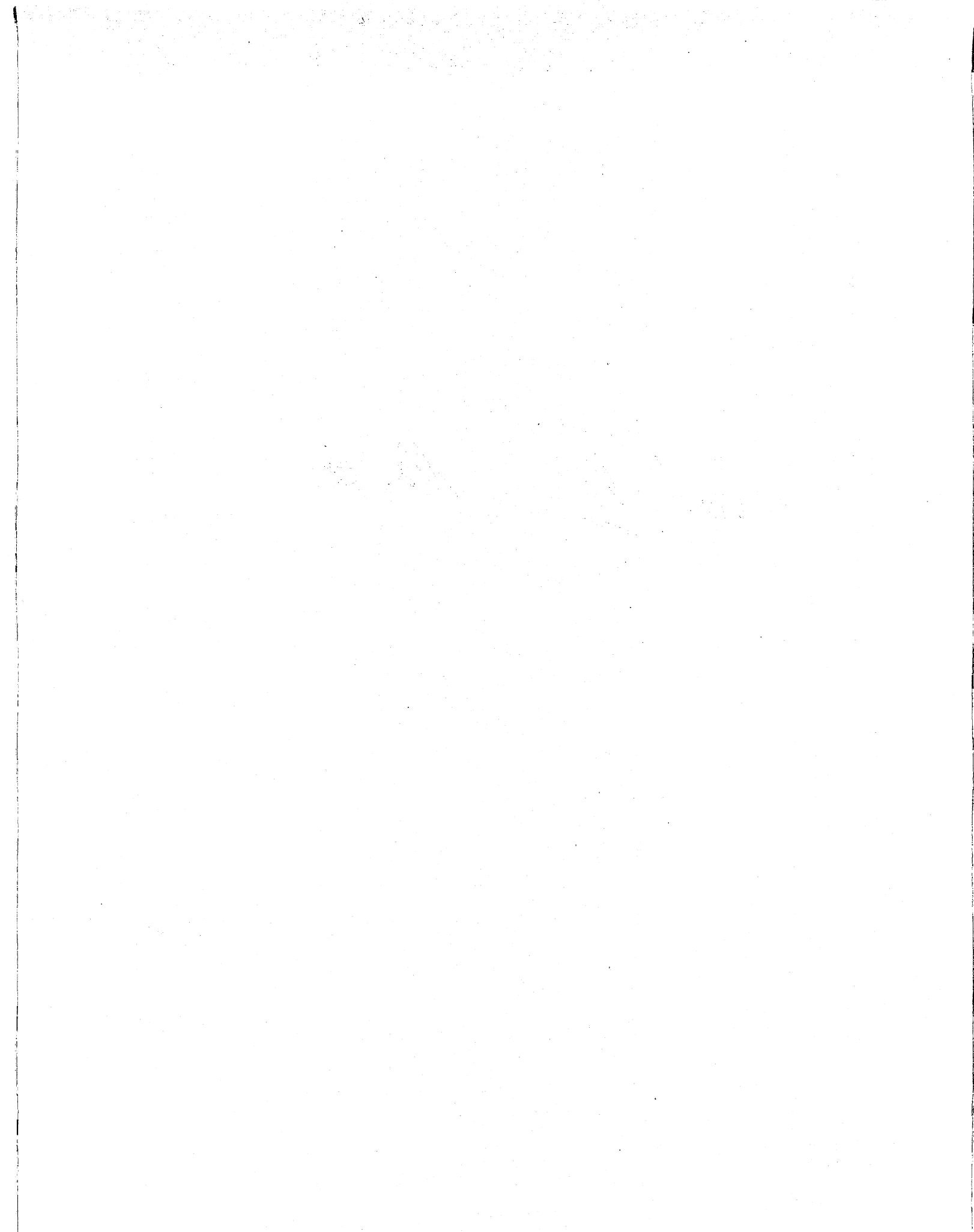
The subscription to the VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post-free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 26, Charing Cross, S.W. No back numbers can be supplied.

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

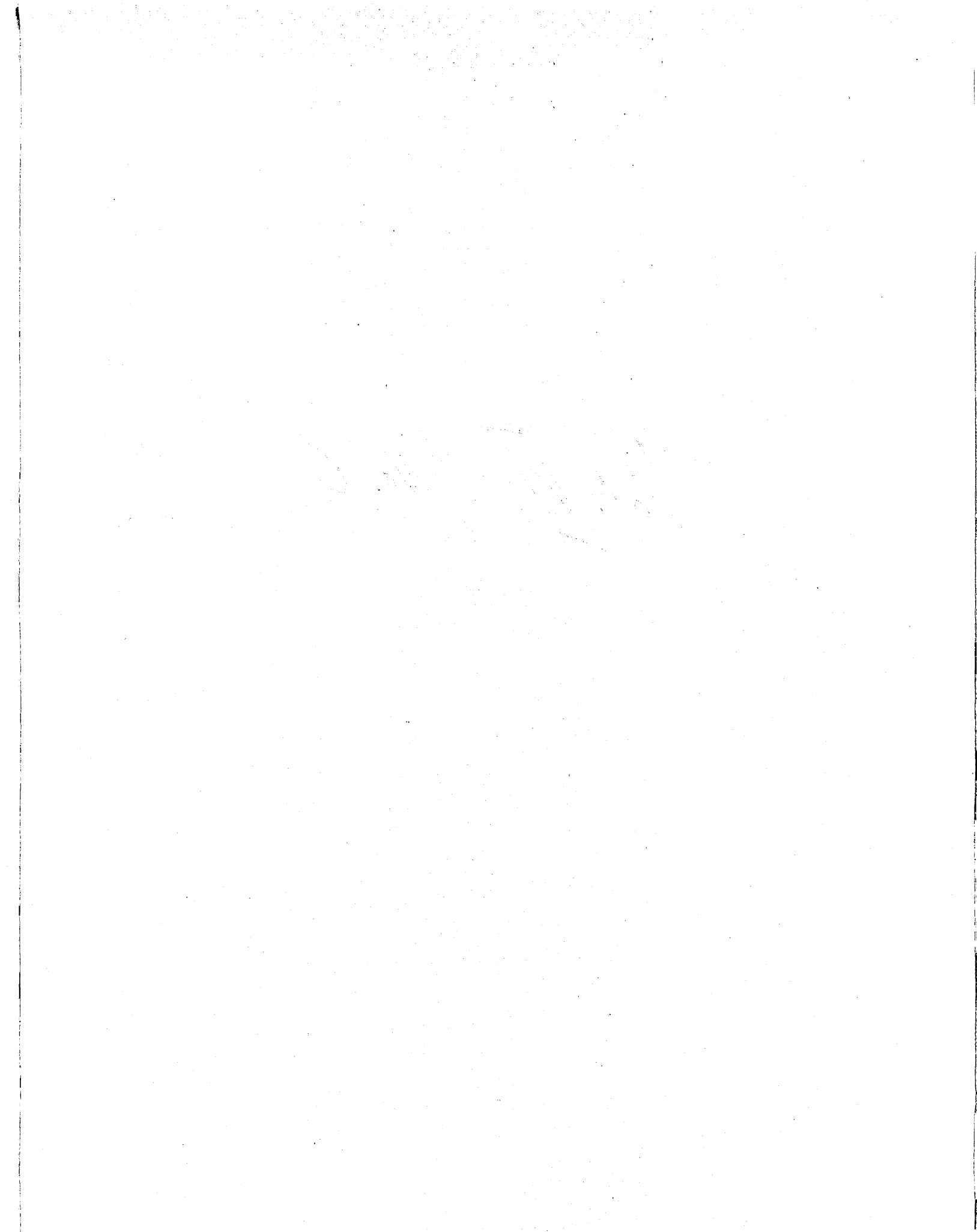


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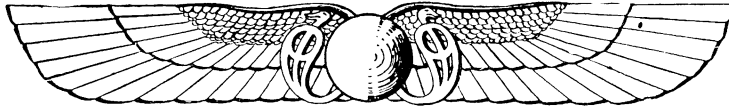
No. 5



Vol. VI No. 6



# 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.—G. R. S. MEAD, *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. VI.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 1, 1897.

NO. 7.

Edited by G. R. S. MEAD.

### LITERARY NOTES.

More than a year has gone by since "Literary Notes" were added to the freight of THE VĀHAN. In January, 1896, when inaugurating the new departure, it was written: "To this end we invite the co-operation of all our contributors and readers, not only that we may be informed of literature distinctly theosophical, but also of any works or pamphlets or articles in general literature which may be of special interest to theosophical students." That was a year and a month ago, and up to the present no literary information of any kind has reached the editorial office from our readers. It is not to be supposed that all the readers of THE VĀHAN are students, but there must be a certain number of our members who are wide readers, and if one or two would take the trouble to send in a few notes occasionally they would lighten the labour of the writer, who has had to supply upwards of a year's "Literary Notes" single handed.

A useful little brochure has just been published in France. Our hardworking colleague, Dr. Th. Pascal has translated Mr. Snowden Ward's *A B C of Theosophy* as the basis of the new publication; to the original pamphlet, however, he has added a number of notes and appended several new sections dealing with the relation of Theosophy to Christian doctrine, completing his task with a list of works on Theosophy in French. The small price of 50 centimes should procure a large number of readers for *L'A B C de la Théosophie* in its new guise. It will serve as a preface to Mons. Courmes' *Questionnaire Théosophique*, which in its turn will form an introduction to more advanced Theosophical works. Dr. Pascal is to be congratulated on his latest contribution to our literature in France.

The T. P. S. has in hand a new and thoroughly revised edition of Manual No. 1, *The Seven Principles of Man*, by Mrs. Besant.

The January issue of *Lucifer* is a good number and well maintains the reputation of the magazine. The difficulty of the editor appears to be the great length of the contributions; but short papers, unless of much excellence, are as a rule too thin for a magazine which is primarily intended for students.

### THE INDIAN FAMINE FUND.

Up to the time of our last acknowledgment the sum of £137 3s. 6d. had been contributed to this fund. Since then the following sums have been received, the list extending to Jan. 20th: Carolus, £10; Tobac, 15s.; Anon., £1; Mrs. Jardine, £5; F. L. J. Z., 10s.; K. B., 2s. 6d.; Miss Connah, 2s. 6d.; K. S., 5s.; J. S., 5s.; G. S., 10s.; W. R. E., 7s. 6d.; G. F. Gregory, £1; Mme. Robinowitch, £1 11s. 3d.; An Edinburgh Friend, 10s.; Mrs. Hamilton, £1; Mr. and Mrs. Larmuth, £1; Miss F. Kennedy, £1; Mrs. Callendar, £1; Miss Callendar, 10s.; Miss Whitfield, 2s. 6d.; Miss C. Cust, 10s.; W. H. S., 5s.; Mme. de Steiger, £1; Mrs. Terrell, £1; W. G. Gratten, 4s.; Margate Lodge, 12s.; Mrs. Mallet, £2 2s.; H. Saville, 5s.; Mrs. Bain, £2; Com. D. A. Courmes, 5 francs; Com. Aymes, 5 francs; Paul Gillard, 5 francs; M. Guillaume, 5 francs; M. Grégoire, 10 francs; C. L. Richardson, £1; Birmingham Lodge, £2 8s.; Dr. M. A. C. Thirwell, \$2; Bradford Lodge, £1; Employees of Bradford Coffee Tavern Co., Ltd., £1 5s.; Some Friends, 10s.; L. F. Weguelin-Smith, 2s. 6d.; Members of the Abbey Chapel, Tavistock, £2 2s. 6d.; Dutch Members, £2 10s.; Brighton Lodge, £1 1s.; Miss A. Nelson, £1; Miss Gay, 2s. 6d.; Dr. Crow, £1; E. Price, 2s. 6d.; W. Davies, 2s. 6d.; Mrs.

Robbins, 5s. ; W. C. Worsdell, 5s. ; Miss Bowring, £2 ; F. L. Bond, 5s. ; Mrs. Howson, £1 ; East London Lodge, 10s. ; W. H. Gardner, £2 2s.

Collected by Mrs. Judson, 3s. ; Mrs. Tweedie, £16 7s. ; Mrs. Terrell (from H. de Castro, L. Ciando, Mme. Gaçon, Mme. Erhardt and Mdlle. Arigo), £1 ; Mrs. Pearson, 15s.

Total £75 3s. 3d. Grand Total, £212 6s. 9d.

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## ACTIVITIES.

### Donations to the General Fund.

The following sums have been received since the last acknowledgment up to Jan. 20th : Miss Mallet, 10s. ; Mrs. Evans, 14s. ; K. S., 5s. ; Miss Claxton, 2s. 6d. ; Mr. and Mrs. Larmuth, £2 ; Miss Bowring, £1 ; Miss C. Cust, 10s. ; Mrs. Wilkinson, £3 ; M. U. Moore, 10s. ; G. Graham, £1 ; Mrs. M. C. Brown, £1 10s. ; Mrs. Midgley, 2s. 6d. ; Dr. Nunn, £1 ; S., 5s. ; F. S. Pitt-Taylor, 2s. 6d. ; Mrs. Terrell, 5s. ; Mrs. Gillison, £1 1s. ; Mrs. Marshall, £20. Total £33 17s. 6d.

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### Headquarters' Lending Library.

The subscription to the Circulating Library at 19, Avenue Road, is : one year, 10s. ; six months, 6s. ; three months, 3s. 6d. ; postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian.

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### The Lotus Circle.

The Lotus Circle meets at 19, Avenue Road on Sunday afternoons, punctually at 2.30. All children are welcomed.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

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### Blavatsky Lodge.

It had been decided not to hold the usual Thursday evening meeting of the Lodge on Dec. 24th ; but on New Year's Eve Mr. Cuffe read an interesting and suggestive paper upon the "Theosophy of Taoism," which gave rise to a certain amount of discussion afterwards. In the course of his closing speech the chairman, Mr. Mead, pointed out the very great advantage that it would be if some member or members of the Theosophical Society would learn Chinese with a view to an intelligent study of the ancient literature of China. In connection with this, it may be appropriate to quote some remarks made by Ernest Renan in the course of a critical essay upon Henri Frederic Amiel. "I estimate," says Renan, "that I should require five hundred years to exhaust the domain of Semitic studies, as I understand them ; and if ever my taste for them should begin to grow enfeebled, I should learn Chinese. That new world, as yet almost untouched by criticism, would keep me in appetite for an indefinite time." I quote the above for the comfort—or otherwise—of those who listened to Mr. Mead's valuable suggestion.

On January 7th, Mr. Mead lectured upon the Essenes, about whom he gave much most interesting information, while on the following Thursday evening Mrs. Cooper-Oakley took as the title of her lecture "Is Brotherhood a Fact in Nature?" In the course of this lecture she showed that if the word nature is taken to include only the lower manifestations in all the kingdoms, then brotherhood does not exist, but on the contrary, dissension and struggle ; that, in fact, so long as our consciousness is confined to the lower planes, we can no more realize ideal brotherhood than we can realize ideal truth or ideal beauty.

The Sunday evening meetings conducted by Mr. Leadbeater always attract large and interested audiences. The last few lectures have been devoted to the Races, and much fresh light has been thrown on this subject.

S. M. S.

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### The Society in Holland.

The fifth annual meeting of the branches in Holland was held in the Dutch Headquarters, 76, Amsteldijk, Amsterdam, on Wednesday, December 30th, 1896.

The report of the work done during the past year was read by the Secretary, and showed that in spite of opposition the Society in this country is in a more flourishing condition than ever before. Three of the centres have now formed themselves into regularly constituted Branches of the Theosophical Society, and more workers are coming forward to help.

A point of some interest put before the meeting was as to whether the Branch as such should support the Anti-Vivisection League, a long discussion ensuing. The accounts of the Dutch Theosophical Society were then put before the meeting, and were audited by Messrs. Friese and Stark. The same committee was unanimously re-elected.

H. WIERTS VAN COEHOORN, *Hon. Sec.*

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### North London Lodge.

The new series of meetings begun in January has been a marked success up to the present. The audiences prove that Sundays are the best days for public meetings, the attendances being three times as great as those at the recent Wednesday evening lectures. The first meeting, addressed by three speakers, was rather too large for the accommodation, but after that more seats were obtained. Mr. Mead lectured on "Primitive Christianity" to an appreciative audience on the second Sunday, the third being devoted to the plan of more general discussion adopted on alternate Sundays.

A. M. G.

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### City of Liverpool Lodge.

With the beginning of the New Year this lodge has made an alteration in its meetings. Instead of being on Thursday evenings they will now be held

on alternate Sundays at 6 p.m. This change will be a great convenience to many members who could not before attend, and increased numbers are looked for as a consequence.

The winter syllabus ended at Christmas, and for the new session it has been decided to take up the study of Mr. Leadbeater's *Devachanic Plane*.

W. B. PITT-TAYLOR.

### Lecture List.

AMSTERDAM, DUTCH LODGE. Meetings at 76, Amstel Dijk, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *Kāma*, E. Stark; Feb. 11th, *Devachan*, Mevr. C. M. Perk-Joosten; Feb. 18th, *The Wisdom of the Chinese*, Mrs. Windust; Feb. 25th, *The Pyramids*, J. L. M. Lauweriks.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 14th, *Hypnotism—Good and Evil*; Feb. 28th, *Mediumship—Good and Evil*.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Avenue House, Avenue Road, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings at the Royal Hotel, Darley Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *Man and his Bodies*.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Lodge meetings at 25, Hanover Square, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

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 alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 2nd, *Social Aims and Conditions from the Theosophic Standpoint*, F. B. Bond; Feb. 16th, *The Bhagavad Gītā*, J. Parsons. Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m. and Fridays at 8 p.m., informal meetings for enquirers.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 35, High Street, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 12th and 26th.

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

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *Free Will and Karma*, Hodgson Smith; Feb. 14th, *The Astral Plane*, John Lumley; Feb. 21st, *Is there Progress in Heaven?*; Feb. 28th, *Birth and Death of Worlds*, C. N. Goode. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., at No. 1, James Street.

HELDER LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays, at 10 a.m.: Feb. 7th, *Theosophy in Daily Life*, Mrs. Windust; Feb. 11th (Wednesday), *Reincarnation a Fact*, S. Gazan; Feb. 14th, *Self-Knowledge*, J. Katsen; Feb. 28th, *Dharma and Māyā*, S. Gazan. Also on the second Thursday of each month at 8 p.m.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at "Glaisdale," Herne Bay, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., especially for the study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 72, Prospect Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at 31, Great George's Street, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hackins Hey, on alternate Sundays, at 6 p.m.: Feb. 14th and 28th.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings at 8, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. (3rd floor), on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Thursdays at 8.30 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *States of Matter and their Characteristics*, Bertram Keightley; Feb. 11th, *Ghosts*, C. W. Leadbeater; Feb. 18th, *Mystics of the 17th and 18th Centuries*, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley; Feb. 25th, *The Builders* (with Illustrations), Miss Ward. Meetings on Sunday evenings at 7: Feb. 7th, *The Life of the Atlanteans, their Social Organizations, Religions, Arts and Sciences*; Feb. 14th, *The Destruction of Atlantis, The Present Remains of the Fourth Race, The Beginning of the Fifth Race and its first Five Sub-races*; Feb. 21st, *The Future Evolution of Humanity*; Feb. 28th, *Non-human Evolutions*.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., on alternate Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.: Feb. 1st, *Our Relation to Children*, C. W. Leadbeater; Feb. 15th, *The Occultism of Shakespeare*, Miss Ward.

LONDON, EAST LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for study of *The Voice of the Silence*, and discussion on general subjects.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at Myddelton Hall, Almeida Street, Upper Street, Islington, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *The Future of Humanity*, M. U. Moore; Feb. 14th, *Man Spiritual and Man Physical, The Higher Self, The Vestures of the Soul*; Feb. 21st, *The Japanese and their Beliefs*, C. Harvey; Feb. 28th, *Beyond the Grave, The Passage from the Body, The Man after Death, The World of Desire*. Meetings for study on Saturdays and Mondays at 8 p.m.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings at 9, Albert Square on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. On second and fourth Thursdays in each month, study of *Man and his Bodies*. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton; or at the Library, c/o Mr. Corbett, 9, Albert Square.

MARGATE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at No. 39, High Street.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 31, Albert Road, on alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m.: the other Tuesdays, study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Sundays at 6.30 p.m., *Secret Doctrine* class.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings are held at 41, Exchange Street, every Friday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at the Foresters' Hall, The Octagon, on Fridays at 8 p.m.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Mrs. Bestwick's, Cambridge Arcade, every Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

## ENQUIRER.

## QUESTION CCCXXXI.

*D. P.*—Does the etheric double sometimes leave the body, or is this possible only for what is called “the *līṅga sharīra proper*,” and what are these two bodies respectively?

C. W. L.—The use of the term *līṅga sharīra* has for some time been discontinued in Theosophical writings, because it was found that it was used in the East in various senses differing widely from the meaning which we in England had been attaching to it, and that therefore much confusion had been caused. Even in our own literature the name had been very loosely used, and Madame Blavatsky herself seems to have applied it sometimes to the etheric double and sometimes to the astral body. It was eventually decided to drop it out of the system of Theosophical nomenclature altogether, and to adopt the term “etheric double” for the mould upon which the denser part of man’s physical body was formed. This title was chosen as expressing in plain English the real characteristics of the principle in question; “etheric,” because it is formed of etheric matter only, and “double” because it is an exact duplicate in every way of the physical body—or rather it would be more accurate to say that the dense body which we see is a duplicate of it.

Thus the two bodies mentioned by the questioner are really one and the same, and when in some of the earlier writings qualities are attributed to the *līṅga sharīra* which the etheric double certainly does not possess, it must be understood that the author was either referring under that name to what we now call the astral body, or was simply confusing the functions of two distinct though closely-allied principles.

Under ordinary circumstances and in the case of ordinary persons the etheric double leaves the body only at death; in fact it is precisely in that complete withdrawal of the true man, in his etheric double as a vehicle, from the physical body that death really consists.

In the case of those who are called mediums, however, the lower principles cohere less strongly, and entities acting from the astral plane can easily compass the partial withdrawal of the matter of the etheric double from its denser counterpart. When so withdrawn, this matter is used by the manifesting entity, whatever that may be, either for the purpose of materialization or to supply the link between astral and dense physical matter which is necessary to enable him or it to produce results upon this plane.

It is to be observed, however, that this borrowed etheric matter is always connected with the body to which it belongs by a current constantly flowing from the one to the other—a current which is frequently described as resembling a rope connecting the two together.

Consequently the materialized form cannot usually pass to any great distance from the body of the medium, and has a constant tendency to rush back and reunite with it.

This frequent though temporary loss of a part of himself is naturally exceedingly trying to the constitution of the medium, and often causes excessive nervous prostration; indeed it will be found that sooner or later almost all mediums for physical manifestations succumb under the strain, and fall victims either to epilepsy and kindred maladies or to the still more terrible disease of drunkenness, brought on by the intense craving for stimulants which is a natural consequence of the collapse which follows extreme and recurrent exhaustion.

For further information as to the etheric double the questioner is referred to Theosophical Manuals V. and VII., and also to the new edition (*not* to the old one) of Manual I.

## QUESTION CCCXXXII.

*Q. Y.*—Is there any truth in the legend of Jesus as contained in the *Sepher Toledoth Jeschu*?

G. R. S. M.—There are two discordant variants of this legend published respectively by Wagenseil, (*Tela Ignea Satanae*, 1681), and Huldrich (*Historia Jeschue Nazareni, a Judaeis blasphemae Corrupta*, 1705). The fraudulent nature of these documents has been repeatedly exposed, and scholarship universally denounces these variants of the legend as Jewish forgeries of the twelfth or thirteenth century.

The small nucleus of original legend concerning Jehoshua ben Pandira or ben Stada, round which the later mediæval myths were developed, is to be found in the Talmud. This nucleus is of importance and deserves close study, but the *Sepher Toledoth Jeschu* should never be quoted by any Theosophical student. The handiest book to which we can refer *Q. Y.* for an account of the matter is *The Lost and Hostile Gospels*, by the Rev. S. Baring-Gould (London: Williams and Norgate, 1874). On pp. 67-115 the whole question of the mediæval legend is fully discussed; the Talmudic nucleus, moreover, is also treated on pp. 50-66.

## QUESTION CCCXXXIII.

*D. P.*—What exactly is the *chhâyā* of which we read so much? Is it composed of astral matter, and what is its function in the formation and nutrition of the body?

C. W. L.—The word *chhâyā* is Sanskrit, and means simply shadow; but there is no term which has been used in Theosophical literature in a more confused and misleading manner. Further references to it will be found in the forthcoming third volume of *The Secret Doctrine*; but the statements



made about it frequently appear quite irreconcilable one with the other. A little examination, however, clearly shows us that Madame Blavatsky employed the word as a kind of general term for any body which was made in the likeness of the physical, and therefore might be called by poetic license a "shadow" of it. She sometimes uses it for the etheric double, sometimes for the astral body, sometimes for that etheric organ in man which specializes the solar jīva into prāṇa, and sometimes for an artificial body thrown out and materialized.

It would be a capital exercise for an earnest student first to familiarize himself thoroughly by a careful study of Manual VII. with the constitution, functions and powers of the various vehicles of man, and then go through the references in older writings to the chhâyâ and the liṅga sharīra, marking against those words each time they occur what he conceives to be the accurate translation of each in that particular case. In all cases he will find it best first to get a firm grasp of the outlines of his subject from the smaller and simpler books, and then to build into that outline the fragments of the more detailed information which he will find scattered about in the larger and more complicated works. By so doing he will save himself much severe labour and many serious misconceptions.

It will be seen that it is impossible to answer the last part of the question; one can only say that to define the functions of the chhâyâ in any particular case, one must first know in what sense the word is there used; the matter is then simple enough.

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QUESTION CCCXXXIV.

*D. P.—If the etheric double is the exact counterpart of the physical body, how does one explain the fact that a man may grow stouter or thinner?*

C. W. L.—The difficulty here is not exactly an obvious one, for why should not the etheric double grow stouter or thinner also? The questioner has perhaps in mind the statement that a man's etheric double is made for him by the agents of the lords of karma, and so feels that it should be impossible for him to produce any alteration in it. But that is not so. The work of building up the etheric double of a child is begun before its birth by what we call an artificial elemental, energized by the thought of the Māharājahs, and this creature builds exactly according to the pattern given to him from the mind of the Lipika. He continues his work until the child is seven years old (the period at or about which the ego takes full charge of his own vehicles) and from that time forward the etheric double no longer receives special attention, but is developed along with the other principles by the action of the ego.

All these principles act and react on one another, and the growth of the etheric double may be in-

fluenced on the one hand from above, by the desires which sway the kāmīc body, or on the other hand from below, by the condition of the denser physical body. If the latter takes much food and little exercise, and so grows fat and gross, the etheric double is also influenced by its action (or want of it), and draws into itself more and grosser particles. Nothing can affect one of the vehicles of man without sympathetically affecting all the others; and the difficulty felt by the questioner is one which disappears upon fuller comprehension of the subject.

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QUESTION CCCXXXV.

*M. P.—I have seen it stated that ideas are re-embodied in the same way as souls are reincarnated. If so, the present Theosophical ideas must have been anticipated in antiquity; I suppose we must look to the East for the last incarnation of Theosophy.*

G. R. S. M.—This subject has been already dealt with to some extent in my papers on the Later Platonists and Gnostics which have appeared in *Lucifer* during the past twelve months. The problem is exceedingly complex, and we must be careful not to use labels and confine the meanings of words to our own limited conceptions of things Theosophical. Again no prior combination of ideas can be said to be re-embodied in exactly the same combination; but that one can trace some of the same tendencies in our own day which have already played their part on the human stage in the past is patent to the student of history, not only inside the sphere of Theosophical ideas, but also outside their pale. Nor have we to go so far as the technical East to find the traces of such ideas, or rather of similar combinations of such ideas. M. P. can do no better than read *A Literary History of Early Christianity* (London: 2 vols.; 1893), by the Rev. C. T. Crutwell, to be convinced of the fact. The period dealt with is the Ante-Nicene, that is, the first three centuries of the present era, and up to the Council of Nicea, 325 A.D. On pp. 252-254 of his first volume Mr. Crutwell writes:

"We have now traced the outlines of the three great types of heresy which distracted the Ante-Nicene Church, together with some of their combinations. We have shown that they proceeded from three main sources—(1) Judaism, pure or mixed; (2) Oriental or corrupted Platonism, including a mass of doctrines from the remotest regions imperfectly fused together; and (3) the dialectical apparatus of Greek philosophy playing upon conceptions at bottom Judaic or Pantheistic.

"The first of these produced the Ebionite form of Christianity, the second the Gnostic, the third the Unitarian. These three forms have died out so far as their outward presentation is concerned, but their spirit is by no means dead. In the

seething ferment of opinions at the present day it is not difficult to perceive the analogues of each of them. Ebionism is reviving under the guise of Biblical theology, which seeks to restrict the genuine Christian dogma to that form of it which historical criticism educes from the New Testament. The brilliant and suggestive works of Matthew Arnold are the best known exponents of this line of thought, whereby the person of Christ is reduced to nearly human dimensions, and the miraculous element in it classed as *Aberglaube*. Unitarianism, as the name implies, still holds its ground; and in the works of Martineau and others rises to a lofty height of spirituality, far transcending the metaphysical restrictions on which the system is logically based. But it is Gnosticism, the hydra-headed, the Protean, that looms highest on the horizon, and once more darkens it by its huge but shapeless bulk. We are not alluding to the current supernaturalism of a magical or theurgic character, which in divers forms is nevertheless making way, both in Roman Catholic and Protestant countries. We speak here only of its intellectual aspect, which in the twofold sense of a theosophy and a science is manifestly reappearing among mankind. As a theosophy, Gnosticism rests upon the faculty of spiritual intuition among those favoured souls who, by discipline or natural insight, are enabled to transcend the physical sphere and penetrate the mechanism of the unseen universe. The recent influx of Oriental ideas and systems into the higher culture of Europe has undoubtedly opened a path of development of which at present we see only the beginning. As a vast syncretistic edifice of religious thought, Gnosticism is even more distinctly re-appearing, though in place of the cosmogonical structures of the old Gnostics we meet with a comparative survey of the religious ideas of humanity founded on the method of science, from the point of view of the critical philosophy introduced by Kant. The science of religion has not yet proceeded far enough in its synthesis to evolve the conception of a universal religion. But unless the human mind is to rest content with the dogmatic *non possumus* of Agnosticism, which is a highly improbable result, we may expect to see in the not distant future a vast religious structure essentially corresponding to the great systems of Basilides and Valentinus, transcending them indeed in the soundness of its metaphysical basis and in the purity of its method, but equally with them including the Christian revelation as one of many elements to be absorbed in its comprehensive scheme."

There is very little to find fault with in the above sketch of the situation: it reveals the mind of an acute observer, and shows how patent are the facts to a student of the history of ideas. If, then, a knowledge of past incarnations throws the strongest light on the make-up of present character; how much more important is the study of the past life of a body of ideas? The intelligent observation and comprehension of the present evolution of thought is one of the highest branches of the

great science of life of which Theosophy is a synonym.

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QUESTION CCCXXXVI.

*D. P.*—*Is the fluidic body of were-wolves and vampires always an astral body, clothed sometimes with physical matter in order to render it visible?*

C. W. L.—The condition either of the were-wolf or the vampire is happily exceedingly rare and entirely abnormal. It is in fact a hideous anachronism—an appalling relic of a time when man and his surroundings were in many ways not what they are now. Undoubtedly the astral body is present in such manifestations, but there is probably also a great deal of the matter of the etheric double, and perhaps also a toll is levied upon the gaseous and liquid constituents of the physical body, as in the case of some materializations. In both cases this fluidic body appears able to pass to much greater distances from the physical than is ever otherwise possible, so far as is yet known, for a vehicle which contains at least a certain amount of etheric matter. The two states, though they have some points in common, and are perhaps equally horrible, are yet quite distinct, as will be seen by reference to Manual V.

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QUESTION CCCXXXVII.

*D. P.*—*It has been said that the kâmarûpa of a person may feel a sensation of burning while his body is being cremated; is this possible? Does repercussion thus take place from the physical body to the exteriorized astral?*

C. W. L.—The first part of this question has been answered in THE VĀHAN before. It is entirely impossible that the true man functioning in his kâmarûpa after death should feel anything whatever of the cremation of his late physical body. It is perfectly true that while the various bodies of man remain linked together the sympathy between them is so close that whenever one of them is affected it must to some extent at least react upon those above and below it. The well-ascertained though little understood phenomenon of repercussion from certain apparitions of men to their physical bodies is an instance of this in one direction, while the all but instantaneous manner in which the wandering astral of a sleeping man often returns to his physical body, if the latter be disturbed by a touch or a sound, is an example of the other.

But after death a complete separation has taken place between the astral and the physical. The etheric double, which is the only possible means of communication between the two, has been finally withdrawn from the physical body, leaving it a mere corpse; and the burning of the latter can no

more affect the astral body than could the burning of a cast-off coat.

QUESTION CCCXXXVIII.

*D. P.*—*Is the radiant matter discovered by Professor Crookes the same as what has been called in recent Theosophical literature Ether IV.?*

C. W. L.—This is a subject about which there seems to be much misunderstanding. Mr. Crookes' experiments were connected with the behaviour of ordinary gaseous matter in what is called a very high vacuum, that is to say, a condition in which its molecules were much further apart and much freer in their action than they ever could be under ordinary circumstances. Radiant matter therefore is still gaseous, and not etheric, however much it may be attenuated.

QUESTION CCCXXXIX.

*L. K.*—*In the case of a man possessing a high sense of morality combined with the inability to believe in any kind of spiritual existence, is this condition bad karma, resulting from rejection or misuse of opportunities in a past life, or may it be only a special line of evolution, in which the opportunities for spiritual enlightenment come later than do those for intellectual and moral growth?*

L.L.—Accurately to answer such a question one would require the power of seeing the past karma of the man referred to; but the first hypothesis of the questioner seems the more probable, since it is reasonable to suppose that our evolution is intended to go on, like other operations of nature, in a complete and harmonious manner, and not to proceed spasmodically, first in one direction and then in another. If we evolve in a one-sided way, we probably have ourselves to thank for it, the law of karma being absolutely just. Thus it seems natural and logical to suppose that an inability to recognize spiritual truths, the character being otherwise highly evolved, can proceed only from neglect to exercise and develop spiritual intuitions in a former incarnation.

E. A. B.—Probably both causes named have been at work; but in any case the "special line of evolution" would be the result of karma in some way; and the high qualities of the man would encourage the growth of spiritual development in another life.

E. A. I.—In considering this case we must remember the great difference between *morality* and *spirituality*. The condition spoken of may not be the result of the man's bad karma, but simply come from a want of age in his soul's growth. In one of Mrs. Besant's recent lectures at Queen's Hall she spoke of the great outpouring of Divine Life which came down upon the human race

through the "Sons of Mind." She said that there were seven divisions in the classes of these outpouring lives; that some were more evolved than others; also that the outpouring was slow—it was not a sudden thing. And she showed that there are different stages of growth in souls, depending upon the age of the outpouring upon them, as well as upon the efforts a soul has made; that there is a difference of age in their state of consciousness—not in their possibilities. This means that men are evolving in seven great classes separated by a difference of age; that all souls travel the same round, and will eventually reach the same goal. Morality precedes spirituality, leading up to it, and as a moral man is further on the road than the man whose life is full of evil, so is his soul at a stage of growth vastly below that of the spiritual man. There is a passage in *Light on the Path* to the same effect: "Great though the gulf may be between the good man and the sinner, it is greater between the good man and the man who has attained knowledge; it is immeasurable between the good man and the one on the threshold of divinity."

QUESTION CCCXL.

*E. A. U.*—*I have heard it said by Theosophists that at the end of the coming year the door to spiritual progress will be closed, and those who have not by that time entered upon the Path of Discipleship will be unable to do so until near the end of the next century. Can this statement be explained? for I do not understand how it can be true.*

C. W. L.—Nor do I. In the form in which the questioner puts it, the statement is certainly *not* true. "When the pupil is ready, the Master is always ready also." The entry upon the Path depends upon the acquirement of certain moral qualifications, and the man who succeeds in developing those within himself will find himself upon it, whether it be this year or next year, or next century. There seems to be some misconception with regard to this matter. The conditions of admission to the Path have been unchanged for thousands of years, and it is quite a mistake to suppose, as some people appear to do, that the foundation of the Theosophical Society in any way modified them. They are exactly the same for the oldest member of the Society as for the outsider, for in these matters every man is dealt with as an individual—not as a member of any organization. These requirements are in no sense arbitrary; on the contrary, they are but the expression of natural law, for it would be an impossibility for the aspirant to gain the next step unless he possessed the qualifications for it. Consequently it follows that no alteration of them can be expected either at the end of this year or at any other time.

What was done by means of the Theosophical Society was to make known more clearly and

publicly than had been done for a very long time that there *was* such a Path to be found by those who were prepared to seek for it. In our western world the very existence of such a way of liberation had been until a few years ago entirely unknown, except to a very few mystics who by virtue of developing within themselves the necessary qualities had brought themselves into secret communication with those who had always known it. This more public announcement, then, was the new departure; and if the prophecy mentioned by the questioner has any basis of fact at all, it must in some way refer to this. Yet that public announcement has been made, and cannot be withdrawn from the stock of common knowledge, so that it is difficult to attach any meaning at all to the statement as quoted.

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QUESTION CCCXLI.

*C. J. B.—Are globes B and F the astral plane dealt with in Manual V., and A and G the devachanic plane of Manual VI.?*

*C. W. L.—No.* The first idea for the questioner to get clearly into his mind is that the seven globes of our chain are *real* globes occupying definite and separate positions in space, notwithstanding the fact that some of them are not upon the physical plane. The astral plane dealt with in Manual V. and the devachanic plane of Manual VI. are those of this earth only, and have nothing to do with these other planets at all.

It should be understood that none of the three lower planes of the solar system is co-extensive with it except as regards a particular condition of the highest or atomic subdivision of each. Each physical globe has its physical plane (including its atmosphere) its astral plane, and its devachanic plane, all interpenetrating one another, and therefore occupying the same position in space, but all quite apart from and not communicating with the corresponding planes of any other globe. It is only when we rise to the lofty levels of the buddhic plane that we find a condition common to, at any rate, all the planets of our chain.

Notwithstanding this, there is, as stated above, a condition of the atomic matter of each of these planes, which is cosmic in its extent; so that the seven atomic sub-planes of our system taken apart from the rest may be said to constitute one cosmic plane—the lowest, sometimes called the cosmic-prākritic. The interplanetary ether, for example, which appears to extend through the whole of space—indeed, must do so, at least to the farthest visible star, otherwise our physical eyes could not perceive that star—is composed of physical ultimate atoms in their normal and uncompressed condition. But all the lower and more complex forms of ether exist only (so far as is at present known) in connection with the various heavenly bodies, aggregated round them precisely as their atmos-

phere is, though probably extending considerably further from their surface.

Precisely the same is true of the astral and devachanic planes; only the atomic matter of each, and even that only in an entirely free condition, is co-extensive with the interplanetary ether, and consequently a person can no more pass from planet to planet even of our own chain in his astral body or his mind-body than he can in his physical body. In the causal body, however, this achievement is possible, though even then by no means with the ease and rapidity with which it can be done upon the buddhic plane by those who have succeeded in raising their consciousness to that level.

It must be understood, then, that globes A, B, F and G are definite worlds separated in space, just in the same way as are Mars and the Earth, the only difference being that whereas the latter have physical, astral and devachanic planes of their own, globes B and F have nothing below the astral plane, and A and G nothing below the rūpa levels of the devachanic.

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QUESTION CCCXLII.

*C. J. B.—Why have some chains three planets on the physical plane, while other chains have only one?*

*C. W. L.—It depends upon the stage of evolution at which they have arrived.* Just as in the chain there are seven worlds, of which the second and sixth are more material than the first and seventh, while the third and fifth descend still lower in the scale, and the fourth is the most material of all—so there are in each scheme of evolution seven chains holding to one another a precisely similar relation. The fourth chain, then, is the most material, and has in it three physical globes; the only examples of this in our solar system at present are the Earth chain and the Neptune chain. In the third and fifth chain-periods or manvantaras, the chain, being less material, has only one physical planet; the Lunar chain in the past and the Venus chain in the present give us examples of this, for the Lunar manvantara was of course our third, while the Venus evolution has reached its fifth chain. For further information on these heads see a recent Transaction of the London Lodge of the T. S.—*The System to which we Belong.*

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*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, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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### LITERARY NOTES.

WE have just received the last number of the valuable *Transactions of the London Lodge* (No. 31; T. P. S., price 1s. net). It consists of a paper by Mr. Sinnett, entitled "The Beginnings of the Fifth Race," and contains an exceedingly interesting sketch of the origins and migrations and evolution of the five sub-races of our present root-race. This brings us down to an epoch of which the later periods fall somewhat within the area of practical ethnology, and the Transaction is on this account doubly interesting to the student.

Students of the Origins of Christianity who are anxious to get the correct perspective of this vast problem-picture, will be materially aided by taking a look at it through Jewish spectacles. The best work on the subject is by the Jewish historian Graetz. Those who cannot read the original German edition (*Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart*; eleven vols., Leipzig; 1868-1877), are referred to the English shortened translation (*The History of the Jews from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*; London, Nutt; 1891-1893), especially vol. ii., which gives the Jewish view and the historical setting of the life of Jesus. The same matter was arranged and translated into French by Maurice Hess in 1867 under the title *Sinai et Golgotha*, with the subtitle "The Origins of Judaism and Christianity with a Critical Examination of the Ancient and Modern Gospels appended."

*The Bible and the Child* (London: Clarke; 1897. Price 3s. 6d.) is one of the most remarkable books of the day; it deals with "The Higher Criticism and Teaching of the Young," and for the most part urges the teachers to tell the children

the truth. Eight prominent teachers of divinity contribute to its pages, including Deans Farrar and Fremantle.

Readers who are interested in monasticism of direct descent from the ancient Laura communities of Thebaid Christendom, and in the recovery of the literary treasures which are said to be hidden in the neglect and ignorance of Oriental monkdomb, should read Athelstan Riley's *Athos, or The Mountain of the Monks* (London: Longmans; 1887), and Bent's *Sacred City of the Ethiopians* (London: Longmans; 1893). The former gives a most interesting account of the twenty monasteries of the Holy Mountain, the centre of orthodoxy of the Greek Church, and is also curious for the ultra-Anglicanism of the writer. The latter is a record of travel and research in Abyssinia in 1893, and describes an anachronistic form of Christianity, an ancient stratum of monkish superstition and fanaticism, superimposed on an exceedingly ancient form of Sabæism, or sun-worship. The sacred city Aksum was visited, and a number of other places of great interest.

Students of magical papyri and the signs, sigils, symbols, apologies, numbers, and the rest of the paraphernalia which the magical schools of antiquity thought necessary for the good of the soul, are referred to one of the latest finds published by Signor Francesco Rossi in a memoir entitled "Cinque Manoscritti Copti della Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino," which is to be found in vol. xviii. (series ii.) of *Memorie della Reale Accademia delle Scienze di Torino*. Mons. Amélineau, the well-known Coptic scholar, has published a notice and translation of these MSS. in a small brochure entitled *Le Nouveau Traité Gnostique de Turin* (Paris: Chamuel; 1895). Students interested in getting straight the tangle of the magical names and invocations of the Codex Brucianus and Pistis Sophia MS., will find a chaos of a like nature in the new Turin fragment.

Lovers of Gnosticism may also be referred to a fairly appreciative article on "The Heretics," by the Rev. W. F. Adeney, Professor of New Testament exegesis, history and criticism, at New College, in the December number of *The New World*, the American Quarterly Review of Religion, Ethics, and Theology. It puts forward a far more enlightened view of the Gnostics than is usual among English theologians.

Lovers of Plato and Pythagoras should read the scholarly and convincing essay of the Tutor of Emanuel Col., Cambridge, Mr. James Adams, on *The Nuptial Number of Plato: its Solution and Significance* (London: Clay and Sons; 1891. Price 2s. 6d. net). This obscure passage of the *Republic* (viii.) has hitherto remained a mystery of mysteries, and had been finally given up as a "mathematical joke" of Plato's. Mr. Adams has solved the riddle, and has shown that the Pythagorean triangle is the key not only to this problem, but to the whole of the *Republic*. The "theological arithmetic" of Pythagoras has still a future before it.

Mr. Waite's digest of the writings of Éliphas Lévi, entitled *The Mysteries of Magic*, has been enlarged and revised, and the second edition has just been issued by Messrs. Kegan Paul, etc. (1897). Not the least interesting part of the book is Mr. Waite's introductory "Biographical and Critical Essay." Though Éliphas created far more mysteries than he revealed, no student of the history of the subject can afford to be unacquainted with his paradoxes.

A new study on the aura has just appeared in America, from the pen of Mr. A. Marques, under the title *The Human Aura* (price 2s.). The details of this subject still prove of a very puzzling nature to the indiscriminating student; there is still wide scope for every investigator.

Still more magic is in the air. Observers of times, weavers of spells, invocers of powers, believers in symbols, and the rest, can surely not complain of a neglect of their subject.

The penultimate volume of the Sacred Books of the East series gives us *The Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, translated by Dr. Bloomfield of the Johns Hopkins University (Oxford: 1897. Price 21s.) About a third of the whole collection is translated, and so we can form a very fair idea of the contents of the fourth Veda. It is a collection of prayers, invocations, incantations, charms and spells, right and left handed; it is used "to appease, to bless and to curse." Dr. Bloomfield is, of course, critical rather than explanatory in his commentaries.

Vol. VII. of Mons. René Basset's translations entitled *Les Apocryphes Éthiopiens*, also contains some magical fragments from Ethiopic MSS. of a late date, which the translator heads "Enseignements de Jésus-Christ à ses Disciples et Prières Magiques." They are of the same nature as the new Gnostic fragment translated by Amélineau and referred to above.

*Lucifer* for February devotes "On the Watch-Tower" to the Higher Criticism problems, and con-

tains a number of valuable articles. Mr. Ward's "Phædo of Plato" is an exceedingly careful and pleasing study; Mr. Bowring's learned paper, "On Some Remarkable Passages in the New Testament," contains some important points; "The Equinox Cycle" of Mr. Gostling will be startling to any who believe in the actual Yuga figures of Hindu chronology; Professor Mackenzie's "Theosophy and Science," Mrs. Cooper-Oakley's "Unknown Philosopher," and Mr. Keightley's "Sāṅkhya Philosophy," are all papers of value, and the result of close study. Mr. Mead continues his essay on the Gnostics, and deals with Dositheus, Simon Magus, Menander, Saturninus and the so-called Ophites.

Mr. D. G. Brinton, in *The Myths of the New World* (Philadelphia: 1896. Price 7s. 6d.), gives an exceedingly interesting account of the myths and religious beliefs of the Red Race of America. The work bears evidence of much research, and, treating as it does nearly every branch of the subject, will well repay careful study. It is refreshing also to find an author so free from the tendency to dogmatize, a failure to which too many mythologists are prone, and one which is certainly not conducive to the elucidation of the truth.

*The Sacred Tree*, by Mrs. J. H. Philpot (London: Macmillan; 1897. Price 8s. 6d.) is a book, well printed and well illustrated, on the tree in religion and myth. It contains nothing new or original, being merely a compilation for the benefit of the general reader from the standard works on the subject. To those beginning a study of this branch of mythology it will prove a useful introduction.

*The Threshold Covenant*, by H. Clay Trumbull (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke; 1896. Price 6s. 6d.). One might almost call this a catalogue of the variations of the "threshold covenant" and the places in which traces of it are found. The subject is rather an unpleasant one, being largely connected with blood, and in certain cases with phallicism, and we do not agree with the author that this covenant was "the beginning of religious rites." Mr. Trumbull's name is a sufficient guarantee of scholarly treatment. C. H.

*The Life of Anne Catherine Emmerich*, by H. Ram (Burns & Oates; 1874. Price 6s.). This is a translation from the German of Father Schmacger's life of a German nun known by her "Contemplations on the Passion of our Lord." The preface says: "Her gifts (visions, healing, etc.) are not usually imparted to souls less rich in the solid treasures of sanctity, but not all who are so holy have shared such special privileges." The chief beauty of the book is in the prayers she offers that the sufferings of those she meets may come upon her instead, since, she says, "they are too weak even to pray for themselves." Her intense devotional love was the origin of her thirst for these expiatory sufferings in which her whole life was spent. She says she was told by the B. V. M.,

"All that you really desire to do and suffer for Christ, you do really and truly by prayer, you can see how for yourself." "If people only knew," she says, "the misery of the poor dear souls (in purgatory) who can do nothing for themselves." The book is of interest not only because of the intuitions of Anne Catherine of the "invisible world" and the duties of "invisible helpers," but also because her case will shortly come up before the Propaganda at Rome preliminary to canonization.

B. H.

### THE INDIAN FAMINE FUND.

The sum of £212 6s. 9d. has been acknowledged in the VĀHAN up to Jan. 20th: the following amounts have since been received: Dr. Pascal, 5frs. (omitted from last acknowledgment); W. B. Lander, £1; Mme. Autun-Sassari, 10frs.; M. Bolton, 10frs.; M. Roberfort, 18frs.; Miss Burnside, 5s. 6d.; Two Members, 4s.; Mrs. Garnett, £2 5s. 6d.; Hermos, 10s. 6d.; S. F. Weguelin-Smith, 2s. 6d.; Dr. T. P. C. Barnard (U.S.A.), 12s. 4d.; E. S., 5s.; A Jarrow Friend, £1 1s.; J. B. Paget, £5; Manchester Lodge, £2 10s.; Miss M. Griffiths, 10s.; A. F. Ford, 10s.; Mrs. Lawrenson, 2s. 6d.; Anon., 2s. 6d.; J. H. Vanstone, 5s.; S. M. S., 10s.; C. M. R. Moorthe, 3s. 2d.; Señor Xifré, £3 3s. 6d.; M. C., 2s. 6d.; Max Gysi, 10s.; J. Widmer, 10s.; Mrs. Haig, 10s.; Miss Shaw, £1; E. Hardcastle, 5s.; A. J. W., 3s.; Miss Williams, £1 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. Dowall, £2; J. M. Watkins, 10s.; Miss Bowring, £2; A. G. B., £1 1s.; Miss Le Lean, 10s.; C. Stollmeyer, £1; Mrs. Kennedy, £1; G. S., 10s.

Collected by Mrs. Gillison, 18s.; Miss Mallet, £2 5s.; Miss Lowthime, 11s.

Total, £36 19s. 6d. Grand Total, £249 5s. 3d.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following sums have been received to Feb. 20th: Anon., 2s.; Stanley C. Bright, 6s.; Mrs. Garnett, 10s. 6d.; Miss Bowring, £1; Miss I. M. Johnson, 5s.; G. Graham, £1; E. Hardcastle, 5s.; F. T. S., £1; Mrs. Kennedy, £5. Total £9 8s. 6d.

#### Headquarters' Lending Library.

The subscription to the Circulating Library at 19, Avenue Road, is: one year, 10s.; six months, 6s.; three months, 3s. 6d.; postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian.

#### The Lotus Circle.

The Lotus Circle meets at 19, Avenue Road on Sunday afternoons, punctually at 2.30. All children are welcomed.

C. W. LEALBEATER.

#### "Secret Doctrine" Class.

The last set of questions was sent out a few weeks ago, and answers should be returned shortly. The following contributions to the expenses are acknowledged: Mrs. Nettleton, 2s.; Mrs. Miller (U.S.A.), 2s.

I. C.-O.

#### "Astral Plane" Class.

The following is acknowledged: Mrs. M. F. Miller, 2s.

I. H.

#### Magazine Clubs.

A plan has been lately organized by which members and associates who cannot afford the entire subscription for *Lucifer*, may yet have the chance of reading the very valuable articles which from time to time appear in it, and which are not reprinted. Nearly all libraries have a system of sending the periodicals round from one subscriber to another, on the payment of a small yearly amount. This arrangement has now been adopted for *Lucifer*; we have at present four *Lucifer* magazine clubs. Members of the club pay 2s. 6d. each, and the postage from one person to another. Seven members form a club and thus read the magazine regularly for the very small sum above mentioned. At the present another club is being arranged, and if any new members wish to join, they can do so by sending in their names and the subscription to Miss Goring, who has very kindly undertaken the arranging of the various clubs for me. The letters can be sent in the first place to me.

ISABEL COOPER-OAKLEY.

#### Mrs. Besant.

Owing to the quarantine arrangements at Brindisi it is highly improbable that Mrs. Besant will arrive at the time originally calculated upon. Several meetings had been arranged for her, but these arrangements will now of course fall through. Mrs. Besant will remain in England only for a day or two, leaving for America almost immediately after her arrival here. She will make an extensive lecturing tour in the United States, returning in the autumn.

#### Lecture List.

AMSTERDAM, DUTCH LODGE. Meetings at 7b. Amsteldijk, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: March 4th, *The Light and the Dark Sides of Nature*, W. B. Frick; March 11th, *Invisible Helpers*, J. Op't. Eynde; March 18th, *Thought Forms*, Mevr. P. C. Meuleman; March 25th, *Karma*, J. C. ter Bruggen.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m.:

March 14th, *Psychometry: its Utility*; March 28th, *Dream-Life*.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Avenue House, Avenue Road, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings at the Royal Hotel, Darley Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *Man and his Bodies*.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Lodge meetings at 25, Hanover Square, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

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 alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: March 2nd, *Philosophy and the People*, H. G. Pollard; March 16th, *The Ethical Ideal in Philosophy*, Miss C. Woods; March 30th, *Zoroaster and his Religion*, Rev. Joseph Wain. Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m. informal meeting for enquirers, and Sundays at 11 a.m., for study.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 35, High Street, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m.: March 12th and 26th.

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

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: March 7th, *Our Elder Brethren*, Hodgson Smith; March 14th, *The Path of Initiation*, Miss Shaw; March 21st, *Mediumship*, W. Bell; March 28th, *The Growth of the Soul*, Hodgson Smith. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., at No. 1, James Street.

HELDER LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays, at 10 a.m.: March 14th, *Theosophy, the Religion of Jesus*, Van der Zeyde; March 28th, *What is Matter and what is Force?* S. Gazan. Also on the second Thursday of each month at 8 p.m.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at "Glaisdale," Herne Bay, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., especially for the study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 72, Prospect Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at 31, Great George's Street, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hackins Hey, on alternate Sundays, at 6 p.m.: March 14th and 28th.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings at 8, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. (3rd floor), on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Thursdays at 8.30 p.m.: March 4th, *Seeking the Soul* (to this lecture only members of the T. S. will be admitted) Mrs. Besant (subject to alteration; see separate notice); March 11th, *Theological Geometry*, G. R. S. Mead; March 18th, *The Christian Creed*, C. W. Leadbeater; March 25th, *The Bhagavad Gita and the Gospels*, Miss Arundale. Meetings on

Sunday evenings at 7 p.m.: March 7th, *Moral Laws and their Basis in Nature. Moral Character as seen in the Aura*; March 14th, *The Idea of Hell. Its Correspondences in Nature. The Lowest Level of Kāmaloka. The Eighth Sphere. Avichi*; March 21st, *Some Illustrations of Karma. Karma and the Life in Kāmaloka*; March 28th, *The Training of the Mind. Yoga Practices and their Results*.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., on alternate Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.: March 1st, *The Phredo* (continued), Wm. C. Ward; March 15th, *What Theosophy is*, A. A. Harris; March 29th, *Theological Geometry*, G. R. S. Mead.

LONDON, EAST LONDON LODGE. General meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Private class on Fridays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to E. Cumberland, Bath House, Hampstead Heath.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at Myddelton Hall, Almeida Street, Upper Street, Islington, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: March 7th, *States of Matter*, B. Keightley; March 14th, *The Heaven World. The Life of the Soul. Ideals and their Realization. The Varieties of Heaven Life*; March 21st, *Stories of Mystics of the Last Century*, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley; March 28th, *The Building of Character. The Training of the Mind. "Yoga."* Meetings for study on Saturdays and Mondays at 8 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 LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at No. 39, High Street.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 31, Albert Road, on alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m.: the other Tuesdays, study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Sundays at 6.30 p.m, *Secret Doctrine* class.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings are held at 41, Exchange Street, every Friday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at the Foresters' Hall, The Octagon, on Fridays at 8 p.m.: March 5th, *The Masters*; March 12th, *Reincarnation*.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Mrs. Bestwick's, Cambridge Arcade, every Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

#### North of England Federation.

The twelfth Conference of the North of England Federation of the Theosophical Society was held at Harrogate, on Saturday, Jan. 30th, under the presidency of Mrs. Cooper-Oakley. Representatives were present from the Bradford, Manchester, Leeds, Harrogate, Middlesbrough and Athene Branches. After the transaction of the usual general business, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley addressed the gathering on "Occultism in the Eighteenth Century or Links with the Past." As this is a subject to which Mrs. Cooper-Oakley has lately devoted much time and attention, it is scarcely necessary



to add that the audience was treated to a very able discourse, during which, much that had been previously very hazy to the average reader of the mystical literature of the period dealt with was made much more definite. A short discussion followed, after which the Conference adjourned. On re-assembling an hour later, an animated discussion was begun on "The Law of Non-resistance or the Use and Abuse of Force." Mr. J. Midgley opened, and was followed by Messrs. Firth, Corbett, Thomas, Savage, Hodgson Smith and Ward, Miss Shaw and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley. A short discussion also took place on "Is there a Tendency towards Pharisaism in the Theosophical Society?" Mr. Hodgson Smith opened, his short but very incisive remarks being very much to the point, and causing no little amusement at times. The Federation adjourned at 8.30 p.m.

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

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### Blavatsky Lodge.

Much steady work has been carried on by various members of the Lodge during the past month. Two most successful Saturday afternoon meetings were given by Mr. and Mrs. Hope at their town house in Green Street.

To the first over sixty people came; the second meeting had bad weather to contend with, but in spite of a steady down-pour, over forty appeared, all anxious to hear Mr. Leadbeater on "The Heaven-World and its Conditions," which was the sequel to the first lecture on "States after Death."

The Friday evening meetings for study held by Miss Pope and Miss Ward, are being well attended, and all the members seem most deeply interested. Mrs. Hooper also reports well of her Tuesday evening circle.

Mr. Leadbeater continues his meetings once a week at Mrs. Faulding's, and much interesting discussion ensues.

The Blavatsky Lodge was crowded on Feb. 11th, to hear Mr. Leadbeater on "Ghosts," but the historical researches of the 18th century kept many members away; there is a psychical curiosity which is to be lamented, when not balanced with definite study. There are, however, signs that definite study and research are being adopted by many members of this Lodge, which will in time prove of the utmost value to the Theosophical Society. Those members who will give the time and take the trouble to specialize in some branch of research will earn the gratitude of all mystical students.

The Sunday evening lectures by Mr. Leadbeater are most popular, and the Lodge is generally crowded. A particularly interesting evening was on Feb. 14th, when the "Destruction of Atlantis," and the early stages of our own fifth root-race were sketched. "The Future Evolution of Humanity" was also of vital interest to many, evidenced by the very full and attentive audience.

On Sunday evening, Feb. 28th, the present syllabus closes with a most inviting subject, entitled, "Non-human Evolutions."

We shall have a new course of these much appreciated addresses on the termination of the present set, the syllabus for March being given in the Lecture List.

S. MAUD SHARPE, *Hon. Sec.*

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### Chiswick Lodge.

At the annual general meeting of this Lodge, the following officers were elected for the present year: *President*, A. A. Harris; *Vice-President*, W. C. Worsdell; *Secretary*, W. C. Ward.

W. C. WARD, *Hon. Sec.*

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### Helder Lodge.

The work of this Branch is proceeding most satisfactorily, meetings being held regularly. The library is also increasing, and contains fifty volumes of Dutch works.

S. GAZAN, *Hon. Sec.*

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### Vienna Lodge.

Count Leiningen-Billigheim, who was previously the Secretary of this Branch, has left Vienna for Munich, and Herr Ludwig has taken his place. Weekly meetings are now held, and the Branch has a reading room, the work steadily improving. It is hoped shortly to extend the movement into other parts of Austria.

### Bradford Lodge.

At the joint meeting of the Bradford and Athene Lodges held on Jan. 20th in the Royal Hotel, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley gave an interesting and instructive lecture on "Is Brotherhood a Fact in Nature?" to an audience of about thirty persons.

At the annual meeting of the Lodge held on February 3rd, the President and Secretary were re-elected, and it was also decided to hold the meetings fortnightly instead of weekly.

J. MIDGLEY, *Hon. Sec.*

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### Toulon Lodge.

Dr. Pascal writes that the public interest in Theosophy is increasing in Toulon. More enquirers are seeking for information, and there is every prospect for a good future. Dr. Pascal has been contributing a series of articles to the local newspaper, a course which will no doubt assist considerably in widening the circle of interest.

## ENQUIRER.

## QUESTION CCCXLIII.

*E. S.—Are the astral and devachanic planets of our chain subject to the action of gravity as the physical ones are? and if so, do they revolve round the same primary?*

C. W. L.—This is one of the many questions which look extremely simple and yet are exceedingly difficult to answer at all satisfactorily. If we may reason backwards from the second part of the question to the first, the reply must be in the affirmative, for undoubtedly the astral and devachanic planets are an integral part of the solar system, and revolve round the sun as do those visible to ordinary sight; yet the conditions under which they exist are so entirely different in so many ways that the idea of what we mean by gravity does not seem to apply to them at all. In the present exceedingly limited condition of our knowledge on these subjects it would be rash and presumptuous to lay down the law about them; one can only put forward a few suggestions. It seems not improbable that further investigation will considerably modify our views as to the real nature and causes of the force which we call gravity, and in addition to this it must be borne in mind that in dealing with these higher planes we come face to face with a condition of affairs which is entirely inexpressible in words—the condition which some have endeavoured to image by formulating a fourth dimension, and eventually many dimensions. Wild as such speculations may sound to scientific ears, there is undoubtedly a great truth behind them, whether upon fuller knowledge of its real nature men may or may not decide upon that particular nomenclature as best suited to its expression. Those who wish to see what there is to be said upon this subject will do well to study Mr. Hinton's *Scientific Romances* and also his *New Era of Thought*.

We have not at present, as has been said, sufficient knowledge to venture upon a definite answer to such a question as this; but so far as can be seen it seems probable that gravity is the expression on the physical plane of a force which is universally active, though its action on higher planes differs so widely from that which we think we know something about down here, that it is not always easy to recognize it as the same.

## QUESTION CCCXLIV.

*N. T.—If animals do not make good or evil karma, what is the reason for the very varied degrees of happiness and misery experienced by them on earth?*

L. L.—We are inclined sometimes to regard with bewilderment the different fates of animals, and to ask ourselves, for example, what one dog has done to merit a life of luxury on the lap of an adoring mistress, or another, to deserve a life of blows and

starvation or a death under the vivisector's knife. If there is no effect without its sufficient cause, what are the causes, we demand, of these contrasts? Some might attempt to answer by admitting that among the more highly evolved animals there seems to be a certain kind of "conscience," an approach to a choice between good and evil, which would incur a responsibility enough to set up good or evil karma. But are we any nearer a solution of questions of karma when we turn to humanity itself? We may be able to see, it is true, *how* our karma works itself out; we may learn to trace the particular way in which the laws operate; but can we at all understand the laws themselves, can we get any further back towards the answer to the eternal *why*? In considering the two examples cited above we are really looking at portions of two infinitely diverging lines. To answer completely questions of karma we should have to follow those diverging lines back to the starting-point from which they diverged. Now to that, the nearest point we can reach is the tendency to differentiation inherent in the Primordial Light (the Light that emerges from the Absolute Darkness); in other words, the power of the First Logos to evolve the Second—*Dual*—Logos. Can we explain that tendency? If not, how can we expect to explain its results?

## QUESTION CCCXLV.

*S. H. B.—A new root-race must physically be descended from one of those previously existing; how then are the very decided physical differences produced, since they are so much greater than could be accounted for by the mere influence of environment?*

C. W. L.—This subject of the foundation of a new root-race is an exceedingly interesting one. The information which we have received is to the effect that this commencement involves something much more than the mere physical change, though as it is with the latter that the question is chiefly concerned, it would be well to consider it first.

When the time comes for the formation of the nucleus of a new race, which usually happens soon after the middle of the period of the previous race, the great Adept (called in *The Secret Doctrine* the Root-Manu) who has charge of this important business, first selects his material from the best developed sub-race then existing on earth—not necessarily, be it observed, from the most civilized sub-race, but from that one which he considers best adapted to supply physical bodies capable of development into what he wishes his new race to be. In the case of our own Aryan race, for example, the selection was made not from among the magnificent civilizations of the mighty Toltec sub-race, but from the newer and more virile blood of the fifth Atlantean sub-race (called in our books the original Semite) which had its origin in that northern and more mountainous part of the great continent which in

those early days was considerably its least desirable portion.

From the very flower, then, of this selected sub-race he chooses a comparatively small number—it may be only a few families—whom he considers most suitable for his purpose; then by some means or other he contrives to segregate these from the rest of their countrymen and establish them in some remote position where they will be undisturbed for generations. This might obviously be done in various ways; sometimes a great prophet might arise whom a few of the noblest spirits of the time might follow into the desert; religious or political persecutions might compel the chosen few to seek a foreign asylum; revolution or conquest might drive them from their ancestral home. However it may have been formed, he watches this new colony with jealous care, guarding it as far as may be from any admixture with lower races, and surrounding it with such conditions as he considers best suited to develop the qualities required.

Then, if after some generations of this isolation the experiment proves satisfactory, the *Manu* himself incarnates among them as the founder of the new root-race. It must be remembered that the image or model of this race is already before him, for it has existed from the beginning of the system in the mind of its *Logos*. Now it would be impossible for any ordinary man in taking birth to approximate himself to that model, because his etheric double would have to be formed in accordance with his past karma, and would therefore certainly fall far short of the new and grander type. But the *Manu* has of course no evil karma behind him to compel the interference of the *Lipika*, and is therefore able to build for himself a practically perfect etheric body exactly in accordance with the proposed pattern. Thus he is born, and probably arranges to become chief or high-priest of the tribe over which he still exercises the same watchful care.

All his direct descendants will then belong to the new race, and though they naturally cannot be as physically perfect as their progenitor, yet by judicious selection in the course of several generations the type of this new people is clearly established. As thousands of years roll by the tribe grows into a mighty nation, which eventually spreads out in all directions, absorbing or driving before it the effete races in its path. In connection with such expansions and migrations it must be remembered that all lineal descendants of the *Manu* count as members of the new race for the purposes of the reincarnating ego; and when once the new strain is thoroughly differentiated, no admixture with lower races can entirely blot out its special characteristics.

But all this care is expended upon the physical development of the new race only in order to provide fitting vehicles for those individualities which have already so far advanced as to be incapable of finding suitable expression in any of the existing nations; and since the new race usually commences when the previous one has but half run its course,

it is obvious that the small number of egos who have then already exhausted its capabilities must be far in advance of the main body. Although this is naturally a subject on which no detailed information has been given, it is stated that the egos which first incarnate as the direct descendants of the *Manu* require and receive special treatment on their own plane by the very highest adept power in order to quicken into activity in them that latent capacity, the unfolding of which is the special business of the new race. When the currents directing the race are fairly set in motion—when it gets into full swing, as it were—this special interposition seems no longer to be necessary, though the *Manu* still watches over and guides its development.

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#### QUESTION CCCXLVI.

*G. W.*—*What part does the physical brain take in the process of abstract thinking? If some people can think and work on other planes without their body, why do most people need a physical brain to think with?*

*B. K.*—Let us first recall to mind some of the facts about man. Taking the average human being of today, we know that in him the highest level of activity—and that in most cases a mere flutter, scarce deserving the name of activity—is the causal body. Within that there is indeed the *Ray*, the spark derived from the third outpouring of the *Divine Life*; but in the majority this is so latent as yet, so nearly a mere potentiality of the distant future, that it has no practical bearing upon the question in hand. The causal body then is the highest seat of activity in man at present. And what is the history of this causal body; whence has it come, of what is it formed? The causal body is the ultimate product of the second life wave, of that portion of the divine life, that we call the *Monadic Essence*, which pouring outwards through plane after plane is the form-ensouler in all the kingdoms. Pouring downwards this life at last becomes the *Monadic Essence* of the mineral kingdom on the physical plane. In that condition its activity affects *only* the matter of the physical plane, and expresses itself *only* as change of arrangement among physical particles. Here is the turning point. In the next stage, still on the physical plane, the vegetable kingdom, this *Monadic Essence* has not only rendered the physical particles more ductile and plastic to its sway, but its activity has begun to affect in a small degree the grosser kinds of astral matter, and so doing the *Essence* becomes able to express the first faint beginnings of a new range of those "potentialities" which are latent within it, *viz.*, those of sensation. For in the higher levels of the vegetable kingdom we find the evolving *Essence* unfolding the power of sensation; as for instance in the sensitive plant. In the animal kingdom the evolving *Essence* affects by its activity the matter of the astral plane to a far greater extent, and sensation of all kinds becomes

the characteristic feature of all animal life. And just as in the topmost levels of the vegetable world, the evolving Essence beginning to affect astral matter, foreshadows the life of sensation, so in the higher kinds of animals the Monadic Essence begins to affect the matter of the mental or mānasic plane, and the first faint dawn of mental activity or thought begins to show itself. Finally a stage higher, the evolving Essence attracts to itself the Ray of the third great Life Wave, of which it now becomes the vehicle, gathering round itself the matter of the third arūpa level of the mānasic plane to form the Causal Body of man.

But it must be remembered that all these four stages of mineral, vegetable, animal and man belong properly speaking to the *physical* plane; and though step by step the activity of the unfolding essence affects the matter of higher planes, yet the whole series belongs, strictly speaking, to the evolution of the Monadic Essence *upon the physical plane*. That is to say, the physical plane is, so to speak, the primary theatre or field of display upon which the evolving essence is unfolding and expressing its latent capacities. For it is obvious that when we speak of the animal as exhibiting the life of sensation and man the life of the mind, we mean that the life of sensation or mind is *being expressed* through gross matter and upon the *physical* plane, and that we are not speaking of the life of sensation or mind as it is *in itself*, on its own plane, and expressed through its own specially appropriate kind of matter.

To find that, we should have, it seems probable, to look on to the evolution upon globes F and G, the astral and devachanic globes of our chain. On the former of these, the basis of evolution being the astral plane, and the lowest body an astral body, we should have the life of sensation pure and simple as the medium through which the evolving Essence was learning to express its gradually unfolding potentialities; and similarly for the mental life on the devachanic globe G.

We see then that the meaning of evolution upon a physical globe, like our earth, is that the evolving Essence is there learning to express more and more of its inherent though latent capabilities by means of, and through, *physical* matter arranged in an appropriate manner to form nervous system, brain, etc.

Hence the answer to the question is this. The physical brain takes no part in thinking *at all*, whether abstract or not. It is the evolving Essence which "thinks," *i.e.*, which unfolding its power of acting upon mānasic matter, sets up therein that activity which *is* thought. But the law of physical evolution is that the unfolding essence must ever strive to express itself through and in physical matter. Hence under its impulsion the brain—a special arrangement of specially selected physical particles—is formed as the instrument through which its mānasic activity or mental life can find expression on this plane.

It is not that people "need a physical brain" to think with, for truly they could think much better without it, as in fact they do in devachan. But

what we call the "waking life," which we make our standard, is a state of things determined by the condition that all the consciousness within it must be expressed *through* physical matter. Hence whatever we may think or feel on other planes, can only be known to us in waking life in so far as we can express it *through physical matter*. So that the question is not "Why do we need a physical brain to think with?" since the tacit assumption that the question is asked from and in reference to, the waking state, involves the assumption that a *physical* instrument or brain is needed; but is really: "Why do not our brains enable us to remember other states? *i.e.*, Why do not our brains express more and better than as a matter of fact they actually do?"

Hence the question is no general, but a particular one, having a different answer in each individual case, and is really like asking why one is not a born musician, and must be answered in a similar manner.

#### QUESTION CCCXLVII.

S. H. B.—*Are there any definite characteristics by which the present representatives of the different root-races may be certainly distinguished?*

C. W. L.—The broad physical characteristics of the three main types are quite distinct, as scientific writers recognize, and they can generally be traced through two or three intermixtures; but it would not be safe to depend solely on any physical indication when dealing with the extremely mixed fragments of most of the earlier races, though an adept would at once classify them by an examination of their higher vehicles.

In studying this question we must not suppose that a new root-race or a new sub-race invariably swoops down upon its predecessors as the Goths and Vandals did upon Rome, or migrates in a body as the Helvetii tried to do; quite as often it spreads slowly by emigration and colonization, as the Anglo-Saxon race is spreading now, so that the transition of any particular nation from one race or sub-race to another is often a very gradual process extending over many centuries, during which it would be impossible to decide from mere physical characteristics under which head it should be classed. In fact, it may be taken for granted that absolute exactitude in regard to details in this study is only attainable by the use of psychic power in examining the auric surroundings of each nation or tribe—almost of each individual.

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, 26, Charing Cross, S.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.—G. R. S. MEAD, *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. VI.

LONDON, APRIL 1, 1897.

NO. 9.

Edited by G. R. S. MEAD.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### THE INDIAN FAMINE FUND.

The following donations have been received to March 20th: Mrs. Burnett, 5frs.; Colonel and Mrs. Patten, 13frs.; Mrs. Apold, 5frs.; Mlle. Rentrux, 2frs.; Miss Townson, 2s. 6d.; P. T., 10s.; Mrs. Laphorn, 5s.; P., 10frs.; Mme. Rolli, 5frs.; Mlle. Regimbaud, 2frs.; Dutch Members, £1 7s.; H. Brooke, 5s.; Miss Logan, 10s.; A. Dyson, 5s.; Miss Wynn, 4s.; A. Pass, 1s. Total, £5 2s. 4d. Grand total, £254 7s. 7d.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following sums have been received to March 20th: Anon., £1; Mrs. Williams, £1 10s.; Mme. Robinowitch, 7 roubles; Miss Bowring, £1; G. Graham, £1; Mrs. MacCarthy, 11s.; Anon. 5s.; Mrs. Marshall, £5; Miss E. Wright, 5s.; S., £1; Miss Stowell, 4s.; Mrs. Wilkinson, £3; J. W. H. Mackenzie, 11s.—Total, £16.

#### New Branches.

March 11th, 1897. Charter issued under this date to H. W. Hagenberg, J. A. Terwiel, G. van den Hoek, P. G. van den Hoek, C. J. Rebers, J. Maas and M. E. Terwiel, to be known as the Rotterdam Branch of the Theosophical Society.

March 11th, 1897. Charter issued under this date to Mrs. A. C. Lloyd, Decio Calvari, Gualtiero Aureli, Ella Ferrando, Enrico Mannucci, B. Moskritinoff and Oliviero Boggiani, to be known as the Rome Branch of the Theosophical Society.

G. R. S. MEAD, *Gen. Sec.*

#### Headquarters' Lending Library.

The subscription to the Circulating Library at 19, Avenue Road, is: one year, 10s.; six months,

6s.; three months, 3s. 6d.; postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian.

#### Headquarters Reference Library.

The Library will be closed from Friday, April 23rd, to Wednesday, April 28th inclusive, for cleaning purposes.

#### "Secret Doctrine" Class.

The following contribution is acknowledged: Miss Wynn, 1s.

I. C.-O.

#### "Astral Plane" Class.

The following contributions have been received: A. J. White, 1s.; Mrs. Judson, 6d.; J. H. McDougall, 6d.

#### Mrs. Besant.

Mrs. Besant arrived in London on Sunday afternoon, March 7th, after a very trying voyage. As was expected, the boat for America previously decided upon could not be caught, and Mrs. Besant remained in London until the following Wednesday, on which day she left to begin her lecturing tour in the United States. Miss Willson accompanies her on this tour. The lecture at the Blavatsky Lodge on March 4th could not be delivered owing to the lateness of Mrs. Besant's arrival, and Mr. Leadbeater occupied the evening with a lecture on "The Âkâshic Records," which proved of much interest.

#### Lecture List.

AMSTERDAM, DUTCH LODGE. Meetings at 76, Amsteldijk, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m. Class for study on Thursdays at 7 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Avenue House, Avenue Road, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings at the Royal Hotel, Darley Street, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *Man and his Bodies*.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Lodge meetings at 25, Hanover Square, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

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 alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m. informal meeting, for enquirers, and Sundays at 11 a.m., for study.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 35, High Street, on alternate Fridays, at 8 p.m. : April 9th and 23rd.

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

HAARLEM LODGE. Meetings on alternate Thursdays.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m. : April 4th, *Reincarnation*, W. H. Thomas ; April 11th, *Nature's Finer Forces*, Miss Ward ; April 18th, *The Risen Christ*, Mrs. Bell ; April 25th, *Prayer*, Miss Shaw. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., at No. 1, James Street, for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*.

HELDER LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays, at 10 a.m. : April 11th, *Initiation*, S. Gazan ; April 25th, *Theosophy and Socialism*, A. J. Malder. Also on the second Thursday of each month at 8 p.m.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at "Glaisdale," Herne Bay, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 72, Prospect Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at 31, Great George's Street, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hackins Hey, on alternate Sundays, at 6 p.m. : April 11th and 25th.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings at 8, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. (3rd floor), on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. : April 1st, *The Elixir of Life*, B. Keightley ; April 8th, *The Action of Karma on Character*, C. W. Leadbeater ; April 15th, *Some Systems of the Gnosis*, I. G. R. S. Mead ; April 22nd, *The Voice of the Silence*, C. W. Leadbeater ; April 29th, *Toleration and Truth*, B. Keightley. On Sunday evenings at 7 p.m. : April 4th, *Magic, Real and False. Ritual and Ceremony* ; April 11th, *Evocation of "Spirits." Magic and Spiritualism*.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., on alternate Mondays, at 8.30 p.m. : April 12th, *Reincarnation*, Mrs. Sharpe ; April 26th, *Taoism*, Hon. Otway Cuffe,

LONDON, EAST LONDON LODGE. General meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Private class on Fridays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to E. Cumberland, Bath House, Hampstead Heath.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street on Saturdays and Mondays at 8 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 LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at 39, High Street.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 31, Albert Road, on alternate Tuesdays at 8 p.m. The other Tuesdays, study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Sundays at 6.30 p.m, *Secret Doctrine* class.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings are held at 41, Exchange Street, every Friday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at the Foresters' Hall, The Octagon, on Fridays at 8 p.m.

RAMSGATE CENTRE. Meetings for enquirers at Boston Villa, Crescent Road, on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 40, Via Lombardia, on Thursdays at 6 p.m. : April 1st, *The Bhagavad Gītā* ; April 8th, *Gnosticism* ; April 15th, *Karma* ; April 22nd and 29th, *Gnosticism*.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Mrs. Bestwick's, Cambridge Arcade, every Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

### Blavatsky Lodge.

On February 25th, Miss Ward gave a very interesting lecture on "The Builders," the first part of which was taken up with an explanation of the present scientific attitude in relation to the subject, after which an outline of the Theosophical position was given. The lecture was illustrated with coloured diagrams.

As Mrs. Besant had not returned in time to lecture on March 4th, Mr. Leadbeater spoke on "The Ākāshic Records," and in spite of the fact that the lecture had to be delivered at rather short notice, it was, to quote the words of one of the members present, "one of the best lectures Mr. Leadbeater has ever given."

Mr. Mead, on March 11th, dealt with "Theological Geometry," pointing out the importance of the study of the subject, and showing why a knowledge of geometry was, in earlier times, considered a necessary preliminary to study of the highest philosophy. A series of excellent models of geometrical solids was exhibited to illustrate this lecture.

In "The Christian Creed," on March 18th, Mr. Leadbeater took a somewhat new line, comparing the three Christian creeds sentence by sentence, pointing out what were the interpolations and what the original teaching, explaining also the real meaning of the different phrases.

The first three lectures of the new Syllabus of Sunday lectures have been delivered by Mr. Lead-

beater, and have been very well attended. "Some illustrations of Karma," on March 21st, was of special interest, being an account of actual cases which had come under the notice of investigators.

#### North London Lodge.

The Sunday evening meetings will be discontinued during the summer months to begin again in October next. The series terminating in March was a distinct success, almost all the meetings having been attended by good audiences. For the summer months the meetings will be limited to private ones on Saturdays and Mondays at the library of the Branch, 10, Park Street, arrangements having been made for visitors to the Sunday evening meetings to attend on Mondays if they desire.

A. M. G.

#### Helder Lodge.

The annual meeting of this Branch has been held and the following officers elected: President, T. van Zuylen; Vice-President, J. Katven; Secretary, S. Gazan; Librarian, H. Witsenburg. Regular meetings are held on alternate Sundays and on one Thursday in each month.

S. GAZAN, *Hon. Sec.*

#### Birmingham Lodge.

The work of this Branch is now meeting with considerable success. The audiences at the meetings vary from twenty-five to forty. A class for study is also held every Thursday evening.

S. H. OLD, *Hon. Sec.*

#### Margate Lodge.

A very successful meeting was held here on March 11th, when Mr. F. J. Johnson, of Herne Bay, read an interesting paper on "Atlantis." The same paper had previously been read before the Herne Bay Literary and Scientific Association, and received full and complete reports in the local press. Members from Herne Bay and Ramsgate were present at our meeting, and an animated discussion took place after the reading.

Since the last notice to the VÂHAN we have added another member and an associate to our numbers, and the meetings throughout the winter have been regularly attended. After April the meetings will be discontinued until further notice.

MARION HOLMES, *Hon. Sec.*

#### Ramsgate Centre.

On Thursday, March 18th, Mr. Johnson, of the the Herne Bay Centre, held a drawing-room meeting at Ramsgate. The attendance was good and the subject introduced proved interesting, provoking many questions which were satisfactorily answered.

HELEN HUNTER.

## ENQUIRER.

### QUESTION CCCXLVIII.

*S. H. B.*—*What representatives are now left on earth of the different sub-races of the fourth root-race?*

*C. W. L.*—For a fuller account of the different subdivisions of the fourth root-race than it is possible to give in these columns the questioner is referred to Mr. Scott-Elliot's *Story of Atlantis*. The list of the sub-races given in that most valuable work is as follows:

1. Rmoahal.
2. Tlavatli.
3. Toltec.
4. First Turanian.
5. Original Semitic.
6. Akkadian.
7. Mongolian.

Some explanation is necessary as to the principle on which these names are applied. Wherever modern ethnology has discovered traces of one of these sub-races, or even identified a small part of one, the name which it has given to it is used for the sake of simplicity; but in the case of the first and second subdivisions there are hardly any traces left for science to seize upon, so the names by which they called themselves are given. Remnants of some of their branches still exist in various parts of the world; the Lapps, for instance, have Rmoahal blood in their veins, and there are some among the tribes of South American Indians who are almost pure Tlavatli; but they must not be taken as representatives of the races at their best.

The third sub-race was a magnificent development, and ruled for thousands of years in great material power and glory both in Atlantis and in South America. To it belong the earliest of the highly-civilized empires of Mexico and Peru, which existed for long ages before their degenerate descendants were conquered by the fiercer tribes from the north whom the Spaniards found in possession. Here again no living race at all accurately represents them, though the noblest of the Red Indians faintly suggest their colour and build. The Rmoahal, Tlavatli and Toltec are indeed often spoken of as the red races, while the four following, though they differed considerably, may all be called yellow.

It is said that far in the interior of China there are still to be found men of almost unadulterated "First Turanian" blood; but this fourth sub-race does not seem to have been a very pleasant one even at its best, and its chief claim upon our attention is as an awful warning in respect to some of the absurd political and social experiments which it tried—all of which is duly set forth in Mr. Scott-Elliot's book. From it, at a much later period, the Mongolian sub-race was derived.

The fifth sub-race, as was indicated in the answer to a previous question, has a special interest for us as being that from which the material for our own Aryan race was selected by the Manu. It grew

and flourished for centuries in the northern part of the great continent of Atlantis, successfully maintaining its independence against aggressive southern kings, until the time came for it in turn to spread abroad and colonize. A very fair representative of it at this period, as far as physical appearance goes, still survives in the lighter-coloured Kabyle of the Algerian mountains, though its civilization was of course far more advanced than his. A sketch of the history of the segregation made from it, and the very interesting events connected therewith, will be found in Transaction No. 31, of the London Lodge. As will be seen from the account there given, the majority of the Semitic tribes of the present day have another and larger factor in their blood than this Atlantean descent.

The sixth sub-race was a great commercial and colonizing people—the ancestors probably of the Etruscan, Phœnician and Carthaginian civilizations. The early inhabitants of Assyria also were very largely men of this sub-race; they are spoken of by ethnologists as the Shumiro-Akkads—a name which denotes accurately enough their mixed blood, the Shumirs being a tribe belonging to the First Turanian or fourth sub-race, while the Akkadians are simply this sixth sub-division. By way of Susiana they seem to have largely intermingled with the Bak tribes, who later became the principal factor in the ancestry of the hybrid race which we now call Chinese.

The seventh or Mongolian sub-race did not come from Atlantis proper at all, but was developed on the plains of Tartary, chiefly from descendants of the fourth or "First Turanian" sub-race, which it gradually supplanted over the greater part of Asia. This seventh sub-race multiplied exceedingly, and even at this moment a majority of the earth's inhabitants technically belong to it, though many of its divisions are so deeply coloured with the blood of earlier races as to be scarcely distinguishable from them. The vast hordes of Malays, for example, represent an intermixture between this sub-race and some of the latest and most developed of the Lemurian tribes; while on the other hand the Japanese show the race at its very best when strengthened by a dash of blood higher than its own.

More than once tribes of Mongolian descent have overflowed from Northern Asia into America across Behring's Straits, and the last of such great migrations, that of the Khitans some thirteen hundred years ago, has left traces which some Western savants have been able to follow. The presence of Mongolian blood in some tribes of North American Indians has also been recognized by various writers on ethnology.

#### QUESTION CCCXLIX.

*J. L. H.—Why are there so many wild animals in the world, living by killing other animals and often men? What purpose do they serve? Is humanity in any way responsible for their savage nature?*

*L. L.—We learn from Theosophical literature*

that humanity is directly responsible for the ferocity of wild animals.

Man was intended to co-operate with the directors of the infant Races in the evolution of animal types by his care of the developing creatures, his attention to their breeding and training. But with man's increasing selfishness grew his neglect of his younger brothers. In the days of Atlantean degeneration men refused to further the evolution of animals on the lines laid down by the Manu of the Fourth Race. Not only did they omit to foster in the beasts faculties really useful to humanity and helpful to the animals themselves: they definitely encouraged impulses destructive to the creatures and, in the end, inimical to man. By training animals to hunt for them, for example, men sowed the seed of those carnivorous instincts which to-day are rampant in the animal world, and which, by karmic retribution, are now turned upon their authors.

Again, by their attitude towards animals of tyranny, slaughter and destruction men have bred in the creatures that should love them such feelings of fear and hate as naturally find expression in instinctive and fierce resistance. Thus, the purpose which wild animals were intended to serve has miscarried through the selfishness and carelessness of man. The "wildness" was *not* designed. Yet we may hope that the pain and misery brought by man to the animals may prove a gift not entirely baneful, after all. Keen emotion—painful as well as pleasurable—hastens the growth into self-consciousness; and the more strenuous the experiences the fewer will be needed by the monadic essence climbing up to individualization.

A. A. W.—There will be plenty of pundits to give the orthodox answer to this question, so I may perhaps be allowed to look at it from another side. When they tell us that it was *not* the intention of those Powers, whom we may for this purpose sum up as Nature, that there should be savage animals, and that it is indeed an earlier race of humanity which should have taught them better and did not, one can only bow to their knowledge. But I think of one thing we may be certain—that matters having thus gone wrong, Nature did not confine themselves (one must speak in the plural) to lamenting over the wickedness of human nature; we may be sure that the event was somehow worked into the scheme of development. In similar manner, we are told that the present mode of reproduction of the human species was not intended by Nature; but see how entirely the whole framework of human society is now settled on that basis! Speaking simply as a student, when I find that, from the lowest organizations to the highest, it is the rule that the higher actually feeds on the lower, I have so much faith in the Order of Things as to be certain that this is *now* (whatever may have been intended at a previous time) the established order of evolution, and that the lower are, in some way which we shall learn by-and-bye, the better for being eaten. You may think that the existence of so many vegetarian animals is enough to upset my



point; I think otherwise. You cannot in this way rule off animals from vegetables; one, as the other, is made up of lives; the life of the grass is the same life as that of the cattle which feed on it—if one is delayed in its progress by being prematurely killed, so is the other. There are vegetables which live on animals—what of them?

We should lose ourselves in mere speculation if we were, at this stage, to ask what is the progress thus gained. It *may* be that the particles of the lower body are refined by transmission to the higher, and that this is the method by which the world, as a whole, rises in the scale. But to keep to what we know. If there is any real truth in this view, I shall be at once asked: "Does not this make it a sort of duty for *us* to feed on the animals—to advance them in the scale, as you say?" A friend with whom I was once talking on the matter replied promptly: "But we are not animals!"—and this might serve as an answer. But I am myself inclined to admit the charge, and, whilst fully allowing the many and serious arguments against flesh-eating from the moral and social point of view, to doubt whether it is not for us also the order of Nature. No more than the lion and the tiger are we provided with the requisite apparatus for eating grass "like the ox"; and as a matter of observation all the world over, the energy and power of a race is in proportion to the meat it eats. The *life* of the human race is not amongst the vegetarians, many as they are. The Buddhist reverence for life—human and animal—is beautiful in sentiment, but utterly against Nature, to whom it is obviously a matter of perfect indifference whether egos are "in manifestation" or out of it. As we are told in Mr. Sinnett's last paper on the "Beginnings of the Fifth Race," it occurred to Nature that it would be a good thing to have a new sea in Asia; and with the calm philosophy of Krishna himself, she made it—drowning in the process three-parts of the wondrous new race of men as if they were flies! And in history the same thing presents itself—the *ruling* races of mankind have always been those to whom their own lives, and still more those of others, have been utterly indifferent. Do you say this is *wicked*? It may be so according to the morality of slaves and weaklings (to use F. Nietzsche's forcible expression), but the strong Powers who rule the world do not judge by such rules. And is it not *our* faith that lives *are* of no consequence?

I should thus be inclined to say, in answer to the question, that the animals who live by killing others, do so because Nature has formed them for that purpose; and that it is the business of our "friends who know" to find out and tell us, what good end they bring about by doing so. For good I am sure it is.

#### QUESTION CCCL.

S. L.—*There seems to be a great deal of confusion in The Secret Doctrine respecting the Mānasaputras, some of the statements being apparently contradictory. In some parts they appear to be ordinary human beings, in others spiritual entities*

*who have already reached nirvānic levels. Is the term always used for the same class of entity, or does it refer to different beings in different parts of the book?*

B.K.—It appears that the term "Mānasaputra," which means merely "son of mind," is used in *The Secret Doctrine* to denote any intellectually self-conscious entity, from the level of true human individuality up to that of a planetary spirit. The name is, of course, derived from the Paurānic literature of India, in which, however, it seems to bear a narrower and more definite meaning on the whole, though until a larger number of these works are made accessible in reliable English renderings we cannot define exactly its scope and usage. In *The Secret Doctrine*, at any rate, it is certainly applied to several very different classes of entities, including, for instance, (1) the first or highest class of the Lunar Pitris (those, that is, who did not come into manifestation on this earth chain until the middle point of the fourth Round has been reached); (2) the great Adepts evolved on the Venus Chain, who came over to help and guide our humanity; (3) certain of the higher Devas, who fulfil an analogous function, and possibly other classes of entities as well. But in all cases the use of the term seems restricted to such entities as are intellectually self-conscious. In short, as used in *The Secret Doctrine* the term Mānasaputra is a generic term, like the word "man," including a number of clearly distinguishable classes which, however, agree in the possession of one or more definite characteristics. We speak of the Australian black, the African negro, the yellow Chinaman, the red American Indian, and the white Caucasian as equally "men," though the difference, say, between the Australian black who cannot count as far as five, and a Newton, is surely wide enough.

The student of *The Secret Doctrine* must ever remember that the writer of that work was forced to begin the creation of a new nomenclature, a new technical terminology for a science new to the Western world, and that, as in every other science, this nomenclature must be a thing of slow and gradual growth as our knowledge expands and becomes more detailed and accurate. And even within the last two or three years close students of Theosophy, who have followed and assimilated the recent additions to our knowledge, will have noted a not insensible advance in this important task.

A. M. G.—For any student of *The Secret Doctrine*, there can be no question as to the confusion existing in that book with regard to the Mānasaputras. So puzzling was the subject, indeed, that there was formerly an idea widely held that the ordinary human egos before incarnation on this earth were themselves the Mānasaputras. That *The Secret Doctrine* is not entirely responsible for this conception, must be apparent to anyone who has carefully collected the various, and it must be said, contradictory statements. There are one or two remarks that might be construed into that view, but as they absolutely contradict other more definite ones, it would perhaps be better to seek for

an explanation on the lines that two (or more) different things are referred to by the same terms.

Later information on the subject given in the pamphlet, *The Lunar Pitris*, provides us with a scheme differing in many ways from that contained in *The Secret Doctrine*, but still the points of difference are really minor ones, and there is one feature at least which throws light on one of the most obscure parts of the older scheme. We are told (*Secret Doctrine*, vol. ii. p. 81), that the Pitris are divided into seven classes, three incorporeal, and four corporeal. The first three are sometimes called the Agnishvāta or Asuras. On p. 98 these three classes are said to have been compelled to be reborn on earth. The language used in connection with these Pitris could certainly not apply to the other beings sometimes called Mānasaputras, Lords of the Flame, and so on, although the terms are so loosely used that confusion is inevitable. It was formerly supposed, however, that these Pitris were one class of the Lords of the Flame, the beings who, we are elsewhere told, had already in past evolutions reached nirvānic levels. When we regard the Lunar Pitris from the standpoint of the London Lodge Transaction above referred to, we find that the appearance of contradiction was mainly due to a looseness of terms. The seven classes of Pitris are here divided into two groups, having three and four classes respectively, the two groups being clearly divided from each other by the stages which they had reached on the previous chain, the lower group not having attained to individuality. The highest class does not pass through the lower kingdoms at all on this chain, nor does it incarnate on the previous globes, but comes into incarnation in the third and fourth races on this globe. This class is said to form the most advanced division of ordinary humanity, but nevertheless belongs distinctly to our human evolution, and not to a higher or more advanced one on other planets. It obviously does not belong to the lower group generally called by Madame Blavatsky the Lunar Pitris or Monads, but the statements in *The Secret Doctrine* applied sometimes to the Agnishvāta, Asuras, etc., apply exactly to these Pitris. It is, therefore, quite reasonable to suppose that when in *The Secret Doctrine* the Mānasaputras are referred to as though they were merely human egos, the highest class of Pitris is meant.

But while the "arupa" Pitris were compelled to incarnate on this globe the same is not said of those beings more generally termed the Mānasaputras or Sons of Mind. Some few only of these took on bodies and became the instructors of men and their rulers in the early races. The average humanity received "but a spark," without which it could have evolved, only much more slowly and without clear self-consciousness. The "spark" is thus an impulse from higher planes which forced on the evolution of those beings who were struggling on the lower levels, and came from perfected entities who had already attained full con-

sciousness and had no need to incarnate themselves. These are thus clearly to be distinguished from those who were *compelled* by karmic law to incarnate in physical bodies.

It would not be impossible, I think, to distinguish in *The Secret Doctrine* the classes referred to in the various passages dealing with Pitris and Mānasaputras. We might take it for granted that where the Mānasaputras are referred to as our own egos (only one or two passages giving that conception) what is now regarded as the highest class of Lunar Pitris is meant, Madame Blavatsky confining the term Lunar Pitri or Lunar Monad to the lower classes. In a work so huge and complicated as *The Secret Doctrine*, put together in so loose a manner, it would be unreasonable to expect to find everything planned out so as to fit, and all the terms confined within proper limits. It seems also quite unnecessary to assume an omniscience on the part of the writer with respect to the great scheme of evolution pictured in the volume. It may well be that with regard to many details the information received was not enough to form a consistent plan, and the different detached parts were connected together in an erroneous order.

#### QUESTION CCCLI.

*D. W.*—We are constantly met with the objection that Theosophy is identical with Hinduism or Buddhism, and is simply an attempt to propagate one or other of those religions in the West; how may we best answer the statement?

*C. W. L.*—Theosophy is not an attempt to propagate any religion, but rather to set forth the ancient wisdom which underlies them all. No doubt to many a Western mind its teachings seem to savour of the Oriental religions, because as a matter of fact those religions have retained within their popular doctrine more of the great truths of nature than has the orthodox faith as commonly preached in Europe; and consequently some of the first ideas which a Theosophist acquires from the study of our literature are likely to remind him of what he has heard of the great Eastern systems.

But if the questioner went out to India he would find that there are some men there who have misunderstood Theosophy in a very similar way—who, because the founders of the Society and some of its prominent officials happen to be Buddhists by religion, have hinted that the whole work of the Society is nothing but the propagation of Buddhism; and this rumour has occasionally caused hesitation on the part of Indians who were about to join the ranks of its adherents.

In Ceylon and other Buddhist countries the misunderstanding has taken exactly the opposite direction, and some Buddhists, whose zeal outran their discretion and their knowledge, accused the Theosophical leaders of unduly favouring the faith of our Hindu brothers. The very fact that such contradictory reports are afloat ought to show where the truth lies to those who have eyes to see—whose minds are large enough and their heads

steady enough to stand upon the real Theosophical platform.

In one sense the statement has truth in it. Theosophy is identical with *esoteric* Buddhism and Hinduism, but then so it is also with esoteric Zoroastrianism, esoteric Mohammedanism, esoteric Christianity.

It should be pointed out to the objector that the motto of the Society is, "There is no religion higher than truth," and that as a corporate body it holds no particular belief or dogma. No one on joining it is required to change his faith, or even asked what his faith is. It has members among Hindus, Buddhists, Parsis, Mohammedans, Jews, and Christians, and each is entirely at liberty to seek to attain the highest truth along the lines of thought to the use of which he is most accustomed; indeed, adherents of each of these systems have again and again spoken gratefully of the flood of light which Theosophy has thrown upon the real meaning of the more obscure points in the teaching handed down to them from their ancestors. The only stipulation which is made when a man joins our ranks is that he shall show to his brothers of other religions the same enlightened tolerance and kindly courtesy which he himself would wish to receive at their hands.

This is the true Theosophical standpoint, but it is a high one, and its air is too rarefied for the respiration of the sectarian or the bigot. He finds himself unable to exist at this unaccustomed altitude, and he must either sink back again into his own dismal swamp of self-complacency, or cast off for ever his shell of spiritual pride, and evolve into a higher and nobler creature. No wonder, then, that those who can see no light but that which shines from their own tiny lamps should be unable to grasp so great and generous an idea, and should consequently misunderstand those leaders of thought whose minds are cast in a nobler mould than their own.

Truth is one, but its aspects are many; and on the lower levels its pursuit often *seems* to lead men in different directions, just as to travellers who approach a mountain from opposite sides the upward road lies in one case to the north and in the other to the south, so that each might well suppose the other to be entirely wrong. Yet ever as they reach the higher levels and the purer air the searchers, however unconsciously, are drawing nearer and nearer to each other, till that supreme moment arrives when they stand side by side upon the loftiest peak, and for the first time fully realize the difference between the real and the unreal.

#### QUESTION CCCLII.

S. B.—*Are people in a series of incarnations generally born into the same class, or do they commonly pass from the higher to the lower social classes in order to learn from a more varied range of life?*

E. G.—The great natural sweep of evolution would, I take it, gradually carry a man onwards from lower to higher grades in the social organism,

but within this primary sweep, as it were, there is to be considered the factor of the individual will—the individual will which, first in its ignorance and then in its perversity, is constantly setting itself against the cosmic or evolutionary will. In this vast interplay of individual wills there results the complexity of the social structures of advanced civilizations—of a civilization such as ours of to-day, which bears little resemblance to the ideal fourfold class-division which characterized our fifth race at its start—the "classification of the people according to their recognized fitness for this or that career," not according to birth or outside possessions, but in accordance with development of character and faculty.

Class distinction to-day, therefore, being so much on the surface, it would hardly be possible, I should imagine, to lay down any general rule in answer to S. B.'s question. It is, of course, quite conceivable that an advanced ego might need to enter a low social class for the working out of some bad piece of karma, the development of some lacking quality, or even might find there in some instances better conditions of inner purity.

B. K.—Apart from definite and special individual karma it appears that social status, *broadly speaking*, corresponds to the general level of evolution which the ego in question has reached. Or to express the same fact in another way, we may say that the lowest savages and most backward races consist mainly of egos who have no pitri ancestry behind them, *i.e.*, of those who have attained to full human individuality from the animal kingdom upon our own chain of globes in the present manvantara. Above them come the third class Pitris who form the large majority of the lower social strata in the advanced sub-races of our own fifth race, *e.g.*, of the European nations. The social strata above these contain a majority of second class Pitris, while the first class Pitris preponderate in the still higher and the topmost strata of our social organization.

This statement of the facts, it must be remembered, expresses as it were the percentage constitution of any given class, and forms so to speak the law of gravitation in the social organism, abstracting from the many and wide divergencies which individual karma introduces. It is the law according to which an ego would gravitate to this or the other social level, supposing it to have simply drifted with the general tide of evolutionary progress, maintaining its natural level on the whole, neither forging markedly ahead of its class nor dropping distinctly behind, and *not* to have generated any specially marked karma which would give it exceptional opportunity or subject it to circumstances of exceptional difficulty or disadvantage.

To make this a little clearer, it may be said that while the majority of the upper classes, say in England, is formed of first class Pitris, yet as an observed fact a second-class Pitri has been noted—and probably there are many more—quite in the highest social level, among the royalties—while very many cases, such as the late Mr. Bradlaugh's,

and not a few men distinguished in science, literature or art, illustrate the fact that special karma of one kind or another not infrequently causes an ego to take birth in social surroundings much below its natural level. Such cases tend to become more numerous in proportion as the egos under consideration reach the levels on which they cease to follow the general average law and become so highly developed and individualized that each successive birth becomes a problem of enormous complexity, owing to the accumulated and highly specialized karma that has been engendered. Of course when once the Path has been entered upon, the ego works off very rapidly his past karma, and learns more and more how to abstain from making fresh by the renunciation of desire for self. But we are not here concerned with these later stages of growth, as no general rules applicable to them can be stated; while if we are to understand the general law, we must look to averages for its exemplification and not seek to apply it in individual cases without knowing the individual karma involved.

A. A. W.—We can hardly fail to find in this question the (probably quite unconscious) “shrinking from the soiled garment which *may* be ours in the next life,” of which a well-known passage speaks. It is a most natural feeling. To look at the poor creatures we meet in the London streets, to think of their life, of the scanty, ragged, filthy clothing, the cold and the hunger; of the rising in the morning from the foul crowd of the twopenny lodging house and the going out shivering and empty into the desolate, cold, bare, endless streets, to wander up and down, up and down, hour after hour, starving in the midst of the well-clad, well fed crowds of passers, hopelessly waiting to see if some one will be moved to give a copper that they may break their long fast with a morsel of bread; and then, in imagination to put our own dainty, fastidious, well dressed and cared for selves into such a “soiled garment” as *that*, may well be a shock to our delicate nerves. You say, “They are used to it—they don’t feel it as we should!” My friend, *that* is the crowning horror of the thing; that day after day like this should be their *life*—that thousands of our brothers and sisters have no other life to look back upon, nothing else to look forward to till death, but just endless wandering, hungry and cold, through the weary, weary streets! You say once more, “They are properly provided for—there is the workhouse for them.” You do not, then, yet understand, my friend, *why* the Lords of the World refuse to allow you to sweep all the poor into workhouses, out of your fastidious sight? It is for *your* sake. You *must* learn the lessons of such a life, as you have rightly guessed. Only you have your choice. You *may* learn them by sympathy with those you meet. It is not giving to collections or subscribing to charities which will help you, or save you from their fate. It is not indiscriminate putting of money into their hands, often undeserving enough. You must learn to take your delicacy of sense, your

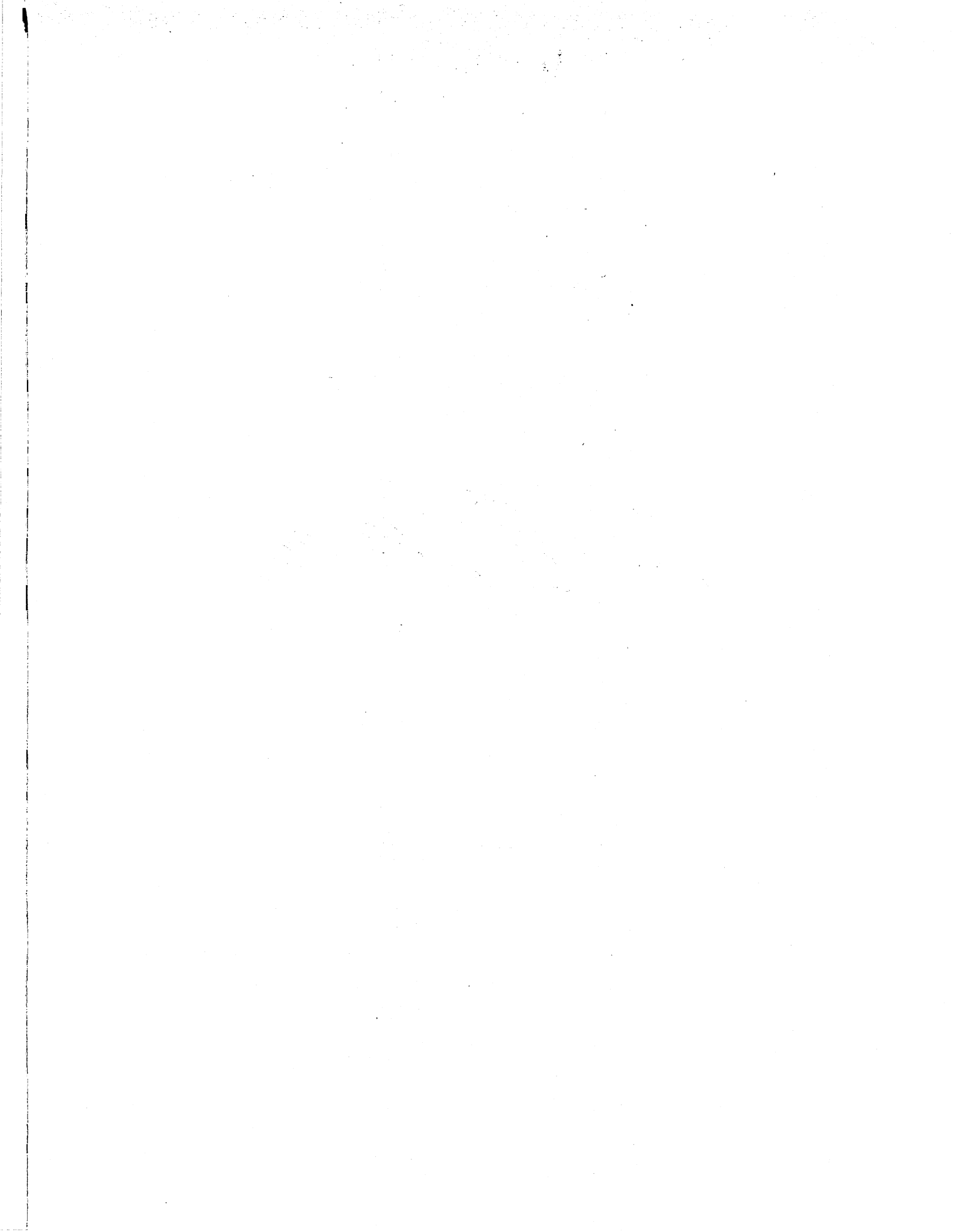
pride of position—nay, your consciousness of virtue—sternly in hand as you would a restive, shying horse, and force them to look steadily upon these pitiful creatures till they see in the foulest of them your poor, ill-used brothers and sisters, far behind in the race indeed, but of the same royal blood; and *then* do to them as your heart prompts. It should not be hard. To me, in such case, there always comes into mind the cry of a French peasant brought out, in the old pre-Revolution days, to suffer on the scaffold. “And must I die? I—who have never in my whole life had as much as I could eat—even of dry bread?” But it is strictly necessary. Unless you, my fine gentleman, can learn to put aside your dignity and your pride of virtue and look on the most wretched drunkard who reels from the public house almost under the wheels of your carriage, steadily, pitifully, as you would on a patient, stricken with mortal disease, in a hospital; unless with the eyes of your soul, you can pierce through all that foul degradation, which is after all of the body and mind of this one incarnation only, to the true Self which is learning its lessons through it—a spark of the Divine Flame as noble as your own—your faith in Universal Brotherhood will not stand the test. And for the fine lady the trial is perhaps harder still: to place herself, in imagination at least, amidst the crowd of poor souls who make some of the London streets impassable at night for modest women, and to let her sympathies touch them, as she would never in actual life permit the hem of her garment to do; to recognize that the foulest vice (as the highest virtue) is a thing of the passing life only and soils not the true soul; to trace out by the quick sense of the heart the lessons which may be learnt even in such a life—the virtues which find there a more congenial soil than in polite society (there *are* such, in spite of your indignant denial!); until she can claim them too as sisters—poor, shamed, spoilt, *lost* souls, but sisters still.

You are shocked, scandalized, insulted at such a suggestion? Then, be assured, you have not passed that trial, and the “soiled garment” is yet waiting to be flung on your shoulders. The lesson of a beautiful story in *Lucifer* a year or two back is the true one; if we will not put ourselves in their place by sympathy there is no help for it, we must be put there in actual life; and a hard school that life may well be.

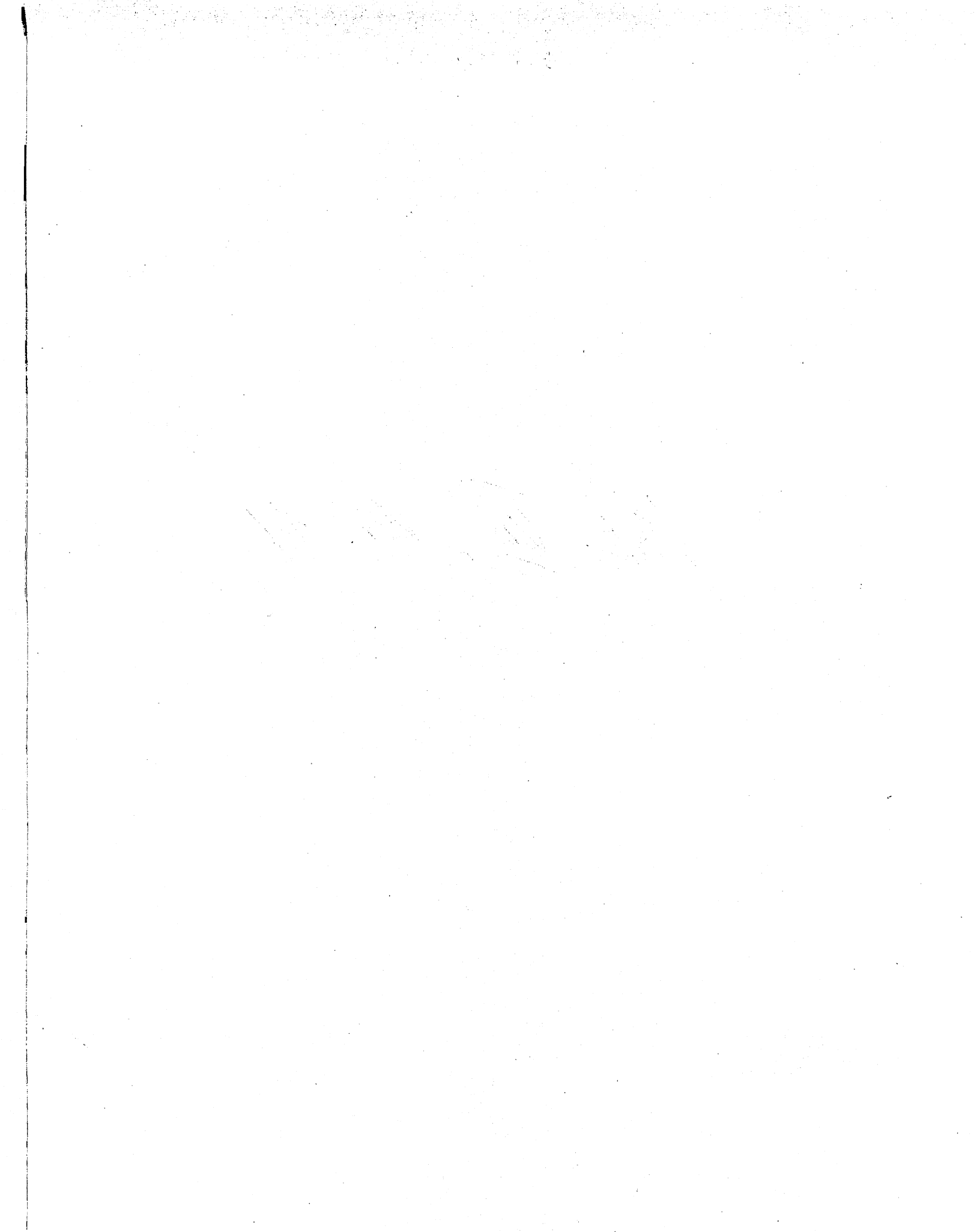
The subscription to the VĀHAN for those who are not members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is *2s. 6d.* per annum, post-free. Single copies, *3d.* each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 26, Charing Cross, S.W. No back numbers can be supplied.

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

Vol. VI, No. 10

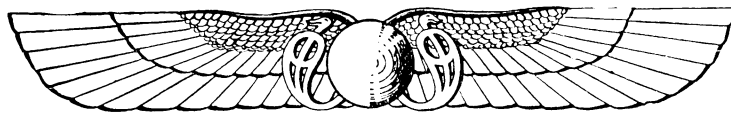


Vol. VI, No. 11





# 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.—G. R. S. MEAD, *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. VI.

LONDON, JULY 1, 1897.

NO. 12.

Edited by G. R. S. MEAD.

### THE CONVENTION.

With this number of the VĀHAN a programme of the Convention goes to each member. In addition to the meetings already announced there will be a reception at Headquarters, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Friday evening, July 9th, at 8.30 p.m. All members are most cordially invited.

G. R. S. MEAD,  
*General Secretary.*

### LITERARY NOTES.

At last the long-promised Volume III. of Madame Blavatsky's monumental work, *The Secret Doctrine*, has appeared. The price for so large a volume (some 600 pages) is small, and needless to say every student should at once procure a copy. The net price is 15s., and copies can be had from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 26, Charing Cross, S.W. The volume is made additionally valuable by the fact that the last 160 pages consist of a series of papers "On the Bearing of Occult Philosophy on Life." These papers were previously circulated privately but are now made accessible to all. Simultaneously with the English edition a separate American edition has been issued. The editor is our tireless colleague, Mrs. Besant, and a band of workers, headed by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, have done their utmost to verify every quotation.

For the present the above brief notice must suffice, as the writer has only just had time to glance through the pages.

We have also to announce the publication of Mrs. Besant's last set of Adyar Lectures, entitled *Four Great Religions* (T.P.S. Price 2s. net). Mrs. Besant has chosen as her four, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Christianity.

In truly theosophic spirit our colleague has endeavoured to treat each religion with utmost sympathy. She says: "I have striven to sketch each religion in its best, its purest, and most occult form, and each as though I belonged to it and were preaching it as my own." Moreover, Mrs. Besant tells us: "Each religion is looked at in the light of occult knowledge, both as regards its history and its teachings." And, indeed, the lectures are most interesting and valuable.

The above short notices of these two important works must suffice for the present; the writer of these notes found copies of them on his table only on his return from Sweden on the 20th ultimo, and has not had time to do more than glance through them. Longer notices will appear in *Lucifer*.

In the June number of *Lucifer* will be found a long review on a most valuable fragment of early Christian literature which preserves one of the most authentic traditions of the actual life of the historical Jesus. It is exceedingly important and deserves the most careful attention of all students.

In the same number Mrs. Besant continues her admirable exposition of the reincarnation idea, while Mr. Mead devotes most of his space to a *résumé* of the famous Basilidian System of the Early Christian Theosophy, called the Gnosis. Mr. Ward finishes his studies on the Phædo; Mrs. Hooper writes on "The World's Fairy Lore," and Miss Ward on "Authority." "A Link in the Chain" is a sketch by Mr. Keightley from an old German work, which at last gives some really tangible evidence of the endeavour of some of their pupils to make the existence of the Great Lodge known to the Western Societies in the last century. Mr. Leadbeater's admirable sketch of "The Ākāshic Records" will be widely read and appreciated. On the whole, the last number of *Lucifer* is of great merit.

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley is preparing a series of

articles on the "Mysteries of the Last Century," which will deal with the "Brothers from Asia," the Count Saint Germain and the Count Cagliostro.

As the research required in order to get authentic and reliable information is considerable, we are unable to say whether these articles will begin in July or August. The subjects will be treated from a common-sense standpoint, and every effort will be made to do away with all pretended mysteries, and the unwise statements which have for so long been made about these occultists. The evidence is being carefully sifted and arranged, and a Bibliography will be attached to each study. Information is being collected in Germany, France, Italy and Austria.

Readers who are interested in such works as the *Anacalypsis* of Godfrey Higgins, *The Book of the Beginnings*, and *Natural Genesis* of Gerald Massey, such books as those of Inman and the rest, the lucubrations of Creuzer and the solar mythologists, will be glad to hear that the second volume of the late Mr. John O'Neill's *The Night of the Gods* (London: Nutt; 1897. Price for the 2 vols, 45s. net) has just been published. Of course to the theosophical student Mr. O'Neill's *haupt-thema*, that all religious ideas and observances of antiquity are to be explained by the polar circular motion of the heavens, is sheer lunacy. But the value of the book is entirely independent of this puerility. *The Night of the Gods* is an encyclopædia of facts of the same nature as those dealt with in such books as those above cited. The difference is that Mr. O'Neill quotes from the latest authorities instead of from works which are regarded merely as literary curiosities devoid of all scholarly accuracy. How grey do the hypotheses of such writers seem to the student of Theosophy; how lifeless, how absurd! Phallicism and solar myths! Such was the highest idea the mind of antiquity could soar to! The soul!—Heaven save the mark, antiquity had nothing to do with a soul, and besides the idea is not scientific. And so we have the apotheosis of phallicism reached by an Inman who reduced everything to straight and curved lines—male and female—after which there was apparently nothing more to be said. O'Neill, however, will have it that circular motion is the whole secret, in which indeed he is not far wrong, but surely never in the way he indicates. Still his facts are an interesting collection.

### THE INDIAN FAMINE FUND.

Since the last notice the following sums have been received from Spain: F. Pol. 10 ptas.; Barcelona Lodge, 27.10 ptas.; V. Diaz, 0.25 ptas.; J. Bombi, 5 ptas.; J. Morena, 50 ptas.—Total, 92.35 ptas. This brings the Grand Total to a little over £270.

### The Dutch Section.

The charter for this new Section has been received from the President-Founder, and is dated May 14th. The Convention of the Section will take place on July 18th, the Sunday following that of the European Section. Mr. Mead will be present at the Dutch Convention, and will thus be enabled to carry the greetings of his own Section to the new organization. Excepting for purely official business the communication between the old Section and the new will be as constant and as cordial as hitherto.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following sums have been received up to June 20th: R. E. Baker, 10s.; Miss Bowring, £1; Anon., £2 15s.; G. Graham, £1; Countess von der Schulenburg, 10s.; Miss C. Fisher, 5s. Total, £6.

#### The Reference Library.

A most valuable addition has been made to the Reference Library by the presentation to it of a complete set of that most admirable series of texts and studies of early Christian literature which is the pride of modern German biblical scholarship. An offer was made to Mr. Mead of a present to the Library of any books which would be of immediate use for the literary work he has in hand, and he instantly chose the series, *Texte und Untersuchungen der Altchristlichen Literatur*, edited by von Gebhardt and Harnack. The series consists of some thirty volumes, the titles of which will be given in our future issues. The donor desires to remain anonymous, but will have the lasting thanks of all real students of the origins of Christianity. This is the most valuable addition to the Library since Mr. Moore's generous gift of Trübner's Oriental series. What if some other members were to present the Library with the English series, *Texts and Studies: Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Studies*, edited by Dr. Armitage Robinson?

#### Headquarters' Lending Library.

The subscription to the Circulating Library at 19, Avenue Road, is: one year, 10s.; six months, 6s.; three months, 3s. 6d.; postage extra. Catalogues on application to the Librarian.

#### The Lotus Circle.

The Lotus Circle meets at 19, Avenue Road, on Sunday afternoons, punctually at 2.30. All children are welcomed.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

## Lecture List.

AMSTERDAM, DUTCH LODGE. Meetings at 76, Amsteldijk, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at No. 5 Room, Cobden Hotel, on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m.: July 4th and 18th, *The Purpose of Life*. Class for study on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Avenue House, Avenue Road, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings at the Royal Hotel, Darley Street, on alternate Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Short addresses by members.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Lodge meetings at 25, Hanover Square, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

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 alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m., informal meeting for enquirers, and Sundays at 11 a.m., for study.

EXETER CENTRE. Meetings at 35, High Street, on the first Friday in each month and by appointment.

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

HAARLEM LODGE. Meetings on alternate Thursdays.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at No. 3 Club Room, People's Hotel, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: July 4th, *The Teachings of Theosophy*, Hodgson Smith; July 11th, Reading from Prentice Mulford; July 18th, *The Theosophical Society and its Work*, W. H. Thomas; July 25th, *Force and Matter*, O. Firth. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 8 p.m., at No. 1, James Street, for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*.

HELDER LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays, at 10 a.m. Also on the second Thursday of each month at 8 p.m.

HERNE BAY CENTRE. Meetings at "Glaisdale," Herne Bay, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 72, Prospect Street, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at 33, Belgrave Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings at 3, Hackins Hey, on alternate Sundays, at 6 p.m.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings at 8, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. (3rd floor), on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings at 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., on Thursdays at 8.30 p.m.: July 1st, *The Antiquity of the Vedas*, M. U. Moore; July 8th, *The Theosophical Aspect of Social Problems*, A. P. Sinnett; July 15th, *The Fourth Dimension*, C. W. Leadbeater; July 22nd, *Knowledge and Wisdom*, B. Keightley; July 29th, *Wonders of the Eighteenth Century*, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W., on alternate Mondays, at 8.30 p.m.: July 5th, *The Spirits in Prison*, Miss Lloyd; July 19th, *Mystics of the Eighteenth Century*, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley.

LONDON, EAST LONDON LODGE. General meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Private class on Fridays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to E. Cumberland, Bath House, Hampstead Heath.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 10, Park Street on Mondays and Wednesdays at 8 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 LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at 39, High Street.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 35, Albert Road, on Thursdays at 8 p.m.

NORWICH LODGE. Meetings are held at 41, Exchange Street, every Friday evening, at 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings at the Foresters' Hall, The Octagon, on Fridays at 8 p.m.

RAMSGATE CENTRE. Meetings for enquirers at Boston Villa, Crescent Road, on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 40, Via Lombardia, on Thursdays at 6 p.m.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Mrs. Bestwick's, Cambridge Arcade, every Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

THORNTON HEATH CENTRE. Meetings at "Thortonville," Bensham Manor Road, Thornton Heath, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Secretary, F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

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 "Astral Plane" Class.

Received:—Mrs. Fennimore, 2s.; F. S. Pitt-Taylor, 1s.

I. HOOPER.

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 A New Branch.

A new Branch of the Section has been formed at Nice, with Mrs. Terrell as President, and the charter has been applied for. For a long time a centre has existed in the town, Mrs. Terrell having devoted much time and trouble to its work, and most of the members have now joined the Society in order to form a recognized Branch.

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 Mrs. Cooper-Oakley's Tour.

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, during April and May, visited Italy, staying at Rome, Florence, and Genoa, and calling on her return journey at Nice, Marseilles and Paris. At Rome a flourishing Branch was found, Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Lloyd having both done excellent work in the city. The

Secretary of the new Lodge, Signor Calvari, is also devoting much time to the work, and is contributing a series of articles to *Nova Lux*.

At Florence a lecture was given to the Spiritualists, who were very friendly to Theosophy, and at Toulon three days were spent in interviews and meetings.

The whole of Mrs. Cooper-Oakley's time was busily occupied with lectures and conversations with numerous enquirers, and also with work in the libraries in connection with the researches in which she is now engaged.

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#### The South-Western Federation.

The South-Western Federation of Lodges is to meet at Bournemouth, on Saturday and Sunday, July 3rd and 4th. The agenda paper includes a drive through the New Forest, with an open-air meeting there if the weather permits. Mr. Leadbeater is expected to preside in the unavoidable absence of the President, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley. Any Theosophists who can find it convenient to attend are invited to do so.

H. S. GREEN, *Hon. Sec.*

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#### Blavatsky Lodge.

On Saturday, July 3rd, there will be a meeting for members of the Lodge only, for the purpose of electing and instructing its delegates to the forthcoming Convention. The meeting will be held at 8.30 p.m., and all members who find it possible to attend are invited to do so.

Although the programme has been departed from in every case the four lectures delivered during the past month have proved of exceptional interest. On May 27th Mrs. Hooper gave her lecture on "Some Results of the Psychical Research Investigations," and brought before the Lodge several different subjects in which the evidence gathered by the Psychical Research Society bear out the teachings of Theosophy.

On June 3rd Mr. Leadbeater spoke on "The Ancient Mysteries," and, as usual, crowded into an hour and twenty minutes a large store of fresh and most interesting information. The lecturer threw a vivid light on the real nature of the Bacchic and Eleusinian mysteries, and dealt rather less fully with those of Egypt and Chaldaea. In every case the nature of the teaching was the same as that which is now being given so much more fully and freely to the world under the name of Theosophy.

On June 10th Mr. Leadbeater again lectured, dealing on this occasion with "Some Recurrent Questions" which are perennial causes of inquiry in the VĀHAN and elsewhere. Among the subjects dealt with were the relationship of the Higher and Lower Manas and the Logoi.

On June 17th Mrs. Cooper-Oakley lectured on "The Brothers from Asia," a lecture which,

though differing in title from that put down to her in the programme, yet treated of the subject that she has been for some time investigating, *viz.*, the mystics and mystical societies of the last century. In the course of these studies Mrs. Cooper-Oakley has been fortunate enough to discover a most interesting pamphlet which, with other clues that she has followed up, proves the existence in Germany and elsewhere in the eighteenth century of a society singularly akin in objects and conditions to the Theosophical Society and deriving its teaching and inspiration from the same Eastern sources.

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#### Leeds Lodge.

The annual business meeting of this Lodge has been held, and the following officers elected: W. H. Bean, President; Mrs. Orage, Secretary; Miss Anna Kennedy, Librarian.

Two new members have joined, the total membership now being fourteen.

Meetings are to be held every Monday evening for the study of *The Key to Theosophy* and general discussion.

J. ORAGE, *Hon. Sec.*

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE BUDDHIST REVERENCE FOR LIFE.

THE letter signed "J. M." in the June VĀHAN in answer to "A. A. W.'s" remarks on this subject in the VĀHAN for April, tempts me to follow up the question raised. I cordially approved of "A. A. W.'s" remarks, and I wish to explain why, because it is easy to misunderstand their drift.

Whenever we see any fact of stupendous magnitude operative throughout Nature we may be sure that it fits into the design of things and is not a mere undesirable confusion introduced into the scheme by human wickedness or folly. The tendency of the more powerful animal life to prey on the less powerful is just such a stupendous fact, and personally I do not believe that the ferocity of wild beasts is the outcome of any failure on the part of man at an earlier stage of his progress to guide animal evolution aright. Nor do I think the slaughter of animals for food by man has been a piece of wickedness on his part at which Nature has looked on sorrowfully. And yet I fully sympathise with the Buddhist "reverence for life," and abhor the slaughter of animals for food, and believe that everyone who finds it compatible with the preservation of his health and capacity to discharge his duties in life, whatever they may be, to live on vegetable food, is setting a good example and foreshadowing the kind of life we shall all be leading eventually. How are these apparent contradictions to be reconciled?

By a proper appreciation, I think, of the difference between the downward and the upward arc of evolution. Theosophical students often forget

that evolution does not proceed in a straight line from start to finish. With unity as its starting point and an improved kind of unity as its goal, evolution begins by setting all its energies in motion to accomplish diversity. The whole first half of the manvantara—the downward arc—is directed towards accomplishing diversity, towards bringing about the individualisation of consciousness, the sense of separateness which is destined eventually to be merged in something higher, but with which Nature—sensibly doing one thing at a time—concerns herself exclusively at first, and for a very long “first.” Not merely up to the stage of human development—up to the half-way period of human development—the law of selfishness is in operation to accomplish Nature’s purpose. On this earth in the third round, unselfishness, strange as the thought may appear to people who will only think, so to speak, in straight lines, and not in cycles—was *not* a duty. Nobody had risen to the height of having any duty at all at that time. The struggle for self was innocent and instinctive, blindly accomplishing Nature’s purpose. The animals preyed on one another, and unconsciously tended towards individualisation in that way.

But, it may be said, we have long passed the middle point of the whole process; we live now in the reign of duty. Quite so; some of us do. But the momentum of the downward arc is very great and moreover the middle period of evolution is not a fixed date for all alike. Human egos are not all of the same age by a great deal. All animal life is still manifesting in forms belonging to the downward arc. A. A. W. puts the idea in a humorous way when he says the lower animals may be the better for being eaten, but none the less it is plainly true that the policy of Nature has been worked out through immeasurable æons in the past by the system that includes their being eaten.

Does that justify us Theosophists in shooting partridges or dining off roast mutton? My answer would be: we are in a transition period when the relatively few of us who understand the design of Nature on the upward arc are in the midst of myriads whose lives are still based upon an ignorant misunderstanding of it. From some of the old habits we can decisively and at once extricate ourselves. We can say in the language of a poet who was to that extent a Theosophist without knowing it, we will never mix our pleasure or our pride with sorrow of the meanest thing that lives. We can abjure the old barbarisms of hunting, shooting, and fishing as things which are necessarily loathsome to us when we have reached certain levels of thought. But we can recognize that multitudes of our contemporaries in time still take pleasure in these old-world pursuits because they are still borne on by the momentum of the downward arc. And many among those of us who would like to have no touch at all with downward arc habits, may be incarnated in bodies still so saturated by heredity with downward arc habits, that the tiresome things would get out of order if not given some downward arc food. Therefore it would be childish to make rigid

rules for all, in the matter of food; worse than childish it seems to me to prescribe, as duties, for people merely beginning their interior theosophic culture, the habits that become matters of course for people far enough on to find it a duty to cultivate their psychic faculties, *and* invested with a physique which that kind of life suits. As a matter of fact, indeed, psychic faculties have not much to do with food (in my opinion); I have known them to get into very fine order on beef and claret, and to remain absolutely unresponsive to fifteen years of earnest vegetarianism and Theosophical study. Of course in reality psychic faculties depend on the condition of the nerve centres of the etheric double, and their conditions—on the karma of the last life.

One could say a great deal more on fruitful ramifications of this subject, but I have merely aimed at offering some defence of sound views incompletely developed in the recent answer of A. A. W.

A. P. S.

DEAR SIR.

Having (to recur to the legal phraseology once familiar to me) wilfully—of malice, aforethought, and against the peace of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, her Crown and Dignity—thrown a big stone into a pool, I cannot (and don’t) complain of the splash. The only reply I feel moved to make to the letters in the last number of the VĀHAN is: that as long as their writers see things in that light they are right to abstain, but not to use strong language of those who see things differently. Into the general question I do not enter; it would be *too* comical (as my friends know) for *me* to be set up as the Frenchman’s typical Englishman, living on raw “bifstek” washed down with unlimited “portarr-bier”; though your correspondents seem to be inclined, in the true spirit of theological controversy, to attribute to me something of the kind. The thing I really had in my mind is very neatly summed up in two words by the critic in *Lucifer*. I had perceived with regret a tendency to regard vegetarianism as (in his words) a matter of “Theosophic orthodoxy.” In the face of the well-known fact that H.P.B. herself did not regard it as necessary either on moral principles or for the purposes of Yoga; and that at this day some of the highest leaders of the Society follow her example, it should hardly have been necessary for a neophyte to protest against this infringement of our freedom. There are more serious matters concerned than our friends quite perceive.

In itself the question is simply one of proportion. Logically carried out, our friend’s views work out in what I used to be taught as a child—that there were certain people in the East who walk about with cloths over their mouths lest they should inadvertently inhale an insect with their breath, and brooms in their hands to brush the places where they set their feet, lest they should tread on one. Illogically (but I fear, to us Westerns, more naturally) the same thing lands

you in Dr. Anna Kingsford's position, to love animals and hate men.

It is true that it is our duty to do all we can to help on the evolution of mankind (I intentionally avoid the *negative* mode of expression); but the fact of the matter is that each one of us, every day of our lives, does and says (and still more emphatically leaves undone and unsaid) to his human neighbours things which are of vastly more consequence to that evolution than the premature death of all the animal kingdom together. This exaggerated sensitiveness to physical suffering and death is, *in us*, simply a product of our decaying Western civilisation—our degeneration, as Nordau would say; and is in no wise justified or encouraged by anything the Lord Buddha taught his Indian herdsmen three thousand years ago. If our friends have made their own the teachings of only the first chapter of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, they will not be scandalized when I say that there are hundreds of things we can—and do—do to our fellowmen worse than to kill them! And this applies with added force to animals, who are not even individuals at all.

I am not aware of any actual *authority* for the assumption that the evolution of what has been called a "block" of animal essence is delayed or hindered by the death of any single one of the bodies through which it manifests.

Our friends are full of the most beautiful arguments to show that the Order of Things is wrong, and should be set right; my more humble task is to recognise what that Order actually *is*, and to find out what Nature means by it. I am inclined, for my part, to suspect that Nature knows what she is about better than I, or even they. But for this discussion the columns of the "Enquirer" are not the place. Perhaps some day *Lucifer* may permit me to have my say thereon at somewhat greater length.

A. A. W.

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## ENQUIRER.

### QUESTION CCCLXI.

*S. H. B.*—*Can anything be said as to the respective functions of the Three Logoi in the evolution of humanity, and their correspondence to the Christian Trinity?*

*C. W. L.*—This is a subject of which none of us can hope to attain perfect comprehension for many an æon to come, for he who grasps it thoroughly must be consciously one with the Highest. But some indications may be given which may perhaps help the enquirer in his thinking, though it is most emphatically necessary to bear in mind all the way through that since we are looking at the problem from below instead of from above, from the standpoint of our extreme ignorance instead of from that of omniscience, any

conception that we may form of it *must* be imperfect and therefore inaccurate.

We are told that what happens at the beginning of a solar system (such as our own) is, allowing for certain obvious differences in the surrounding conditions, identical with what happens at the re-awakening after one of the great pralayas; and it will probably be more possible for us not entirely to misunderstand if we endeavour to direct our attention to the former rather than to the latter. It should be realized to begin with that in the evolution of a solar system three of the highest principles of the Logos of that system correspond to and respectively fulfil the functions of the three Great Logoi in cosmic evolution; in point of fact, those three principles are identical with the three Great Logoi in a manner which to us down here is wholly incomprehensible, even though we may see that it must be so.

Yet we should be careful, while recognizing this identity in essence, on no account to confuse the respective functions of beings differing so widely in their sphere of action. It should be remembered that from the First Logos, which stands next to the Absolute, emanates the Second or Dual Logos, from which in turn comes the Third. From that Third Logos come forth the Seven Great Logoi, called sometimes the Seven Spirits before the throne of God; and as the divine outbreathing pours itself ever further outward and downward from each of these we have upon the next plane seven Logoi also, together making up on that plane forty-nine. It will be observed that we have already passed through many stages on the great downward sweep towards matter; yet, omitting the detail of intermediate hierarchies, it is said that to each of these forty-nine belong millions of solar systems, each energized and controlled by its own solar Logos. Though at levels so exalted as these differences in glory and power can mean but little to us, we may yet to some extent realize how vast is the distance between the three Great Logoi and the Logos of a single system, and so avoid a mistake into which careless students are constantly falling.

It has often been stated that each of the planes of our system is divided into seven sub-planes, and that the matter of the highest sub-plane in each may be regarded as atomic *quâ* its particular plane—that is to say, that its atoms cannot be further subdivided without passing from that plane to the one next above it. Now these seven atomic sub-planes, taken by themselves and entirely without reference to any of the other sub-planes which are afterwards called into existence by the various combinations of their atoms, compose the lowest of the great cosmic planes, and are themselves its seven subdivisions. So that before a solar system comes into existence we have on its future site, of to speak, nothing but the ordinary conditions of interstellar space—that is to say, we have matter of the seven subdivisions of the lowest cosmic plane (sometimes called the cosmic-prākritic), and from our point of view this is simply the atomic matter of each of *our* sub-planes without the

various combinations of which we are accustomed to think as linking them together and leading us gradually from one to the other.

Now in the evolution of a system the action of the three higher principles of its Logos (generally called the three Logoi of the system) upon this antecedent condition of affairs takes place in what we may call a reversed order. In the course of the great work each of them pours out his influence, but the outpouring which comes first in time is that from that principle of our Logos which corresponds to the Manas in man, though of course on an infinitely higher plane. This is usually spoken of as the Third Logos, or Mahat, corresponding to the Holy Ghost in the Christian system—the “Spirit of God which broods over the face of the waters” of space, and so brings the worlds into existence.

The result of this first great outpouring is the quickening of that wonderful and glorious vitality which pervades all matter (inert though it may seem to our dim physical eyes), so that the atoms of the various planes develope, when electrified by it, all sorts of previously latent attractions and repulsions, and enter into combinations of all kinds, thus by degrees bringing into existence all the lower subdivisions of each level, until we have before us in full action the marvellous complexity of the forty-nine sub-planes as we see them to-day. For this reason is it that in the Nicæan symbol the Holy Ghost is so beautifully described as “the Lord and Giver of Life”; and some clue as to the method of His working may be obtained by anyone who will study carefully Professor Crookes’ paper on *The Genesis of the Elements*, read before the Royal Institution of Great Britain on February 18th, 1887.

When matter of all the sub-planes of the system is already in existence and the field has thus been prepared for its activity, the second great outpouring begins—the outflow of what we have sometimes called the monadic essence; and it comes this time from that higher principle corresponding in our system to the Second Logos, of whom the old theologians spoke truly enough in intention, however unfortunate they were in their choice of an expression, when they called Him “the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, by whom all things were made,” since He is indeed the only direct emanation of the First, the Unmanifested, and undoubtedly “without Him was not anything made which was made,” for this monadic essence is the ensouling and energizing principle at the back of all life of which we know anything.

Slowly and steadily, but with resistless force, this great influence pours itself forth, each successive wave of it spending a whole manvantara in each of the kingdoms of nature—the three elemental, the mineral, the vegetable, the animal and the human. On the downward arc of its mighty curve it simply aggregates round itself the different kinds of matter on the various planes, so that all may be accustomed and adapted to act as its vehicles; but when it has reached the lowest point of its destined im-

meshing in matter, and turns to begin the grand upward sweep of evolution towards divinity, its object is to develope consciousness in each of these grades of matter in turn, beginning of course with the lowest.

Thus it is that man, although possessing in a more or less latent condition so many higher principles, is yet for a long time at first fully conscious in his physical body only, and afterwards very gradually becomes so in his astral vehicle, and later still in his mind-body. Thus also while we see in the mineral kingdom scarcely anything that we should call consciousness—nothing but the first faint beginnings of desire as shown in chemical affinity—in the vegetable kingdom we find likes and dislikes (desire, in fact) becoming very much more prominent; indeed, we have only to read any of the later works on botany to see that many plants exercise a great deal of ingenuity and sagacity in attaining their ends, limited though these ends may be. In the animal kingdom desire occupies a very prominent place, and there can be no doubt that the astral body is definitely beginning to function, though the animal has as yet nothing that can be called consciousness in it apart from the physical vehicle. In the higher domestic animals, however, the astral body has sufficient development to be made after death into a kâmarûpa which persists for some days at least, or sometimes even for weeks, while a certain amount of mânasic activity is distinctly beginning to show itself.

When we come to the human kingdom we find that while with the lower types of men desire is still emphatically the most prominent feature, the mânasic development has proceeded much further; during life the man has a dim consciousness in his astral vehicle while he is asleep, and after death his kâmarûpa is very fairly conscious and active, and endures for many years, though as yet he has practically nothing of the devachanic life. Coming to the ordinary cultured man of our own race, we find him showing high mental activity during life, and possessing qualities which give him the possibility of a very long devachanic existence after death. He is fully conscious in his astral body during sleep, though not usually able to carry through any memory from the one condition of existence to the other. The cases of the comparatively few men who have as yet undertaken the task of self-development along occult lines show us that the future course of evolution simply means the unfolding of consciousness on higher and higher planes as humanity passes onward and becomes fit for such development.

But long before this period the third great outpouring of divine life has taken place—that from the highest principle of the Logos of the system, corresponding to the Âtman in man, and holding the place filled in *cosmic* evolution by the First Logos, which has been called by Christianity “God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible,” because from Him all came, even the Second and Third Logoi themselves, and into Him one day all

that came forth must return. An attempt has been made to indicate how the monadic essence in its upward course gradually unfolds consciousness first in the physical plane, then in the astral, and then in the lower mānasic. But it is only when in the highest of the domestic animals it reaches this latter stage that the possibility of the third outpouring comes within measurable distance. For this third wave of divine life can descend of itself no lower than our buddhic plane, and there it seems as it were to hover, waiting for the development of fit vehicles to enable it to come down one step further and be the individual souls of men. The phrase sounds strange, but, it is difficult to express accurately in human words the mysteries of the higher life.

Imagine (to use an Eastern simile) the sea of monadic essence steadily pressed upward into the mānasic plane by the force of evolution inherent in it, and this third outpouring hovering above that plane like a cloud, constantly attracting and attracted by the waves below. Anyone who has ever seen the formation of a waterspout in tropical seas will grasp the idea of this Oriental illustration—will understand how the downward-pointing cone of cloud from above and the upward-pointing cone of water from below draw nearer and nearer by mutual attraction, until a moment comes when they suddenly leap together, and the great column of mingled water and vapour is formed.

Similarly the blocks of animal monadic essence are constantly throwing parts of themselves into incarnation like temporary waves on the surface of a sea, and the process of differentiation goes on until at last a time comes when one of these waves rises high enough to enable the hovering cloud to effect a junction with it, and it is then drawn up into a new existence neither in the cloud nor in the sea, but between the two, and partaking of the nature of both; and so it is separated from the block of which it has hitherto formed a part, and falls back into the sea no more. That is to say, an animal belonging to one of the more advanced blocks of essence may by his love for and devotion to his master, and by the mental effort involved in the earnest endeavour to understand him and please him, so raise himself above his original level that he becomes a fit vehicle for this third outpouring, the reception of which breaks him away from his block and starts him on his career of immortality as an individual.

If we remember that the consciousness of the monadic essence has been developed up to the lower mānasic level, and that the hovering influence of the divine life has descended to the buddhic plane, we shall be prepared to look on the higher mānasic levels, the arūpa division of the devachanic plane, for the resultant combination; and that is truly the habitat of the causal body of man, the vehicle of the reincarnating ego.

But here we note that a curious change has taken place in the position of the monadic essence. All the way through its long line of evolution in all

the previous kingdoms it has invariably been the ensouling and energizing principle, the force behind whatever forms it may have temporarily occupied. But now that which has hitherto been the ensouler becomes itself in turn the ensouled; from that monadic essence is formed the causal body—that resplendent sphere of living light into which the still more glorious light from above descends, and by means of which it is enabled to express itself as a human individuality.

Nor should any think that it is an unworthy goal to reach as the result of so long and weary an evolution, thus to become the vehicle of this last and grandest outpouring of the divine spirit; for it must be remembered that without the preparation of this vehicle to act as a connecting link the immortal individuality of man could never come into being, and that this upper triad thus formed becomes a transcendent unity—"not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God." So that no fragment of the work that has been done through all these ages is lost, and nothing has been useless; for without that work this final consummation could never have been reached, that man should become the equal of the Logos from whom he came forth, and that so that very Logos Himself should be perfected, in that He has of His own offspring those equal to Himself upon whom that love which is the essence of His divine nature can for the first time be fully lavished.

Be it remembered also that it is only in the presence within him of this third outpouring of the divine life that man possesses an absolute guarantee of his immortality; for this is "the spirit of man that goeth upward" in contradistinction to "the spirit of the beast that goeth downward"—that is to say, which flows back again at the death of the animal into the block of monadic essence from which it came. A time will come—the time of the mähāpralaya—when "all things visible and invisible" will be reabsorbed into That from which they came; when even the Second and Third Logoi themselves, and all that is of their essence, must disappear. But even in that period of universal rest there is one Entity who remains unaffected; the First, the Unmanifested Logos rests still, as ever, in the bosom of the Infinite. And since the direct essence of this, the divine Father of all, enters into the composition of the spirit of man, by that almighty power his immortality is absolutely assured.

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