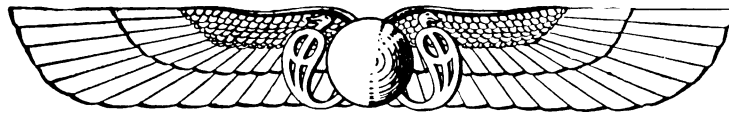


THE VĀHAN



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, AUGUST 1, 1901.

NO. 1.

Edited by ARTHUR A. WELLS.

LETTER FROM THE AUSTRALIAN SECTION.

May 20th, 1901.

To the General Secretary,
European Section.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you a resolution passed at our Seventh Annual Convention held in Melbourne, May 4th and 6th: "That fraternal greetings and good wishes be sent to all the other Sections of the Theosophical Society."

I remain,
Yours fraternally,
H. ARTHUR WILSON.
General Secretary.

REPORT OF THE CONVENTION.

With the present issue of THE VĀHAN the Report of the Tenth Annual Convention of the European Section goes to members.

ARTHUR A. WELLS,
General Secretary.

CLOSING OF THE ROOMS AT HEADQUARTERS.

Members are notified that the rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be closed during the month of August. The office, however, will remain open for the necessary business.

ARTHUR A. WELLS,
General Secretary.

LETTER FROM THE SCANDINAVIAN SECTION.

The General Secretary,
European Section T.S.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

With great pleasure I communicate to you that the Scandinavian Section T.S., assembled in Annual Convention, sends its fraternal greetings and best wishes to the European Section.

I remain,
Yours fraternally,
P. E. LILJESTRAND,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to July 20th: E. M., £1; W. E. F., £1; C. R. H., 10s.; M. A. C. T., £1; H. M., £1 1s.; E. S., 5s.; E. B., 2s. 6d.; L. J., £4 15s.; J. M., 6s.; A. S., 15s.; A. D., 7s.; M. W., £1; A. L., £1; M. H. L., £2 10s.; H. S. G., £3; N. H. P., £1; M. S., 6s.; I. T., £4; H. & K. D., 5s.; J. B. G., £2; E. F., £5; M. B., 16s.; H. B. H., 5s.; B. S., £20; H. G., 4s. 6d.; C. B. W., 10s.; C. M. W., 5s. Total, £53 3s.

Section Reference Library.

This Library is closed during August.

We have much pleasure in acknowledging the reception by the Library of the following books:

De Geheime Correspondentie van Abraham de Wicquefort met den franschen Minister de Lionne, Christian Friedrich Haje, Amsterdam, 1901; *Diospolis Parva, The Cemeteries of Abadiyeh and Hu*, 1898-9, W. M. Flinders Petrie (publication of the Egypt Exploration Fund, 1901); *Apollonius of Tyana, the Philosopher-Reformer of the First Century A.D.*, G. R. S. Mead, London and Benares, 1901.

A. J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

North of England Federation.

The next meeting of the North of England Federation will be held at Harrogate, on Saturday, August 10th, under the presidency of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater. Members of the Society are cordially invited to attend.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On June 20th the above Lodge held the last *Conversazione* of the present syllabus.

The meeting on the 27th began with a business meeting to elect delegates (eleven in all) to represent the Lodge at the Convention. When the business was concluded a lecture on "Craniology," was delivered by Mr. Dyne, a lecturer new to the Blavatsky Lodge, though well known to other Branches of the European Section. Mr. Dyne illustrated his lecture by various drawings of typical skulls; the subsequent questions showed that many members were much interested in the subject.

On July 4th Mr. Keightley gave his second lecture, which he promised on a former occasion, on the Sikh religion, showing its gradual transformation from a purely spiritual movement, to a religious body not unconcerned with politics, and finally into an essentially militant and fanatical organisation, bitterly antagonistic to the Mahomedan Faith.

On July 11th Mr. Mead gave a most interesting and eloquent lecture on the "Wider View" of Gospel Criticism taken by those who accept the mystical and occult tradition of the Christian origins. The Lodge on this occasion was crowded, for many delegates from foreign and provincial Lodges were present.

On July 18th the lecturer was Miss Cust, who spoke on "Dante's Divine Comedy;" this lecture was the last of the present syllabus.

The Lodge re-opens on October 3rd with the annual business meeting, which all members interested in the work of the Lodge are earnestly requested to attend.

S. M. S.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Alfred Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: August 4th, *The Planetary Chain*, T. Prime; August 11th, *Plato*, III., H. M. Chaplin; August 18th, *The Soul*, II., Miss Hustler; August 25th, *For the Sake of Others*, Bernard Old. Elementary class for study on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 in County Chamber. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Cobden Hotel.

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

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings discontinued during August.

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

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Meetings at 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

FLORENCE LODGE. Meetings will be discontinued during the summer. Lodge rooms at Via Venezia, 8, will be open on Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m., for the exchange of books.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Tuesday in each month at 8 p.m.

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

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Aug. 4th, *The Unseen World*, C. W. Leadbeater; Aug. 11th, *The Mission of Theosophy*, C. W. Leadbeater; Aug.

18th, *Imagination*, Mrs. Corbett; Aug. 25th, *Reincarnation*, Hodgson Smith. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Christian Creed*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings suspended until September.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarian Restaurant, Boar Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Hyde Park, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.; Secretary, R. A. Vennor Morris, 28, Gartmoor Gardens, Wimbledon Park, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. The Lodge closes during August and September.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings discontinued for the summer.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on Mondays at 7 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings suspended during August.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings discontinued till September.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., in Room 62, York Chambers, 27, Brazenose Street. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Man and His Bodies*.

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

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 72, Via S. Niccolò da Tolentino, on Mondays, at 6.15 p.m. Class conducted by Signor D. Calvari on Fridays at 6.15 p.m. for study of *Dharma*. *Conversazione* on Wednesdays at 6.15 p.m.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., and on Saturdays from 3 to 5 p.m.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 135.

J. H. E.—*As the physical body rapidly passes through the stages of previous evolution, does the re-incarnating ego sum up its previous experiences in the early years of physical life? And if so, is it possible for the average person to be guided to a knowledge of his Dharma from the consideration of his early life?*

A. P. S.—Certainly not in the early stages of physical life. It has, I think, been hinted that there is a stage, moment, or period in the descent of an ego towards a new incarnation, when something like a preliminary glance at the programme of the coming life is possible. But at the present stage of human evolution this does not count for much in the direction of guidance for the new personality. Perhaps the forecast will be more useful for men of a later time, more richly endowed with faculties ranging over superphysical experience than are common with us now.

E. L.—If we observe carefully those around us we can see in every day and hour of a person's life this "summing up of previous experiences" going on, in the power of judgment shown, the course of action taken. What is that but the memory—however dim—of the past? No, the average person though he might (if at all a believer in the inner teaching) get useful hints from self-introspection, could not acquire a knowledge of his Dharma in the way suggested. Knowledge of Dharma means that a high stage has been reached, and if *full* knowledge is implied, then a very high stage indeed. But it would be very useful to retrace the present life (all that is within the reach of most of us consciously) and find out as far as possible its fundamental lines, seeing the results arrived at, and checking them for future guidance. Then he will return to earth with a clearer conception of Dharma, and as he progresses gain an ever clearer idea of the path he should tread, and thus it will be seen that the summing up is not confined to the early years of physical life, but is continuous, as continuous as the man himself.

G. R. S. M.—There seems reason to believe that when an individual "wakes up" in any birth, he finds that his past karma has been already impressed upon his physical, psychic and mental make up. The self-conscious ego then takes up the task where it was left off. When this self-consciousness arises it may be possible for us to see the "why" of many things which have happened to us in our present bodies, but this intelligence will not, in our opinion, help the ego to know his Dharma, for like Paul he will say: "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things," and my Dharma now is to do the will of Him who sent me.

QUESTION 136.

C. P.—*What kind of karma is it which produces a novelist? In what manner do the thought-forms he thus produces, multiplied as they are in the imaginations of his readers, influence their future lives?*

M. E. G.—There are novelists and novelists, and the karma which would produce a Marie Corelli would certainly never produce a Nathaniel Hawthorne; just as an acrobat and a poet could not spring from like karmas. I should think, however, that literary men are quite likely to be the products of pent up observation of men and things in previous lives, the line of literature being only the flowering of desire to make such observation known. The second part of C. P's question, however, is of tremendous import, and the "calling" of novelist is perhaps one of the gravest responsibilities that man can undertake. "If thou would'st not be slain by them, then must thou harmless make thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable, that swarm round humankind, the progeny and heir to man and his terrestrial spoils." (*Voice of the Silence*, p. 64.) In greater or less power are these thought-children sent out among men, according to the strength and intuition of their author. Angels and Devils and many grades between, a vast army are launched daily into the mental world, either to drag down or raise up those with whom they come in contact. Happy for the author when by many strands of gold his thought-children have linked other souls to his in the upward climb; but there is a reverse to the picture, and we pause in horror before its far reaching possibilities. Perhaps, after all, it is well that a great deal of novel writing has so little intuition in it; that the thought-forms produced are but weaklings of a day, and also that so many minds are so little receptive that no definite impression is left by these mental denizens they meet. Still the first and true view of the subject remains, and it is one to make the novelist pause and pray for light, before he takes up his pen.

E. L.—I should say that the karma producing a novelist might be (and is) exceedingly varied in its aspects, since we have writers who exercise both good and bad, far-reaching and mediocre influence on their generation. The materials contributing to the make-up of a novelist would, it seems to me, be as follows:

1. A development of the dramatic instinct.
2. A keen observation of character and general knowledge of life in large things and small.
3. The power of combination.
4. Impressionability, coupled with the faculty of throwing himself into the scenes he depicts.

That a lively intelligence and a command of language would be necessary, of course goes without saying. (I have here enumerated the elements I personally consider essential to a first-class novelist.) All these powers would be the karma set in motion in the past, or rather the result of that karma, or action. A novelist is an example

of the creative instinct in its threefold sense. The principles of Colour, Form and Sound enter into his creations, for you get first of all the general skeleton, or ground-plan of the book, harmoniously proportioned—if he be a powerful writer and an artistic blender—then the building up of the complete form along these lines, and the colour coming from the imaginative instinct which pervades the story, the living passions and emotions depicted. In the narrative itself you get the symmetrical word-grouping, the literary form, as some people would term it, or the choice of expression. And the factor of sound, the inherent perception of its laws certainly lies at the basis of this.

In considering the influence of such a person, we must say that it would depend both on his own power of influencing and the kind of influence he wielded, also on the capacity of his readers for being influenced, and to what extent in one or the other direction. A sensual type of book would, therefore, affect the person who had any such elements in his nature, and would help to strengthen them. Literature of a pure and lofty order would hasten the development of an idealist. We need not go so far as the future lives to estimate these influences, though undoubtedly they are affected by the present. We have many examples of swiftly working out causes around us now.

G. R. S. M.—The karma of the word painters surely! which is tantamount to saying that a novelist is the outcome of a novelist, even as a musician of a musician. And if it be objected that there were few, if any, novelists fifteen hundred years ago (the average period of inter-birth), and to-day there are thousands and thousands of novelists, then it should be remembered that there were in antiquity thousands of myth-makers and writers of religious romances. Beyond expressing our feeling of assurance that a novelist must be responsible for his mind-born children, it is impossible to give a general answer to a question which raises so many complex problems. As a very small contribution, however, to the subject, we may venture the suggestion that the former writer of a religious romance may very well take the romance he wrote in a past life for actual history in his present birth, and so base his faith upon the shifting sands of his own imagination, instead of upon the solid rock of actual fact.

QUESTION 137.

W.—(1) *According to Matt. x., 34, Christ came not to send peace but a sword on earth. In verse 35 we are told he came to set relatives at variance. In Luke xiv., 26, our parents, brothers and sisters and our own lives even are to be hated. Answer to Question 123 clears up the difficulty of the parents, but leaves that re brothers and sisters untouched.*

(2) *In Matt. xix., 11-12, a horrible rite is apparently recommended by Jesus. Some early Christians, including Origen, are said to have practised this and become eunuchs.*

(3) *Now are these teachings authentic in the sense of being taught by the real Christ? What is to be the canon of judgment in regard to the truth or otherwise of the Gospels?*

(4) *Failing a canon, would it not be wise to entirely eschew the Gospels as absolutely untrustworthy and misleading?*

G. R. S. M.—(i.) The mystical Gnostic exegesis of all such “dark sayings,” to which I referred in Question 123, applies the same method of interpretation to the passages quoted as to the saying about our “parents.” The “sword” is the symbol of enmity between the higher and lower nature; it is a fiery sword, the fire of “baptism,” which burns up all impurity and “separates” off the “above” from the “below,” the “good” from the “evil” elements, the “brother” from the “sister.” Our “lives” again are the “lower” nature, the “animal.” But these sayings have a still wider scope and import, and are not to be applied simply to the individual economy of the disciple, for it is very patent that this “separation” wrought in the individual himself cuts him off to a large extent also from the “world,” the normal environment, and that this separation is felt, and for the most part resented. It is said, moreover, that whenever there is a strong pouring forth of spiritual power, there is always a strong reaction, and this must be patent to every one who has studied the history of religion. In the most literal of literal senses, then, also the saying about the sword has been verified in Christendom. Compare with the whole of this teaching the setting of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and the relatives drawn up on either side in the conflict.

(ii.) Touching the question of the marrying of divorced persons, it is reported that the disciples were confused at the Master’s answer, and thought that He condemned all marriage. Perceiving their difficulty He continued: “All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother’s womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”

The final formula indicates another “dark saying.” If it be permissible to hazard an interpretation on the lines of common sense and on the general wisdom teaching of the Masters of the great religions, it all seems clear enough. The passage suffers somewhat in translation, the stress coming on the wrong words. *Only those to whom it is given* can accept the conditions of celibacy. Most men cannot do so; indeed, are not called upon to do so. It is not to be expected that all the world should ape the ascetic life; nay, “celibacy” merely is not necessarily a higher state, it depends entirely on the motive. Some are born impotent (perhaps, we may speculate, in consequence of some abuse or of self-imposed celibacy for a selfish purpose in a previous life); some are forced into celibacy—

either by the means suggested by the questioner, or by drugs, or by vows taken in ignorance and punishable by death as among the Vestals; others do so because of their longing for spiritual things.

In the third category alone are to be found, we must suppose, those whose celibacy is approved by the Master, and even here we are not free from the suspicion of spiritual selfishness in many cases. What, however, is of interest is that as we have here in all probability an authentic saying of the Christ, then *according to orthodox tradition*, in the very year of the ministry, the Master declares that “there *be* eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake.” Who were these “eunuchs”; who were these celibates? Were they only the Essenes; or does the Master speak in general terms? If He speaks of the Essenes, then we have in existence men and women who were celibates for the “kingdom of heaven’s sake” *before* that *new* gospel of the kingdom was preached according to other teachings. If He speaks generally—then we have His endorsement of *Pagan* practices, and the declaration that some of the Heathen did these things for “the kingdom of heaven’s sake.” We leave our orthodox particularists to take which horn of the dilemma they prefer.

Origen, mighty intellect though he was, misunderstood; at the same time it may be remarked that the “priests of Attys” were the relic of a once wide spread archaic rite which in these ancient animal days was perhaps the only means of dominating certain passions.

(iii.) The above remarks go towards an answer to this question; as to a canon of judgment, it can only be acquired by every one for himself. The test is simply: Is this saying true? Then it matters little whether it was spoken historically by this or that teacher. Personally we see no reason to reject the sayings referred to; they seem to us to be, in every probability, authentic utterances of the Christ, whether during the year of the ministry or during the post-resurrection period, matters little.

(iv.) The last question requires little answer in THE VĀHAN. It proceeds from the same attitude of mind (though it has all the appearance of being the very antipodes of it) which declares the whole of the Gospels to be literally and infallibly inspired by the Spirit of Wisdom. The “sword” to which the Master referred is sometimes called “Viveka” in Sanskrit, and this is generally translated “discrimination” in English. Discrimination does not confuse absolute and relative, does not throw the whole cargo overboard because a few sacks of wheat are spoiled, or even half the ship-load damaged.

QUESTION 138.

D.—*Why does it happen that when one ardently desires a manifestation of the assistance of the Masters, or seriously formulates a request before going to sleep to be enabled to retain on waking a clear impression of*

what he is to do under certain special circumstances, he frequently fails to obtain a reply?

R.—The higher a being stands on the scale of evolution, the nearer he is to the Divine, and the more completely does he act according to the Divine Law. The Masters are Divine, they work along with the Law, with God; and (like God) they do not always answer the most fervent prayer; or rather, they but rarely give *the reply we expect*. But what we think of as an *answer* is not the real answer: it is merely the impression made on the convulsions of the brain, on the physical consciousness by a higher vibration. Now, in nearly all cases, the brain is far too undeveloped to respond to the vibrations which form the true answer, because these are of a rapidity quite beyond the brain's power to respond to them.

But the *real man*, the higher mental consciousness, receives this reply; it receives it more completely as its evolution is more advanced, and it is in this way the *true man* is assisted, it is thus that God and the Masters give answer to our prayers. A very few, in their highest moments of prayer, are able to receive the divine impression into their ordinary waking brain-consciousness, and these are able to see, to hear, to feel, as the case may require. All men will come to hear God in their bodily consciousness when their brain organisation, in the course of their evolution, becomes sufficiently spiritualised.

Until this takes place, the physical consciousness will be insensitive to the answer which the *true man* (the deeper consciousness) receives each time it questions and prays. And this answer it is which gives the needful aid, unknown to the lower senses.

In order to manifest to the physical consciousness before this time God (or the Masters) would have to work a wonder—to materialise in human form; and this needless expenditure of force would not be so effective a help as that which acts on the Higher Ego.

This is why the Masters, like God, so often *appear* to give no answer to our prayers.

EDITOR.—In copying, with due acknowledgment to the *Bulletin Théosophique* of June, the above interesting question and answer, I should like to add something our friend has not had the heart to say to his querist, well as he himself knows it. It is quite true that when the Masters *do* answer our appeal it is seldom in a way comprehensible to our physical brain; but it must also be kept in mind that there are many things as to which that same physical brain and lower mind ardently desire a sign, and all the Master's answer can be is, in the words of the Master Jesus in such case, "there shall no sign be given them." And this for two reasons. We must never forget that the Higher Powers are interested in us solely in regard of our Higher Ego; the circumstances of our physical life—the questions as to what we are to do on this plane—in short, precisely the things about which we most anxiously appeal for guid-

ance, are absolutely nothing to Them. They are not, indeed (again in Scripture phrase) incapable of "being touched with the feeling of our infirmities," but they look at them as the mother upon the baby frettings and tempers of her infant child—indulgently, but yet knowing that the time will come when we shall see for ourselves of how little consequence they are to the life of our individuality—the true Man. And still further—the growth and evolution of this Higher Self, the one thing for which we manifest on this physical plane at all, is made precisely by our very struggles and mistakes, and by nothing else. It is not heartlessness which makes the watchers look on in silence as we blindly choose the course which may bring us pain and suffering. What is of consequence is, not that we should avoid suffering, but that we should learn its lesson; and the sharper the pain the quicker is the lesson learned. The popular doctrine of "Sin" as the one thing to be thought of or avoided has blinded us to the higher view of life. Jesus himself did not think or speak so. To Him, as to every Teacher sent from God, the one thing of importance was that the man should turn from seeking the gratification of the lower self, should lift up his eyes to the God within and above him. In the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* Krishna says that such a man, though of evil life, may be at once counted amidst the good—"he hath the right way chosen, he shall grow righteous ere long"; and in the Gospel, when Jesus finds a man who has "faith" (which is the same thing in other words) the assurance "Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace" follows as a matter of course. By those past sins he had learned the lesson which only the going wrong *can* teach, that his true life lies in following the Higher Self and not his lower appetites; and this once learnt, what matter the troubles, the sorrows, and sufferings which have taught him?—"forgiven," "blotted out," done with for ever more. His deliverance is not from any fabled Hell for what he has done in the past, but from the necessity of going over again the weary round which *must* be repeated again and again until he learns that nothing is to be loved but God.

Considerations of this kind may perhaps soften the bluntness of the answer I should be inclined to give our querist. I should say to him: "You get no reply because you ask about things which are of no consequence to your true life, and because *that* grows by your free choice, unaided by any higher Powers, and by your experience of what follows. Choose for yourself; and, having chosen, take the consequences like a man. If suffering follows, do not allow your foolish conscience to worry you as having done *wrong*, but set yourself to learn what was amiss and to do better next time. That is all which matters to you or anyone else. In all probability you are not sufficiently advanced to be trusted with the "pride of virtue"; and your lesson is to hold on, confidently and faithfully, through all the sin and failure which yet beset your path—"you have the right way chosen and shall grow righteous ere long," though

that time may be short only as the gods measure it, and not by our mortal years and lives.

QUESTION 139.

J. B.—A mother who has lately lost her child is anxious to know something of its whereabouts, etc. She has read all the likely books she has bearing on such subjects, but without any satisfactory result. Will you answer these questions?—1. What becomes of a young baby after death? 2. Has it a long stay in Kāmaloka—say to end of its natural life? 3. Or does it go straight to Devachan? 4. Or does it reincarnate again almost immediately?

A. A. W.—The root of the difficulty here is the old one, that people do not always succeed in moulding their actual thought according to the knowledge they possess. They really know better than to ask such questions, but we must not be hard upon the unreasonableness of a mother's grief, or be impatient if, to her, the little warm body she has so lately pressed to her bosom seems the reality, and she asks if this, the baby she has so loved, goes straight to Devachan. It is the same confusion which makes the mother at a spiritualistic séance expect her child to show itself as grown up to the age it would have had had it lived. Of this we have lately spoken in these pages.

What really is this "young baby" whose future is in question? It is the preparation for a human being—the living, breathing house shaped by the Lords of Karma to be for a single life-time the fit dwelling for a soul; fashioned according to the special karma of that soul, according as it has to be made happy or miserable; to find its progress upwards in this life assisted by the perfection of its dwelling or the contrary, as the sins and virtues of its past life may have determined its fate in this. The "breath of life" has been breathed into it; but, at birth, it is an animal only; the soul for which it was made has not yet taken possession of its vehicle. Now, as far as I know the only certain information we have on the matter is that we must not reckon the ensoulment of the body as complete before seven years old—the age universally and rightly known as the "age of reason."

But of this much I think we may be sure; that the soul takes an absorbing interest in the preparation and growth of the body in which it is to dwell, watches it anxiously, and from time to time makes efforts to do something with it. There is no loving mother who has not to tell of looks and actions of her infant seeming to manifest an intelligence, as is said, "beyond its years." If it be remembered that the soul which is to use this tiny form is not itself a baby soul, growing *with* the the body, but, on the contrary, one possibly older and higher than its parents', there will be no wonder or incredibility about this. It will be understood that the true Self of the babe has, for a moment, looked out upon the world through its

tiny eyes—that the mother has, for one instant been in the presence of her son in soul as well as body, an instant of soul communion possibly deeper than the chances of his grown-up life may ever again grant her. It is over in a moment; the soul does not yet possess the body fully, but it is a pledge of what shall be hereafter. Another suggestion is furnished by the distinct *character* which many children bring into the world with them. Indeed, very few children's minds are the blank pages which the older educationalists believed them; and all these differences are the working of the soul within.

Now for our question. Somehow this ensoulment fails to take place; the body dies, and the soul is left to look for another chance of reincarnation. How is this possible? How is it that karma thus allows itself seemingly to be vanquished and its work wasted? It may come about in many ways. It may be that the karma of the parents brings this sorrow on them; it may be that the waiting soul has this kārmic penalty to pay. What has been told us of souls drawn into renewed earth life by desire to meet others may suggest the possibility of something like a premature attempt to return—a desire sometimes granted by the Lords of Fate and sometimes refused. And besides such causes as these, it is evident that we must often be in presence of what is called "chance"; a word we use to express the action of a law or laws, unknown to us, and beyond the working of our own personal karma. Something done, or thought, or suffered by the mother may have reacted upon the unborn babe and made it unfit to be the soul's dwelling place, or it may be caught and crushed in the great wheels of national or Cosmic Karma—Fate—without any personal fault of its own or its parents. I pass by the question whether there may not be a child born for which no soul is waiting, and which simply drops off as unripe fruit from a tree, for this would lead us too far.

Anyway, in the case put by J. B.—the death of the infant before the soul has taken full possession—there is no difficulty in answering his question. The soul which was to have made a human being of the dead child remains just where it was before. It has not gone through death, for it has never lived in that body at all. There is no question of a new spell of Kāmaloka or Devachan for it. We can hardly doubt that links of love have been formed by its temporary association with the parents of the body which was to have been his; links which will have their effect upon his next incarnation; links which it seems not unreasonable to imagine might possibly, under favourable circumstances, bring him into reincarnation as another child of theirs. I do not see anything which by our doctrines could be pronounced impossible in the published stories of cases in which a child has brought with it certain recollections to this effect. It is in this direction, as it seems to me, that Theosophists must look for something to replace for us that satisfaction to our human love and longing which a mother feels, and cannot be

reproached for feeling, when at a materialising séance a form resembling and calling itself her child presents itself to her embrace. Put it at its best this is only a happiness of the physical world. In its stead I think we Theosophists may fairly believe and trust that the mother's devotion to her child whilst living and her thoughts and prayers and loving remembrances afterwards cannot but form the closest of ties betwixt her own soul and that other which has stood by, conscious of all that she has done and felt for it, loving and sympathising in return, sharing her hopes and fears for the new man who was to have been their joint work. Nor can we doubt that when the two meet in the higher world he will indeed "spring to her and call her his," even if they should never more meet on this lower physical plane. For what is all meeting on earth, compared with an instant's communion of souls in Devachan or the Buddhic plane—the Place of Bliss!

QUESTION 140.

Z. M.—How may I learn to apply the Theosophical teachings to everyday life in detail? The great majority cannot devote their lives to Theosophy. They are here to work and fight and love, and keep the business side of the world moving. Therefore they can but master the general principles and try to apply them.

Do you think a complete abnegation of self and earthly things is to be desired or aimed at for the rank and file? Is it practicable?

A. P. S.—The question is admirably answered by the questioner himself. The majority can but master general principles and try to apply them. One might add they cannot do better. But if they really master general principles they do, perhaps, more than they think. Firstly, if those principles govern their action in this life they are making very good karma, which will tell in more ways than one next time. And secondly, they will find, as a consequence of such mastery, that the after "death" conditions of life are enormously improved as compared to what they would have been otherwise. The astral world, if they linger there for any time worth speaking of, will be happy and useful instead of bewildered and comfortless, and their devachanic period will be enriched in many ways that will conduce to the spiritual progress of the ego. Anyone who masters general principles in this life will be pretty certain to do a good deal more in the next, even if the greater part of his energies, this time, may be spent upon the reasonable pursuit of legitimate objects of worldly ambition. The abnegation of self is undeniably a very fine ideal and for that matter its attainment in the highest degree is entirely compatible with work, fight and love, especially with the last named occupation.

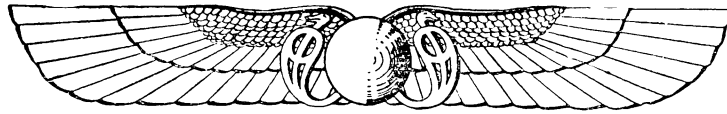
G. L. S.—The way to apply the Theosophical teachings to everyday life in detail may be learned by trying. There is no need to stop working in order to devote one's life to Theosophy; but it is certainly necessary that what appears to each individual to be the teachings of the Divine Wisdom should be applied, and just to those very details of everyday life which may seem at first sight to be so many useless stumbling blocks, but which are really tests of our sincerity and so many opportunities for advance. This is, perhaps, too often overlooked. We have a vague idea of doing something great at a stroke some day, and this for obvious reasons usually comes to nothing. It is in the small everyday details that our grand opportunity lies to devote our lives to Theosophy, and each and every individual can do this if he wishes. It is surely no part of Theosophic teaching that the disciple should go mooning about and become quite unfit to take his share in keeping the business side of the world moving. On the contrary these teachings instruct him how to render greater assistance than ever in keeping the world's machinery in motion by reducing the friction of its wheels to a minimum.

The possibility of complete abnegation of self and earthly things is a question which would seem to depend on the evolutionary standpoint occupied by any given soul. For it must be kept in view that human souls are not all of the same age, have not all lived the same number of lives, any more than the members of a family have all lived the same number of days. The younger entities derive a great deal of enjoyment in the pursuit of experiences which possess neither novelty nor attraction for their elders, not because the latter are better but because they have outgrown such pursuits. In like manner as the soul acquires maturity and experience it finds that the objects which delighted it in its spiritual childhood no longer possess their old charm. Among many other things the impermanence and "non-reality" of form and the permanence and reality of the spirit underlying form are gradually recognised and eventually realised; and this realisation naturally brings with it the desire for self-abnegation and the giving up of earthly things. The pilgrim then definitely sets out from the "City of Destruction. To many undoubtedly the giving up of earthly things has nothing of the ideal in it, but is regarded as a pure and simple penance, and they consequently neither aim at it nor desire it. Why should they?

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1901.

NO. 2.

Edited by ARTHUR A. WELLS.

THE PRESIDENT'S JOURNEYINGS.

Colonel Olcott passed through London last month on his way from the United States to Buenos Ayres. He looked surprisingly well and is seemingly as full of vigour as a man of forty. His bodily strength seems, in fact, equal to any strain that is put upon it. At the end of seven months of travel, covering some 16,000 miles of sea and land, and after giving scores of lectures, hundreds of private interviews, and many conversation—or as the Americans say, quiz—meetings, he is as fresh as if the work lay all before him. From official and private accounts we learn that the President-Founder's recent tour through his native land has been exceptionally successful throughout. His public discourses have drawn crowds of from 500 to 1,500 persons, who have followed him with the closest attention. Sometimes he has answered thirty or forty questions after the lecture, covering a very wide field of thought. Moreover, he seems to have reached the hearts of our members and to have left none but friends behind him. The General Secretary of the Section writes that he can already see that the tour of Colonel Olcott will do great permanent good to the whole Section.

THE ADYAR LIBRARY.

The Oriental library at the Society's headquarters seems to be outgrowing its premises: before leaving home Colonel Olcott made large additions to the shelf-room, and now he will have to build an extension to hold the books that are coming in. At a nominal cost, a private collection has been purchased, which comprises 224 palm-

leaf MSS., some very large, 500 printed Sanskrit books, 260 in Tamil, two in ancient Hebrew, and forty in English. One of the printed Sanskrit books (six vols.) is worth 500 rupees, as no duplicate is known to exist.

NOTE.—These two paragraphs were contributed to our columns by the President-Founder himself during his short stay amongst us. We expect him in London for two or three days in October, on his final departure for India, and arrangements are in progress to give the members of the Society an opportunity of meeting him to bid him farewell—not, we hope, for long. Particulars will be given in our October number. The few friends who were in London during his visit can heartily endorse the statement as to his excellent health and spirits. We expect that his visit to South America will result in a considerable and permanent improvement in the condition of the Society there.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to August 20th: J. A., £5; B. P. M., £1; E. N., £1; A. F. P., £6. Total £13.

Section Reference Library.

The Library will re-open for the season on September 1st.

North of England Federation.

Mr. C. W. Leadbeater presided over the thirtieth Conference of the North of England Federation, which was held at Harrogate on

Saturday, August 10th. There was a large attendance of delegates and members from nearly all the Northern Branches and Centres, including Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Hull, Bradford, York, Harrogate, Middlesbrough, Newcastle-on-Tyne, etc. Very satisfactory reports of Lodge work were given by the respective delegates, and there was a general feeling that Theosophy was gradually becoming better understood and its teachings more widely known.

A short discussion took place on the "Ethics of Commerce," after which Mr. Leadbeater gave an account of his recent tour in the United States.

On the invitation of the Harrogate Lodge the members present at the Conference were entertained to tea in the Winter Gardens.

On reassembling the Chairman delivered a most instructive lecture on "The Desire Elemental."

In connection with his visit to the North Mr. Leadbeater delivered a series of public lectures in Harrogate, and he also gave a course of three lectures on "The Development of the Ego" in the Harrogate Lodge Room on August 9th, 16th, and 23rd. Many of the members of the Northern Lodges attended these meetings, which were specially helpful to the student of Theosophy.

Mr. Leadbeater delivered public lectures during the past month at Edinburgh, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Middlesbrough, Bradford, Hull, Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham. He also met the members in many of the towns named and delivered Lodge addresses, etc. Altogether, the tour was a great success, and Mr. Leadbeater takes back with him the hearty gratitude of the Northern members.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

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Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings at 15, Alfred Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Lecture by Mr. Leadbeater on September 11th.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings at Cobden Hotel, Room No. 5, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Sept. 1st, *Esoteric Side of Different Religions*, Miss Keeley;

Sept. 8th, *The Sign of the Cross*, T. Prime; Sept. 15th, *Meditation*, G. Tubbs; Sept. 22nd, Miss E. Ward; Sept. 29th, *Science and Poetry, Ether and Spirit*, B. Hodgson. Elementary class for study on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 in County Chambers, Martineau Street. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Season opens September 10th, when Mr. C. W. Leadbeater will lecture. Meetings at 5, Beaconsfield Road, Clifton, on alternate Tuesdays, at 7 p.m. Classes on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m., for the study of *The Key to Theosophy*.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Meetings at 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

FLORENCE LODGE. Meetings discontinued during the summer. Lodge rooms at Via Venezia, 8, are open on Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m., for the exchange of books.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Tuesday in each month at 8 p.m.

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

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m. Subjects: for Sept. 1st, *The Upward Progress of the Soul*, Miss Shaw; Sept. 8th, *Man, the Maker of his Destiny*, Hodgson Smith; Sept. 15th, *Theosophy in its Relation to Modern Thought*, Miss Ward; Sept. 22nd, *The Future of Humanity*, A. R. Orage; Sept. 29th, *Proportion*, A. J. Faulding. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarian Restaurant, Bear Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Hyde Park, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on

the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W., except on September 4th, when the meeting will be held at Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill; Secretary, R. A. Vennor Morris, 28, Gartmoor Gardens, Wimbledon Park, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. The Lodge closes during September.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings discontinued for the summer.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on Mondays at 7 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings recommence on the first Friday in October. A syllabus is in course of preparation, and will be distributed as soon as possible.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., in Room 62, York Chambers, 27, Brazenose Street. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *Man and His Bodies*.

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

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 72, Via S. Niccolò da Tolentino, on Mondays, at 6.15 p.m. Class conducted by Signor D. Calvari on Fridays at 6.15 p.m. for study of *Dharma*. Conversazione on Wednesdays at 6.15 p.m.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., and on Saturdays from 3 to 5 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

In the answer of A. A. W. to Question 139 there are one or two points which seem to me to call for further discussion.

A. A. W. says, in speaking of the "young

baby, that at birth it *is an animal only*; the soul for which it was made *has not yet* taken possession of its vehicle." The truth underlying this statement seems to me to be contained in the concluding lines of the paragraph, *viz.*, that "we must not reckon the ensoulment of the body as complete before seven years old." This seems to be the case, but to say that at birth the young baby "is an animal only" appears to me rather a strong way of describing the facts as they have been stated. It is true that the exact time when the entity comes into connection with its new vehicle has not been told us, but there is much to point to the conclusion that this connection takes place in the ante-natal life, and that the new vehicle is even then influenced by the incoming entity, so that although the consciousness may be more on the astral than on the physical plane, yet, to use the words of another writer, "from the earliest beginning the child and the soul to which it might be destined to give incarnation must evidently be regarded as already in union." So that the mother as she clasps the tender new-born infant to her breast may feel that it is not the mere animal form that she cherishes, but that the living soul is there in close connection, a soul perchance with whom she may have been in the closest bonds of affection in the bygone ages of time.

With respect to the question as to why in some cases the young body dies and there is not the maturity of ensoulment, it seems to me that karma gives ample explanation; it may be, it must be, as A. A. W. says, the karma of the parents also, but I cannot conceive that in any case it can be apart from or outside the karma of the experiencing entity, although it is quite conceivable that that personal karma may be included in what we call national karma, but it seems evident that in the past history of many individuals there must be karma that would allow of an early death; if it were not so I think we should find that the child would be brought back even, as it were, from the gates of the grave. I do not think that we can imagine that any physical form should be built and a child born for which no soul is waiting, because the mould on which the body is built is made suitable for the incoming entity, and is so determined by the thought of the Lords of Karma; I do not mean that every germ must fructify, for physical nature is lavish in its possibilities, but when the body is formed with its special characteristics and capacities it is so formed in view of the special needs of a certain entity, or perhaps, in the more undeveloped, of certain types of entities, but in all cases long before birth there is the connection of the body and soul.

These considerations, however, do not go very far in answer to the question put by J. B., nor would it bring much comfort to a mother's natural sorrow at the loss of her child; but where the mother may draw comfort is, that, as A. A. W. says, there is no question either of Kāmaloka or Devachan for the entity connected with the infant body. It has generated no fresh causes,

so that it has none to work out; it will therefore await a rebirth and if there has been soul love between the mother and the entity that has left the child body it is certain that they will come together again, perhaps even in the same incarnation. Instances have been known in which the ensouling entity of a child that died young was reincarnated almost immediately, so as again to be present in the same life with those it loved.

F. A.

If I were to undertake a controversy with my old friend F. A., I should expose myself to the retort with which the old Bishop of Birmingham (I forget his name) ended a discussion with the late Cardinal Manning: "Manning—I was a Bishop when you were an 'eretic!" I will only plead that I think a careful reading of my answer to the question referred to will show that there is really no serious difference between us; if there is I give in! Perhaps my answer to a further question on this subject in this number may make my position clearer and more satisfactory.

A. A. W.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 140.

(Continued from p. 8.)

Z. M.—*How may I learn to apply the Theosophical teachings to everyday life in detail? The great majority cannot devote their lives to Theosophy. They are here to work and fight and love, and keep the business side of the world moving. Therefore they can but master the general principles and try to apply them.*

Do you think a complete abnegation of self and earthly things is to be desired or aimed at for the rank and file? Is it practicable?

A. W.—Is the questioner right in stating that "the great majority cannot devote their lives to Theosophy?" It is true that few of us can leave our surroundings and definitely give up our life to learning and teaching. But is it not also true that most of us are so occupied in longing for great opportunities and complete abnegations that we stumble over or entirely miss the little first step towards the theosophic path that lies so humbly waiting at our feet? If we can practically recognise that the things we have to do from minute to minute in daily life, really give us the opportunity to learn to consciously act in accord with the highest we know, the rest will follow in due course as we become ready for it, right up to the goal of Initiation itself.

There might be no visible difference between the deeds of a morally and mentally well-balanced man of the world and those of a man who was consciously entering on the Path. Both might "work and fight and live, and keep the business side of the world moving," but the one would act

blindly, while the other would, in every spare moment, master the general principles of the teachings he loved, and try to apply them to his deeds; and surely in this way everyone, however busy, can devote his life to Theosophy.

In regard to the second part of the question, we are told that no soul can dwell in the highest heaven which has not, while yet on earth, passed through the narrow gateway of Initiation (*Ancient Wisdom*, p. 156), and if this is true for those so far in advance of us, how futile it would be for the "rank and file" to attempt to abnegate their duties in regard to earthly things. At the proper place they fall off, like Christian's burden—they are not cast off. It is our inner attitude to our outer self and things that constitutes progress. Our body and the world around us remains the same, but the inner man is awakening, and beginning consciously to direct, and thus to ennoble the outward life.

E. A. B.—Complete abnegation of self and of earthly things can hardly be called practicable for "the rank and file"; one would rather say there are few for whom it is practicable, and very few indeed with whom it is truly the practice. For the great majority the duty of life does lie in the everyday details of work of all kinds—the "business side" of things. Yet it is surely well to recognise an aim, an ideal, higher than anything within our present reach, and this will gradually affect our way of doing this same work: it will be done not worse, but better, for this recognition. There is good practical sense in the Mormon maxim: "He who aims at mediocrity will fall below it; he who aims at perfection will rise above mediocrity." Anyone who masters the general principles and tries to apply them in his daily life is truly leading the theosophic life, whether or not he may be able to devote his time directly to Theosophy, for which the lives to come will doubtless bring him fuller opportunities. Meanwhile, the circumstances in which we find ourselves and the duties that naturally fall to us, are just those in which we may best learn, and grow, at any given stage. What these may be matters little, if the motive be pure and the ever-rising ideal be kept in view.

A. L. B. H.—If the questioner has mastered the general principles and is trying to apply them, he will find them influencing every detail of the daily round.

They make life a large business affair, instead of a small one ending abruptly. We are all here to work and fight, and love *and* to "pass along, please"—in obedience to the inexorable command. The sum total result of the most important career is simply the acquiring of a character which will act and endure in many another world than this. Every soul has a long journey before it, and there are numberless and relatively petty preparations to be made, which it is certainly not business-like to leave till the last minute. The chief preparation is the health of the soul, just as the health of

the body is considered before a long expedition is undertaken. And the training of the soul is carried on by the necessity of keeping the business side of the world moving—by the mere fact that the business side cannot stand still, and that the soul cannot go to sleep, but is pushed along if it will not walk independently.

E. L.—L. M. need not fear that the vast majority will ever want to devote their lives to Theosophy even were the outer conditions made conducive to the deeper study of the technical teaching. It has been said many times that each person has exactly the conditions he wants for his development around him. The facilities required for present development are around us all now. We are all here to “fight, work and love” in our several ways. What else indeed is life? True, there will ever be the Theorists or Idealists, and the Realists or “practical” folk mingled. Both are essential to evolution, both sets of faculties have to be blended at some time or other. The sooner the better, for then the goal will be in view. We begin by mastering the general principles of any scheme and then fill in the details. Only by so beginning can we ever hope to apply in full. I am here taking Theosophy in its large and (to me) true sense, and Theosophists as meaning not only members of our society but those who are devoted to the inner side of things, all the world over. No, “a complete abnegation of self and earthly things” is not asked of the “rank and file,” nor would it be practicable.

They have many useful and necessary lessons to learn ere the more delicate chiselling process becomes essential. It would be out of place in the earlier stages of evolution. (I do not, of course, regard Theosophists as belonging quite to the masses spoken of.) The advanced person—sometimes called a disciple—reaches a stage where karma of this kind—I mean immersion in the mere ordinary business and relations of life—becomes normally worn out. Then a distinctly specialising process can commence and evolution becomes more rapid. We should examine our own lives, realise what obligations they bring us, or rather, what we have brought ourselves, and learn from the circumstances of every day to apply the principles that have appealed to us in this incarnation sufficiently for us to wish to live them, and make at least some feeble efforts to do so.

M. E. G.—The questioner seems to be labouring under a complete misconception of the aims and ends of Theosophy, but it is, I fear, a very general misconception among a large number who would otherwise be attracted by its tenets. They confuse the great mass of abstruse instruction which has come to light through the wider study of the “Scriptures,” with the inner and real aim of theosophic teaching. I am inclined also to think that many of those who have handled its terms and phrases for the last six and twenty years have little idea how foreign their language is to ordinary ears, nor into what a bewildering maze

of facts the new comer is oftentimes led. In contradistinction to this, Theosophy or Divine Wisdom as I understand it, is the search for the “diversity of operation, but the same Spirit,” spoken of by St. Paul as underlying all religion, and the keynote of its teaching is Unity by Love. So understood, from the scriptures on every side, there comes but one answer to the above question. There is no uncertainty in the voice, the message is hedged round by no modification of varying circumstance. “Follow the wheel of life, follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, and friend and foe.” “The man who does not go through his appointed work in life, has lived in vain.” “Whatsoever ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” “Work while it is called to-day.” The striving after perfection in everything has to be daily and hourly practised and that even in the commonest tasks of life; otherwise, this physical plane would be left as an untilled corner in the garden of God’s universe. Thus, to be in the world, but not of it, is the attitude of mind required. But M. asks, what of the rank and file, are they also included in the same way? Every being has its part to play in the great drama of evolution, and for a long time self must be the dominant note. From the instinctual wants of the savage to the self-seeking grasp of the man of the world is a weary journey, but it is always upwards. From the self-seeking to seeking for others is another step gained even though the motive be self-interest in the earlier stages. Still higher, others are sought for before the wants of self are supplied, and on the topmost rung of the ladder, there is no place for the lower self at all. But to strive to inculcate complete self-abnegation before this point is attained, would simply be to destroy one of the greatest motors in the development of humanity and become that most dangerous factor in the universe, the iconoclast. There is need of an infinite and divine patience, for a time will surely come to each when the pleasures of the world will no longer charm; when the heart has found its treasure in heaven. When that time comes, the abnegation will lie in rendering hearty and faithful service among earthly things, then the work of the Logos will be fulfilled through these His agents on the physical plane, shielded by their Great Master’s prayers, “I pray not that Thou would’st take them out of the world, but that Thou should’st keep them from the evil.”

G. R. S. M.—When a similar question was put to one of the Wise Ones of the earth, it is reported that He answered: “Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and come and follow me.” In this case the young man had great possessions, and the Master was there before him in a physical body. The choice for him was to become a disciple and servant of the Master in a distinct and special task at a certain time. Now if everybody were foolishly to apply this saying to himself, there would be an end of society, and therewith of the man-process on this earth, for all would be-

come wandering ascetics. Such a pronouncement interpreted universally would mean that the Christ was of opinion that the whole world process was a failure. It is evident, therefore, that unto another He would have said otherwise, and so unto each according to his spiritual need. It follows, therefore, that no answer can be given to Z. M. unless the whole of our querent's life and circumstances is known.

I suppose that it is "desirable" that the rank and file should be "Christ's," but it is at present entirely outside the sphere of the practical; the following of the Christ and the "imitation" is to be interpreted spiritually and not literally; and a man who spends his life wisely distributing a large fortune to deserving objects is in all probability a more self-denying follower of the Christ than one who gives it away in a lump and becomes a recluse. Everyone has his own task or duty to perform, and it has been wisely said that the doing of one's own duty or natural task—one's dharma—though indifferently, is better than doing that of another with great success. So long as we try to squeeze all men into the same mould, so long will there issue forth cripples; and any system of theology which outrages nature is doomed to eventual disappearance among the unfit. Theosophy does *not* desire to make all men lank ascetics or perpetual praying-machines, but active helpers in the heart of life, glad citizens of a beautiful estate.

QUESTION 141.

M. L.—In A. A. W.'s answer to Question 139 he says that a child until seven years old is an animal. I understood that quite the opposite was the case; that we were nearer the divine in infancy, and that the "prison house" closes round us and Heaven is further off as we grow older. I should be glad of some explanation of this.

A. A. W.—I am sorry that my desire to compress my meaning into the limits of an answer in the VĀHAN has caused misunderstanding. If M. L. will read it again he will see that I did not say that even at birth it was *only* an animal, without an important qualification, which the querist has not noticed. The Self which is to animate that baby frame is *always* close at hand, watching its growth and trying to make use of it; even (as F. A. rightly reminds us) before its birth. The limit of seven years is only an average. A soul whose karma has deserved a peculiarly suitable body may bring it into working order long before; whilst, at the other extreme, a congenital idiot is a case in which this spiritualisation is quite impossible. I am glad that the querist has referred to Wordsworth's Ode. What he had in his mind is the other side of the matter. Whilst the body is being spiritualised, what happens to the soul is the converse; that is being for the time immersed—immersed, in flesh. The readers of that very remarkable Theosophical novel, Du Maurier's

Peter Ibbetson, may recall a vivid presentation of this in the chapter where the heroine, after physical death, succeeds in materialising herself for her lover's eyes and describes to him the strangeness and discomfort with which she finds her spiritual senses once more limited and obscured by physical organs. The soul, accustomed to the spiritual and immediate intercourse of the higher planes, has to see and hear vaguely and imperfectly through its human eyes and ears; can know nothing of its fellows but what these senses convey to it; and when this subjection of spirit to body is complete there is a very real and intelligible meaning in saying that the "prison house" has closed round us, at all events during our waking life. It was to this I referred when I said that in the glance of her baby's eyes the mother may possibly have soul communion deeper than ever again in after life; for the soul which speaks through them is not yet in prison and the prison bars do not yet come between them.

It seems to me that in this view we have, for the first time, an intelligible explanation of the child state. Its *faults* are those of the animal nature, not yet under full control of the Higher Ego; not *sins*, for the soul is not responsible for what has not yet been taught to obey it. They will pass when the soul takes command; whilst, on the other hand, the beauties of its infant character, the things which its mother, like Mary the mother of Jesus, "keeps and ponders in her heart," are of the true Self, which does not come into existence at birth, and dies not with the death of the body.

Of course to make this account complete, much needs to be added. The very animal nature which I so sharply distinguish from the soul within, is itself the work of that soul in previous lives, and the complete rule of it by the soul is not (in actual fact) gained in seven years or in seventy. All is a matter of degree; but the statement of the broad general principles is all which can be made here.

QUESTION 142.

1. A. Z.—1. *If an animal—say a dog or a horse—is badly wounded, or incurably diseased, and suffering pain for which there is no remedy, is it right to kill it and thus put an end to its suffering?*
2. *If a human being is suffering from an incurable disease, rendering him a burden on his friends and relations, and requiring laborious and disagreeable nursing, would he be justified in committing suicide so as to put an end to the distress of those around him?*
3. *If a child is born with repulsive deformities of a kind that could obviously never be remedied, would a medical attendant be justified (with the consent of the parents), in destroying it, and should the law be so altered as to provide sanction for such a course?*

A. P. S.—My own beliefs oblige me to answer "yes" to all three questions in this group. No doubt the general results of theosophic study lead us to respect life in a greater degree than was

usual with our ancestors. In an increasing degree we shrink from putting criminals to death, and humane feeling now forbids this except in extreme cases. People outside the circle of theosophic influence continue to kill some birds and animals for sport, but that habit, the bequest of a barbarous age, will probably be discontinued under the simple influence of humane feeling, even before the theosophic motive for regarding it with loathing is generally appreciated. But all movements of thought carrying us away from primitive error are liable to hurry their exponents, for a time, into some fanatical excess, and respect for life even may be exaggerated till it becomes absurd or even mischievous. Nature herself exhibits no respect for life. The scheme of evolution provides for its wholesale destruction at every point of the compass; at every moment of the clock. When it suits an emergency human creatures, as well as the animals around them, are swept off the face of the earth by millions. But human governments would not be justified in imitating such proceedings. We do not know enough to feel justified in destroying a race outright merely because it is ignoble and degraded. On the other hand we do feel justified in taking individual lives, when atrocious crimes have disgraced them—and if some theosophical writers disapprove of capital punishment even in such cases, that is merely on the selfish ground that the criminal may be more dangerous on the astral plane than in prison. The question is one that might be debated on its own merits; but those now before us are simpler. The consciousness of the suffering animal can only be released by its death. It is inconceivable that the volume of spiritual energy to which it belongs can be prejudiced by the suppression of the one unfortunate manifestation. The action of the person who destroys it is—by the hypothesis—purely benevolent and it would be childish to imagine bad karma attaching to any such action.

The problem of the human being releasing himself from suffering by suicide is more intricate. Such suffering could hardly be otherwise than karmic. To evade it might be, for the person chiefly concerned, to involve its recurrence in another life. But when the motive has honest reference to the comfort of others it seems fantastic to suppose that any evil consequences of a persistent nature could attach to an act that would be practically one of self-sacrifice. It is quite possible that on the astral plane, a person escaping in the manner supposed from a sick bed of suffering, would find that he was merely exchanging one disagreeable condition for another. The self-sacrifice might *not* turn out an immediate translation to bliss; but that is merely equivalent to saying that it would be in reality, as well as in intention, an act of self-sacrifice. Astral plane conditions are so varied and our information about them so imperfect as yet, that few of us can feel any assurance about the course of events after death where the circumstances are abnormal. But meanwhile it seems to me that any answer to

the question under notice would be founded on superstition and not on reason or common-sense if it forbade euthanasia under the conditions imagined.

And what excuse could we have for being accessories after the fact in an accident of Nature that has given rise to a human monstrosity?—a creature condemned from the outset of its existence to be a perennial spring of misery for itself and others. Will it be argued that the deformed organism fitted into the scheme of karma and was designed as a penal incarnation for some grievously erring ego? The argument is one which, carried to its logical conclusions, would forbid us to attempt a remedy for any state of suffering that might be developed. If a man has a wen on his head it must not be removed because it may be a kârmic infliction! If a child has bow legs they must not be straightened because the ego might have been required by Nature to express itself in that fashion! As the human race grows in wisdom and capacity it will more and more be trusted by Nature to set right her occasional unavoidable accidents, and an ego caught for a moment in a deformed incarnation would stand deeply indebted to the kind friends who turned it back from that miserable path of distress—much more deeply indebted indeed than the curable cripple whose bodily vehicle should be successfully repaired by the same intelligent lieutenants of Providence.

QUESTION 143.

H. B.—The idea of "taking short cuts," of "outstripping our fellows," has often been mentioned. Does any Ego really outstrip those of his own block or batch who began their evolution together? Is not this rapid growth quite normal at a certain stage? Why should one have that intense desire to progress? Are not those who feel this really in advance of the rest in incarnation around them, and is not their apparent outstripping the rest really quite normal evolution for them, the few advanced ones?

A. P. S.—Egos do not belong to blocks or batches. If first class Pitris, they may come into incarnation on this earth in generations, but undeniably some of them outstrip their companions, using their freewill to better purpose. The state of advancement that invests any given ego at any given period with an intense desire for spiritual progress is itself the result of relatively modest desires in that direction at an earlier stage. There is nothing to be thought of as normal in connection with spiritual progress.

E. A. B.—I think H. B. is right in supposing that the swifter advance—the "outstripping our fellows," of which he speaks, is "really quite normal" for the few advanced ones. There are egos in incarnation at the same time of widely different ages and at all stages; but it is also true that when they have developed the power of conscious choice, of the inner will, this in itself implies a growing

diversity, and they may hasten or retard their further progress by choosing to work with the Divine Will as it becomes gradually unfolded to their understanding or choosing to disregard it; or they may simply drift on without making any special effort. The first course means effort which probably none can steadfastly maintain till after many, many lessons of failure—and the last may be without blame; yet the difference in result after many lives would be so great, that what to these would seem but a possibility of some far-off future (or not even that), would be approaching realisation for the “advanced few”; *i.e.*, such quickened evolution would thus have become “normal for them,” as the result of their long-continued effort—though both classes may in the distant past have stood on the same level.

The “intense desire” for such swifter progress is a sign that the ego has at least begun to be conscious of its possibilities and to make some effort towards realising them.

E. L.—Speaking broadly, we may, I think, take it that there is a certain amount of ground which is allotted to be covered by human beings belonging to this scheme of evolution during this world period, to which I presume H. B. refers. Secondly, assuming the freewill, the Divine nature of these human beings, we can, it seems to me, infer that (within certain limits) each can take his own time in accomplishing the purpose. For instance, one person may put forth more efforts during one stage of the journey than another, or *vice versa*. The effort has to come somewhere, but owing to pre-development of faculties in some far-off past of evolution we can reasonably conclude that the force of these efforts and the stages in which they are made will differ, just as is the case when we consider a far smaller area. H. B.’s question is a fairly big one, and analogy is our best and only guide in such matters at present. For a person who had made great progress in the past it would be as he phrases it “quite normal” that such a one should outstrip the mass of humanity in these times. The abnormal thing would be if he did not do so. Everyone has the same possibilities inherent, but everyone may not develop them and does not develop them coincidentally. From the above I think it follows that, taken in a high metaphysical sense, the “outstripping” is more apparent than actual, since it only means that one reaches the goal a little sooner than another. But we can only argue these questions in a limited area, however large we make our limits, and who shall dare to set any goal as final for That which is Divine? Those who feel the intense desire to go ahead and take short cuts, certainly by that very desire prove themselves to be in advance of the masses. But what is here meant by “advanced”? There are, no doubt, a fair number of people who think they are advanced and who, from a mere vulgar ambition

of excelling their fellows and gaining distinction, may be keenly animated by this desire. It is a step on the road certainly, taken in its own time and place, but would not, it seems to me, be what is meant by the term. The only safeguard here (and a safeguard is terribly needed for all of us) would be to endeavour to make normal, not only the swifter progress, but the renunciation of the fruits of it individually in order that the whole might benefit. And we can begin to do this in our little daily lives.

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that ideas of this class are sometimes suggested with a view of utilizing the personal ambitions as aids to progress by turning them away from the physical world. But so long as they attract, the illusion of personality is still dominant. Sooner or later even the hunger for growth has to be killed out, lest we harden by the forcible passion for personal stature. Here lies the danger of the desire for psychic powers of which Rāma Krishna said “they lie in the way of the pilgrim towards Brahman as temptations. Beware of these powers and desire them not.”

It seems very unlikely that any ego really outstrips his æonic contemporaries. But the phrase quoted was probably intended to apply simply to the ordinary men surrounding such an individual in the present life.

This intense desire is felt because ambition is not killed out. Those who so suffer are certainly in advance of the rest in incarnation around them, and this craving is doubtless normal at a certain stage. But in the writer’s view real advancement lies in the transcending of the personality, in being ready to sacrifice every personal like and dislike for the sake of knowing the truth, and in thereby “becoming a mere beneficent force in nature.”

G. R. S. M.—If there be any “outstripping” by an ego it must be necessarily an outstripping of those of his own grade; this outstripping presumably means a “shortening of the times,” the causing of individual evolution to proceed more rapidly. The normal, therefore, varies. The intense desire is presumably the submission of the lower to the higher will, but what that higher will is has never yet been answered in a manner that the lower can understand.

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, OCTOBER 1, 1901.

NO. 3.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

RESIGNATION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

Before the meeting of last Convention our General Secretary, Dr. A. A. Wells, had intimated to the Executive Committee that he was desirous of resigning his office, owing to the fact that he found his health steadily failing him. At the urgent request of the Committee, however, he kindly consented to withhold his definite resignation in the hope that possibly the coming summer would restore his health and so enable him to continue to hold the office he has so admirably filled since Mr. Cuffe's much-regretted resignation.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee, however, held early in September, Dr. Wells informed the Committee that he found his health had not improved as had been hoped, and he therefore found himself obliged, however reluctantly, to place in their hands his definitive resignation of the office of General Secretary of the European Section. Under the circumstances the Committee felt obliged, though with the greatest regret, to accept Dr. Wells' resignation, and proceeded to make arrangements for filling the vacancy thus created.

Finding that Mr. Bertram Keightley, Joint-General Secretary of the Indian Section, would be remaining in England during the coming winter and spring, the Committee unanimously requested him to fill the vacant post *ad interim*, until the meeting of Convention, next July, should enable a fresh election to the office to take place in regular order. To this Mr. Keightley consented on the understanding that the arrangement should be a temporary one, limited to his stay in England, and should not involve any severing of his connection with the Indian Section.

With this issue Mr. Keightley assumes the duties of Editor of the VĀHAN.

The following letter of resignation from Dr. Wells was submitted to the Committee :

1st September, 1901.

To the Executive Committee of the European Section of the Theosophical Society.

GENTLEMEN,

I find myself compelled, by the condition of my health, to lay in your hands my resignation of the office of General Secretary, to which I was elected at the late Convention. In doing this, which I assure you is to me a matter of great and sincere regret, I desire to express my sense of the unvaried kindness and ready help I have received from everyone with whom I have been brought into contact in the discharge of my duties during the brief period I have held the office, and my best wishes for the prosperity of the Section under my successor. Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,
ARTHUR A. WELLS.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee, held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Sunday, September 8th, 1901, it was unanimously resolved :

“That the Committee accepts with the deepest regret the resignation by Dr. A. A. Wells of the office of General Secretary of the Section, and desires to place on record its grateful appreciation of the devotion with which Dr. Wells has performed his duties. The Committee feels very strongly the value of the services which Dr. Wells has rendered to the Section, both by accepting office at a moment of difficulty when the Hon. Otway Cuffe's unexpected resignation created a sudden vacancy, no less than by the admirable manner in which he has

filled the post since his election to the office in October, 1900; and deplores exceedingly that the state of his health should compel him to relinquish duties which he has performed so much to the satisfaction and benefit of the Section."

Resolved:

"That during the intended absence abroad of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, Dr. A. A. Wells be appointed to act for him as a member of the Executive Committee."

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

It has been suggested to me that a somewhat fuller statement of the case than is contained in my letter of resignation is due to the Society, but I really do not know what I can add to my advantage. I do not think that anyone who knows me could imagine that anything but actual physical necessity would have caused me to resign an office which I hold in such honour as the Secretaryship of the European Section, or would need the assurance that I depart *this life* in the fullest Christian charity with those I leave behind. A Spanish general, when *in extremis*, being exhorted to forgive his enemies, is said to have replied, "Enemies? I have no enemies! I have shot them all!" but I, much more fortunate, never had any to shoot; and one of my greatest regrets in leaving office is that I shall cease to meet so frequently the friends who have made my brief tenure of the post so pleasant, and who have done all my work, or nearly all of it, with such unselfish devotion to the Cause. I shall always have the very pleasantest recollections of my life at Albemarle Street, and nothing but regret that I was forced to leave. Why *do* I leave, then? Wholly and solely because I find myself getting old and superannuated, like so many better men before me. I was born worried, and have had a great deal of worry in my life, besides what I was born with; and I find I can't carry any more now that I am old—not even the trifling worries of a General Secretary—without serious mischief. Forty years ago I could have risen to my opportunities; I should have magnified my office, as St. Paul says, and ruled with a rod of iron, much to my own satisfaction if to no one else's; but now I have to content myself with having been a convenient stop-gap, till a better man could be found. I don't think that during my year's dignity I have done any great mischief, and if anything I may have said or done has hurt anybody's feelings I feel sure that *they* are sure I didn't mean it, and no one has ever hurt *mine*! But, like Goethe, I find after trying many things, that there is only one thing I can do well, and that is to write my native language; and I should feel much more regret in giving up my place than I do if I did not think I shall be more useful to the Cause sitting quietly at my writing desk at home, than in trying to do some one else's

Dharma in the private office at Headquarters! What more can I say or do but, in the character of the Heavy Father, go off the stage with a final "Bless you, my children!"

And I *do* say it, and with all my heart!

Yours very sincerely,
ARTHUR A. WELLS.

OPENING OF THE NEW DUTCH SECTIONAL PREMISES.

The General Secretary of the Dutch Section, Mr. W. B. Fricke, desires us to inform the members of the European Section that the new Dutch Sectional premises, 80, Amsteldijk, Amsterdam, will be formally opened on October 24th. The President-Founder will take the chair at the inaugural meeting, and Mr. Leadbeater will also be present. Any members of the European Section who may be in Holland will be welcomed.

ACTIVITIES.

Reception for the President-Founder.

On Saturday evening, October 19th, from 8.30, a Reception will be held in the rooms of the Society, at 28, Albemarle Street, W., in honour of Colonel Olcott, who will be passing through London from South America on his way to India. As our President's stay in London will be very brief, this occasion will be the only opportunity for members to meet him and give him good speed.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received up to September 20th: M. H., £1; M., £5; J. W. C., 5s.; C. H., £5; H. R., £1; O. and F. F., £2; C. P., 7s. 6d.; M. E. G., £1; J. B., £10; E. J. D., 15s.; W. H. G., 15s.; J. L. A. and E. H., £10 10s.; E. P. D., 15s.; M. S., 3s.; H. B. H., 5s. Total, £38 15s. 6d.

The Social Committee.

The Monday afternoon meetings at 28, Albemarle Street, for questions and discussion, will be resumed in November, and particulars will be given in the next issue of the VĀHAN.

Practice Debating Class.

The first meeting of this class will be held on Saturday, October 5th, at 3.30 p.m. It is hoped that as many members as possible will attend, as future arrangements will then be discussed. The debate on this occasion will be *impromptu*.

E. M. MALLET,
Hon. Secretary.

Lectures by Mr. Mead.

During the autumn six lectures, entitled "The Gospels and Modern Criticism," will be given on the most recent results of Gospel-criticism, by Mr. G. R. S. Mead, on Tuesday afternoons, from 5 to 6, in the Lecture Room of the Theosophical Society, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

SYNOPSIS OF THE LECTURES:—

Lower Criticism.—Oct. 29th. The History of the Transmission of the Greek Text and the Demonstration that the Received Text differs widely from the lost Original.

Higher Criticism.—Nov. 5th. How the four Gospels were chosen and their own Account of themselves. Nov. 12th. The Nature of the Earliest External Evidence as to their Authorship and Authority. Nov. 19th. The Present Position of the Synoptical Problem. Nov. 26th. The Problem of the Fourth Gospel.

What Lies Beyond.—Dec. 3rd. The Unveiling of the Traces of the "Gospel" itself in History and Fact.

Course Tickets, 7s. 6d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. Admission to each lecture, 2s.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The usual annual business meeting of the above Lodge will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Thursday, October 3rd, at 8.30 p.m. It is hoped that the attendance will be as full as possible.

Mr. Mead will be the lecturer on October 10th, and his title is: I. "What do we know?"

The Sunday evening meetings for enquirers will begin on October 6th; Mr. Mead is the lecturer and his title is "The 'Word of God' and the 'Lower Criticism.'"

Mr. Keightley lectures on October 13th, on "The Scope of Theosophical Enquiry."

The lectures begin at 7 p.m. Members are requested to spread the knowledge of the fact that they have begun among such of their acquaintances as are interested in Theosophy.

S. M. S.

North London Lodge.

Monday meetings were resumed on September 2nd. Mr. Glass will open a class for the study of "Vibrations," on October 5th, continuing the study on alternate Saturdays. For the intervening Saturdays a programme of lectures and papers is being arranged. The Debating Class also resumes work on October 5th. A successful winter's work is confidently anticipated.

W. M. G.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.**Lotus Circle.**

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

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Until a new Lodge room is selected there will be no regular place of meeting. Enquiries should be addressed to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Bond Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Oct. 6th, C. Burton; October 20th, B. Hodgson. Elementary class for study on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 in County Chambers, Martineau Street. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings are held on alternate Tuesdays, and a Reading Circle for members on alternate Sunday afternoons. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, Alliance Chambers, Bristol.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: Oct. 22nd, Symbolism, E. J. Cuthbertson. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Meetings at 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

FLORENCE LODGE. Meetings discontinued during the summer. Lodge rooms at Via Venezia, 8, are open on Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m., for the exchange of books.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month at 8 p.m.: Oct. 28th, *Reincarnation*, Neil Black. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 14th, *Sound and Colour*, Mrs. Handyside.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Oct. 6th, *Walt Whitman—A Reconciliation*, A. W. Waddington; Oct. 13th, *The Holy Catholic Church*, Mrs. Bell; Oct. 20th, *The Study of Human Nature*, E. J. Dunn; Oct. 27th, *Thought*, by members. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Vegetarian Restaurant, Boar Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 7th, *Dreams*, A. R. Orage; Oct. 14th, *Music and Occultism*, E. J. Dunn; Oct. 21st, *Imagination*, Mrs. Corbett; Oct. 28th, *Theosophy Applied*, E. Outhwaite. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Hyde Park, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Oct. 6th, *The Objects of the Theosophical Society*, D. N. Dunlop; Oct. 13th, *Theosophy in Relation to Modern Thought*, Miss Ward; Oct. 20th, *Is Theosophy Practical?* Mrs. Hooper; Oct. 28th, *The Christ*, A. J. Faulding.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., and on Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street. The meetings on Thursday evenings are open only to members of the Society, those on Sunday evenings also to visitors.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings discontinued for the summer.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on Mondays at 7 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N. Debating class on Saturdays, at 6.30 p.m.

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

Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Oct. 4th, *The Scope of Theosophical Inquiry*, Bertram Keightley; Oct. 11th, *Man's Place in Evolution*; Oct. 18th, *The Doctrine of Re-birth*, Miss Ward; Oct. 25th, G. R. S. Mead.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., in Room 62, York Chambers, 27, Brazen-nose Street. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays: Oct. 13th, *Fear—its Cause and Cure*, Mrs. Bell; Oct. 27th, *The Building of Character*, W. H. Thomas.

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

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino, on Mondays, at 6.15 p.m. Class conducted by Signor D. Calvari on Fridays at 6.15 p.m. for study of *Dharma*. Conversazione on Wednesdays at 6.15 p.m.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., and on Saturdays from 3 to 5 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IN A. A. W.'s answer to Question 138 of the VĀHAN he says: "By those past sins he had learned the lesson which only the going wrong *can* teach." Should the "*can*" be so very definite? Ought it not rather to be "lessons which the going wrong *will* teach him, if he be able to learn in no other way"?

Otherwise the necessity for suffering is assumed; to which I should reply, as A. A. W. replied a while ago, that it is a disgrace for a man to have to be taught by pain. In other words, there *is* a path of joy, here and now, which consists in a man learning gladly, in being always in the front of the line of evolution, in being always on his *own* line. And surely this is the more inspiring idea, and the more necessary idea in these days. As Nietzsche said: "Since man came into existence he hath had too little joy. That alone, my brethren, is our original sin."

A. R. O.

It would hardly be needful for me to say more in answer to A. R. O.'s true and beautiful letter than that I heartily agree with every word of it, if it were not that he seems to think that the word I used indicates a real divergence of opinion. I assure him that in writing it my pen hesitated—from the precise feeling he so well expresses. If I had been writing a serious treatise, instead of an answer to a question, I should, of course, have had to take into account the *theoretical* possibility

of a man's learning his lessons without anywhere going wrong. I hope I shall not characterise myself in his eyes as a hopeless pessimist if I say that, on consideration, it seemed to me needless to express such a qualification. As a matter of actual fact, I don't believe there is a single human being amongst us who has attained such an exalted development as this would imply. I shape my answers here as a preacher does his sermons, for the benefit of my immediate audience, and have no doubt they frequently contain careless statements which would not bear the scrutiny of one possessed of exact knowledge, and desirous of expressing it in formal shape. I might, were it advisable for my audience, make some show of defence for what I said; I might remind A. R. O. that Beings much higher than ourselves make mistakes and, presumably, learn by them; I might go so far as to suggest that the Universe itself has not gone precisely in the path its Maker laid out for it, and that (with all due reverence be it said) our Logos Himself may fairly be expected, like ourselves, to "do better next time." The "necessity for suffering" exists wherever *limitation* exists; though in all probability the "suffering" of the higher would be happiness unimaginable to the lower. But it is better to let it pass, with the hearty wish that my correspondent may find for himself the "joy of learning gladly and being always in the front" of which he speaks.

A. A. W.

With respect to Question 142, and answers two and three, may I ask a few more questions?

1. If in every earth-life we reap what we have sown, neither more nor less, is it a rational act to cut short such a life with the idea of saving others from distress?

2. Is any "accident of Nature" outside the Law of Karma? May not human alleviation of human ills be part of kârmic law? But can we, ordinarily, know enough to dare to cut short the *human* earth-life even of a deformed infant?

I ask the questions very humbly, because, in my work, I have fought for the "No" to those very questions to which A. P. S. answers "Yes." I remember a case where a child, on being roused from a swoon at a critical moment during a dangerous sickness, cried and reproached us for "bringing her back." An old friend of mine, a man of genius, but poor and without near relatives, and dying of an agonising malady, begged and entreated for opium to end his torture. In these, and other like cases, I never had a doubt that our duty was to insist on each earth-life running out its whole length, without shortening either by doing or leaving undone. The apparent cruelty of forcing people to live with incurable diseases, and the miseries that often come to themselves and others through the prolonging of their lives, often at the cost of immense labour and expense, has often made me feel as if I had done evil rather than good; but I had no doubt that suicide—except to escape dishonour, in the case of an otherwise defenceless

woman—was always a crime against the Law—the Natural Law. But if it is lawful to commit suicide under certain circumstances, it cannot be a duty to prevent it in others, or to force remedies on them, under those same circumstances.

It is a common belief amongst the lowest classes that seven months' babies need not be kept alive. This belief I have condemned and fought as I would the will to murder. Yet these fragile, abnormal infants, are almost certain to grow up diseased and burdensome to themselves and others. Often I have fought for the prolonging of human life, without one single reason except the belief that it was a universal law to preserve such life whenever any responsibility rested on me. But if, in any case, it is lawful (in the highest sense) to take life, then where should the line be drawn? If at absolute monstrosities, not wholly human, I think the line would be distinct enough.

A. M. F. C.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 144.

Y. Z.—*Admitting that Jesus is only one of the Aspects of God, and that Krishna, Buddha, and the like were also "Gods" in differing degrees; still, though we can no longer proclaim Him as the Universal Lord, may we not offer Him our special gratitude and love, as having lived and suffered to bring us back to the way, saying, "I belong to Him because He came to seek and to save the lost. I was lost and He found me, and loved me into happiness and hope again"?*

A. A. W.—Our querist has touched very beautifully on a point often sadly misunderstood by our Christian friends. It is very hard for them to conceive a veneration, a love, for the Christ which does *not* proclaim him as the Universal Lord; and one who refuses this, as a Theosophist must do, is instantly regarded as a disbeliever in Christianity, an Atheist. It was not so in the earlier ages of Christianity. In the Acts of the Apostles, in the speech attributed to S. Peter but a few days after the Crucifixion, we find only the simple and true statement that Jesus was a Man, a Teacher sent from God. It is, as usual, controversy which has hardened and materialised the truth. When the whole doctrine of Divine Teachers had been lost, men arose who, seeing that even now the New Testament does not speak of Christ as identical with the Father, hastily concluded that there was nothing for it but to say He was a man, *like ourselves*. Now *this*, beyond all question, He was *not*; a man, verily, but immeasurably different from, and higher than, ourselves. But the later and most defective Christian theology had no place for such a Being as He really was; the Christ could only be lifted above the pettifogging lawyer's disputes as to whether He were indeed "without sin," as regards fig-trees and swine and the like, by proclaiming Him Almighty God. The instinct was right, but the results of the ignorance deplorable. It has

finally committed the popular theology to a position absolutely untenable in the present condition of history and science, and its work must be undone if religion (in the ordinary sense of the word) is to live through the century.

But whilst agreeing that the querist should himself think and explain to his friends that he thinks of Christ in the way suggested in his question, thus putting our doctrine in as pleasant a light as possible to the Christian people about him, I do not like to let the question pass without pointing out to him that a time will come when he will see for himself that this view also is a very limited one. The Masters are not, in actual fact, separate from each other in the sense that we, still members of the common herd as we are, have a right to think ourselves as belonging to this Master or that. It is not on their plane, as it is on the physical plane where "one may be of Paul, another of Apollos, another of Christ." Till we come to the point (as yet far distant) where we shall be so raised above our fellows as to be possible *disciples* of a special Master, it is far better for us in our thoughts to group the whole of that great Hierarchy as "The Master" (as is done in our books) and to offer That the love and reverence our querist would fain still find some excuse for limiting to the Syrian Teacher. His thought shows him, to a certain extent, yet subject to the popular illusion that any reverence paid to others is so much *taken from* Jesus. It is not so, it is so much added to Him; for at that height it is already true of Them what is only a devout aspiration for us, "That they all may be one, even as Thou, Father, art one with Me and I in Thee." It is to that Divine Love, of which all the Teachers are but the channels, we must lift our eyes and hearts. Our friend forgets his New Testament; it is the love of the Father which the Teacher came to show, not his own; it is the Father's love which loves in Him, even as it is the Father—not I—who teaches the wisdom and does the work—not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. And nothing could be so distasteful to a true Master—Jesus or any other—as that the disciple should let his love and reverence stop at *His* person and not pass forwards and higher to the Father whose love sent Him into the world to seek and save. And whether you call this higher Love which flows out through Masters and disciples alike, the Father, the Logos, or the Master, is all one. For in God's sight They, and we, are even now all one in Him.

QUESTION 145.

L. S.—In *Ancient Ideals in Modern Life*, we read on page 64 :—“Every nation has its teachers, the teachers that it deserves. If there are serving in the Temples many who have no right to be there, it is because of the low level of spirituality in the masses of the people. Karma gives to every nation that which that nation has earned. The priesthood given to India is fitted to the degraded spiritual life among her people. It is the way of the West to see

the outer evils only and to try and destroy them. It is the way of the East to study the law of Karma and to sow seeds that shall bring forth fair harvest.” *The latter part of the passage quoted seems to contradict the first part; then how is it that India having sown such perfect seed in the past (as depicted in the book in question) is reaping such a bitter harvest? On page 70 we read :—“The Rishis turn eyes of tenderest love on India’s children and welcome them with a greater joy than they welcome the children of other lands.” Why? We are told in our literature that perfect justice rules the world; that being so, how could one nation be favoured beyond and above all other nations?*

A. B. C.—In endeavouring to suggest answers to the two questions raised by L. S., it is almost necessary to preface the suggestions by some remarks which are applicable to both. In dealing with the book under discussion it seems to me that one will be very liable to fall into errors of judgment unless one takes a very broad survey of the circumstances under which it comes into existence. We have, primarily, to remember that these are lectures given to Hindus with the definite object of setting before them in no measured terms the evil ways into which they have fallen, and of indicating the direction of the needed reforms. The speaker is of another race and is dealing with subjects the most intimate and sacred, fully aware of the sensitive prejudices of the people addressed. Rebuking, warning, pleading, persuading in turn, as a prophet of old might have warned and persuaded a chosen people, one almost hears the impassioned words and realises the speaker fairly carried away by the immense earnestness of purpose, the magnetic associations of the place, and the spell of the potent forces that lie behind all unselfish effort for the regeneration of a people. But these lectures are reported verbatim, and read in print, far away from any influence of place and circumstance, and then it becomes not difficult to select this and that which seem at variance with our accepted ideas. It is an enormously severe test for any speaker to be subjected to, for it is impossible for the spoken word to be as precise, as guarded, as the written book.

Mrs. Besant has lived for years among the Hindus as one of themselves, has shown herself their friend and sympathiser in religion and social life, and because of this was able to say what probably no other European could, or might have said; but even then the words of reproof had to be rendered palatable by words of a more homied kind. Is it not so with most of us? We can be led where we cannot be driven, and it is better for people to take their powder with jam rather than not take it at all. Presumably all this strenuous effort for the uplifting of a special people would not have been undertaken unless it was recognised as an important preliminary to the greater work of uplifting all mankind. The majority of us, who can only vaguely surmise as to the direction in which human energy is to be most wisely guided, are not in a position to say whether this or that is rightly

undertaken. Happily we have only our own dharma to be responsible for, but, remembering some of these things, we may perhaps wisely suspend our judgment on some of the points which come up in connection with so specialised a book, and the remembrance may help us to an explanation of the apparent contradictions.

Take the first difficulty. The ancient ideals—the perfect types—depicted in the book are drawn from a period more than 5,000 years ago—the beginning of the Kali-Yuga—and 5,000 years have afforded ample time for gradual spiritual degeneration and for the sowing of any amount of the bad karma which is now being reaped. Then the types themselves—sketched from the great epic—must not, one sees, be taken as representatives of the ordinary level of humanity at that period, but, we have been told, were in many instances highly evolved souls incarnating for a special purpose, to play a definite part in a great world drama, in fact to be the models or ideals for a coming age. This purpose has apparently been carried out, for the Mahābhārata has been to India through thousands of years its Bible and its Iliad, and has indubitably been a great uplifter of national aspiration. The normal level of humanity must have been far below the heroic types although there may conceivably have been less wickedness than to-day simply because the race was nearer its guarded childhood, for it has been set forth that in many of the earlier civilisations divine kings and rulers were the means of ensuring much less crime and suffering than we have amongst us to-day; but we cannot fail to see that that was a stage of comparative childhood and that as intellect grew, and with its greater possibilities, wider choices and individual responsibility, the age of innocent ignorance passed away, and the race began to sow its wild oats and is gathering the harvest.

Viewed in this way I do not think the book sets forth any contradiction to the law of karma. The sentences as to the way of the West and the way of the East should really, I take it, have commenced a fresh paragraph on the page in question. If L. S. will turn it up again he will find that these sentences in reality hinge on to the latter part of the page, the speaker going on to emphasise the need of improving ourselves so that our environment may improve rather than demanding—after the fashion of the West—that the environment shall be improved first. It is obviously out of gear with the preceding lines unless more of the context is read.

Turning to the quotation from p. 70, a very nice question is raised. The spirit of mischief might dictate the suggestion that a parallel is to be found in Luke, c. 15, v. 7; or an analysis might indicate that there could be no question of injustice as the “greater joy” was an emotion pertaining to the Rishis, not to the children of India. It is not stated that the latter receive any greater benefit or blessing, only that their redemption affords more pleasure among the Rishis “who love their ancient fatherland.” But taking the point *au sérieux*, if one may venture to try to read the

thought which was in the speaker's mind, I think it would be found to be a recognition of the fact which is set forth in one of the letters in the *Occult World*, p. 86 (fifth edition). It is there written by one of the Masters of Wisdom—“Tracing our lineage through the vicissitudes of Indian civilisation from a remote past, we have a love for our motherland so deep and passionate that it has survived even the broadening and cosmopolitanising effect of our studies in the laws of nature. And so I, and every other Indian patriot, feel the strongest gratitude for every kind word or deed that is given in her behalf.” Here is a distinct statement by one of the Adept Brethren themselves of their patriotic feeling, and I am inclined to think that a re-perusal of the letter from which the above is quoted, and indeed of a good deal more in that, of late, somewhat neglected book, might tend to re-adjust the balance of ideas on other points besides the particular one of the patriotism of more highly evolved humanity. In view of such a passage as the one just cited, one cannot feel that the orator has gone beyond the legitimate use of rhetoric in that part of her peroration, although the natural feeling of those of another race might well be a sense of chill on first reading the lines. A little reflection convinces one that no very serious injustice is even implied—much less possible—and one has only to remember that, in the natural course of things, the egos now incarnated for work in the West must have been “India's children” in the past—perhaps many times—and probably will again, to remove any latent feeling that any remoteness from the hearts of the Great Ones is really incurred by reason of our Western bodies. Nay! rather one may take comfort in the reflection that if, as this book hints and other books have plainly stated, a western body is a handicap to the spiritual life then—welcome the western body and be a berserker! The bigger the odds the greater the glory!

E. L.—The questioner appears to have left out of consideration the fact of cyclic law with its alternating periods of night and day, dark and light, both of which are perfectly natural, and only requiring to be kept in perfect balance one with the other. The perfect seed that India has sown will assuredly be reaped in due time, although we in our present lives and times may only perceive the reaping of some other harvest sown. We are told that some thousands of years ago India began to fall from her high estate, and since then if we study her history it seems that the Dark Forces have been using many channels thus prepared for them, in order to work their own ends. According to the channel prepared so is the Force that uses it. The present state of things then may quite conceivably be a reaping of the harvest sown in those far-off days which immediately succeeded a period of great enlightenment. Can we not then assume that the stage lying in front of this mighty nation is one where the day shall succeed the night, and the fair harvest sown in the golden age shall be reaped once again?

Thus it will be seen that the apparent contradiction comes from our own inability to sense a wider range of things than *one* day and *one* night of the great evolution through which the spirit of that mighty empire is passing, a progression which cannot be fully intimated in human language, and in the limits of one short discourse, as the writer would be the first to admit. And when the Golden Age of India dawns is it not quite imaginable that some of us in our *then* limits will be asking, "How is it possible that out of such darkness the daylight has arisen to bless and illuminate anew?"

As regards the second part of this questioner's difficulty, will he or she pardon me for saying that it comes from a little sore, but natural craving, of our very human hearts, coupled with the difficulties which the growing mind in us is bound to create, and which induce conflict in that process of growth.

The Rishis *do* turn eyes of tenderest love on India's children, but it should be remembered, in all fairness, that these are Indian Rishis, the special guardians of that vehicle of the Life of God. Their first concern is with that nation. *That* is their work. Can we doubt that each nation has its own guardians, Who love it best, and Who did They not do so, would not fulfil the Good Law? For remember that all and any who are working in connection with any limited state, any form-side of things, however high, are also limited for the time being, a limitation, of course, which, compared to our sense of the term, is not limitation, hence the very natural idea that leads one at first sight to resent anything like partiality (as it seems to him) being attributed to these lofty beings. I have been told that even the Masters have their favourite pupils, so if I believe that I do not find it difficult to believe that Those still higher may incline more towards one nation than another. It is my belief that the same tendencies and attributes existing in humanity as we know it, are come across again and again in an ever-extending form, as we climb the mount of evolution. In this world we see the father of a family having a care for his own children above those of others, and rightly so, for they are his special charge, kârmically brought into relation with him for the time being. Why should not this sentiment find its portrayal far higher, where the family becomes the nation or race, and its Father is the Rishi, its guardian? The book from which these quotations are taken is composed of discourses addressed to, and written for, India particularly, and we, as children of another great nation, have priceless privilege in that it has come into our hands, and may well teach us of things high and holy, wise and true, if we are *grateful* enough to accept, receptive enough to learn from it. Myself I believe—and the belief may hold a suggestion for the questioner—that India *does* occupy a special position in the world's history, and I see no reason why one nation should not hold the office of priest and teacher, another that of, say, warrior or statesman, and so on, the whole group of nations involved in the scheme

being destined to form at last some great unity, some harmonious organism through which the Light and Life of a God may pour.

G. R. S. M.—It should be remembered that the above passages are quoted from speeches delivered on the spur of the moment to a special audience. Personally, I am of opinion that it would be better to rewrite all such lectures before issuing them in book form; on the other hand, it is said that scrupulous honesty demands the exact reproduction of a speaker's words. Objections to a speech should be properly confined to the members of the audience and be addressed to the speaker himself; a few words of explanation can then either easily remove misunderstanding, or at any rate make the issue more definite. But "the written word endures," and when what was transitory speech passes into permanent print, it challenges the standard of far wider and minuter criticisms, where the critic has the additional advantage of again and again reviewing the words used by the speaker.

Now L. S.'s question when addressed to THE VĀHAN, merely amounts to this: Don't you think my points are well taken? To this question my answer is: Certainly your points are well taken; but why don't you write to the speaker herself? Doubtless her written answer will explain what is present in the report of her spoken words seems not only obscure but contradictory to what she has written elsewhere.

QUESTION 146.

J. W.—*Is it possible, during the present round, for monads who have reached the ultimate in the mineral kingdom to enter the plant world; or vegetables, in like manner, the animal? It is distinctly taught that no more monads can enter the human kingdom in this round, and that animals ready to become men have to wait until the close of this and the beginning of the next manvantara before incarnating in human form. Is this also true of monads in the lower kingdoms, or do they continue onward without pause?*

A. P. S.—"Monad" is rather a misleading expression as applied to the mineral and vegetable kingdoms. A large volume of spiritual energy animates an immense mass of vegetable life. In the mineral kingdom it has even been said that there is only one mineral monad for the whole. The method by which this passes on to the next higher kingdom is altogether mysterious. Probably it passes all round the chain of planets as such before it melts into another kingdom in the manasic planet A. But there has been no precise teaching on the subject as far as I know.

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1, 1901.

NO. 4.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

ACTIVITIES.

THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER.

Colonel Olcott arrived in London from South America, after a visit to the Branches in the Argentine Republic, on Sunday, October 20th. He should have arrived on October 18th, but unfortunately his boat was delayed. The reception which was arranged for Saturday, the 19th, had, therefore, to take place without its chief guest, and a large number of members were greatly disappointed. Colonel Olcott, however, attended the meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge on the Sunday evening and many members had the great pleasure of welcoming him. His stay in London was very short, as he had to leave the day after his arrival for Holland, in order to open the new Dutch Sectional Rooms in Amsterdam, as announced in our last issue.

OPENING OF THE NEW DUTCH SECTIONAL ROOMS.

The official opening of the new Headquarters at Amsterdam of the Netherlands Section, on the evening of October 24th, was a most successful function. Colonel Olcott occupied the chair and addressed the meeting; an address of welcome was given by Mr. W. B. Fricke, General Secretary of the Section, and short addresses by Mr. Leadbeater, who spoke on behalf of the European Section, Count Axel Wachtmeister, who represented the Scandinavian, Herr Bernhard Hubo, who spoke for Germany, and de Heer W. H. M. Kohlen, who said some words of cordial friendship on behalf of the Branches at Brussels and Antwerp. After some eloquent remarks by Madame Meuleman, Colonel Olcott pronounced the rooms officially opened, and the crowded and enthusiastic audience adjourned for refreshments, which had been provided.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to October 20th: F. C., £1; E. F., 5s.; F. K., 12s. 7d.; A. M., 10s.; A. G. M., 10s.; E. W., £10; A. C., £1; E. J. G., £1 1s.; W. T., £1 1s.; B. P. M., 15s.; G. R. S. M., £2 2s.; J. A., 5s.; C. M., £12; H. and K. D., 5s.; A. M., £2; F. W. S., £1 5s.; M. H., £1; S. E. G., 2s. 6d.; A. L. E. H., £4; M. A., £2 2s.; C. E., £21. Total, £62 16s. 1d.

Section Reference Library.

We have pleasure in acknowledging the reception for the Library of the following books: *Medical Testimony to the Miracles of Lourdes*, The Rev. R. F. Clarke, London, C.T.S.; *Revelations of Divine Love Recorded by Julian, anchoress at Norwich, A.D. 1373*, edited by Grace Warrack, London, 1901; *In Tune with the Infinite*, Ralph Waldo Trine, London, 1900; *The Adversaries of the Sceptic*, Alfred Hodder, London and New York, 1901; *Evolution and its Bearing on Religions*, A. J. Dadson, London, 1901; *Giebt es ein Leben nach dem Tode? Giebt es einen Gott?* Bernhard Hubo, Hamburg, 1901; *Bouw-en-Sier Kunst*, Amsterdam.

A. J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Afternoon Meetings at Headquarters.

Six Afternoon Meetings will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, from 3 to 5 o'clock on Mondays in November and December, for discussion and questions on Theosophy. Open to all members of the Society and their friends.

The names of those who will answer questions are:—

Nov. 4th.	Mr. Sinnett.
" 11th.	Mrs. Hooper.
" 18th.	Miss E. Ward.
" 25th.	Mr. Ward.
Dec. 2nd.	Mr. Bertram Keightley.
" 9th.	Mr. Mead.

Full particulars may be obtained on application to the undersigned.

W. H. THOMAS.

7, Ryedale Terrace, Middlesbrough.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The above Lodge re-opened on October 3rd, when the annual business meeting was held. Mrs. Besant was, of course, enthusiastically re-elected President; and the only change in the officials of the Lodge for the current year is the retirement of Mr. Moore from the Council and the election of Miss Goring and Mr. Keightley.

The monthly conversaziones were abandoned for the time being; and on the suggestion of a member of the Council that such arrangements were better in the hands of the Social Committee, it was suggested that a quarterly Conversazione should be held as a Sectional, rather than a Lodge, activity. In place of the monthly Lodge Conversazione it was arranged to hold an open night for questions and discussion.

Mr. Mead was the lecturer on October 10th. His title was: "What do we know?" The Lodge, on that occasion, listened to an exceedingly able lecture, giving food for much thought. The substance of Mr. Mead's remarks will be found in the *Theosophical Review* for this month in the "Watch-Tower."

Mr. Mead was also the speaker on October 6th, and his lecture on "The 'Word of God' and the 'Lower Criticism'" aroused much interest; this lecture was the first of the Sunday evening meetings for enquirers; Mr. Keightley delivered the second on the 13th, his title being "The Scope of Theosophical Enquiry." Those who have heard Mr. Keightley speak on this and kindred subjects will know his power of perceiving and throwing light upon the difficulties which arise in the mind of the enquirer with regard to the statements advanced by students of Theosophy.

S. M. S.

Battersea Lodge.

Owing to Mr. Vennor Morris's departure from London, he has been compelled to resign the Secretaryship of this Branch and Mr. A. P. Cattanaich has taken his place.

Correspondence Class.

It has been suggested that a Correspondence Class for members of the Society might be helpful to those who are unable to attend classes and lectures. Those wishing to join such a class should send their names to the General Secretary.

"Secret Doctrine" Class.

A class for the study of the *Secret Doctrine* will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on alternate Thursdays, at 5.30 p.m., and will be conducted by Miss Goring. The class began on October 31st. Any members who are interested are invited to attend.

Lectures by Mr. Mead.

The following lectures on "The Gospels and Modern Criticism" will be delivered by Mr. G. R. S. Mead, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, on Tuesday afternoons, from 5 to 6. The first lecture on the "Lower Criticism" was given on October 29th.

The following is the synopsis of the remaining lectures:—

Higher Criticism.—Nov. 5th, How the four Gospels were chosen and their own Account of themselves. Nov. 12th, The Nature of the Earliest External Evidence as to their Authorship and Authority. Nov. 19th, The Present Position of the Synoptical Problem. Nov. 26th, The Problem of the Fourth Gospel.

What Lies Beyond.—Dec. 3rd, The Unveiling of the Traces of the "Gospel" itself in History and Fact.

Course Tickets, 7s. 6d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. Admission to each lecture, 2s.

North of England Federation.

The next Conference will be held in the Swedish Gymnasium, Harrogate, on Saturday, November 2nd, at 3 p.m., under the presidency of Mr. Bertram Keightley. All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend. Mr. Keightley will also address a public meeting in Harrogate on Sunday, November 3rd, at 7 p.m., and during the same week lecture in Bradford, Hull, Manchester, and Edinburgh. On November 10th, he will lecture in Middlesbrough, and the following day in Leeds.

Meetings at Shepherd's Bush.

A series of "At Homes" for the purpose of bringing together Spiritualists and Theosophists for friendly interchange of views, was held last winter at the house of Mrs. Bathe, and was attended with great success. These meetings will be resumed on November 12th, and continued on alternate Tuesdays up to and including December 10th. Mr. Robert King will attend at each meeting to answer questions. Admission by ticket, to be obtained by sending stamped addressed envelope

to Mrs. E. Bathe, 15, Ashchurch Terrace, Goldhawk Road, Shepherd's Bush, W.

R. K.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lotus Circle.

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

A. J. W.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Nov. 10th, J. H. Duffell; Nov. 17th, A. W. Greener; Nov. 24th, B. Old. Class for study of the *Bhagavad Gītā* on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., November 2nd and 16th, and for general study at 3 p.m., Nov. 9th, 23rd and 30th, at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at the "Downs" Café, 186, Whiteladies' Road, Clifton, (first floor room). The Lodge Library is available at all times to members on application to the Manageress of the Café. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: Nov. 19th, *The Systems of Yoga*, M. A. C. Thirlwall. Lodge meetings are held twice monthly for special study. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Meetings at 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m.

FLORENCE LODGE. Meetings discontinued during the summer. Lodge rooms at Via Venezia, 8, are open on Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m., for the exchange of books.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month at 8 p.m.: Nov. 25th, *Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement*, J. Wilson. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 11th, *Theosophy and Spirituality*, D. G. Williamson.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Nov. 3rd, *The Intellectual, Emotional and Spiritual Elements in Religion*, Bertram Keightley; Nov. 10th, *Karma, or Action and Reaction*, Miss Shaw; Nov. 17th, *Progress—the Law of Life*, Hodgson Smith; Nov. 24th, *The Real and the Unreal*, Mrs. Corbett. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 4th, *Some Neglected Christian Teachings*, W. H. Thomas; Nov. 11th, *Life and Death*, Bertram Keightley; Nov. 18th, *An Ancient Idea of Evolution*, A. R. Orage; Nov. 25th, *The Sun and His Seven Suns*, Miss Shaw. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Hyde Park, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Nov. 3rd, *The Life of a Crystal*, J. Stirling; Nov. 10th, *Evolution, Heredity and Reincarnation*, A. P. Cattanaach; Nov. 17th, *Persian Mysticism*, J. M. Watkins; Nov. 24th, *A Peep into the Gospel Workshop*, G. R. S. Mead.

Lodge meetings for study on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m., Nov. 13th and 17th. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanch, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street.: Nov. 7th, *Science and Poetry*, W. C. Worsdell; Nov. 14th, 11.—*What do We Believe?* G. R. S. Mead; Nov. 21st, Open Night for Questions and Discussion; Nov. 28th, *Conceptions of Duty*, B. Keightley. These meetings are open only to members of the Society. Sunday evening meetings at 7 p.m., open to members and visitors: Nov. 3rd, *The Vehicles of Consciousness*, A. H. Ward; Nov. 10th, *The Theory of Re-birth*, W. B. Lauder; Nov. 17th, *Man's Place in Evolution*, Miss Ward; Nov. 24th, *Theosophy and Chemistry*, G. Dyne.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 5th, *Progress on the Physical and other Planes*, Miss F. Arundale; Nov. 12th, *Short Cuts*, Miss A. Hallawell; Nov. 19th, *The Duty of Self-Development*, Robert King; Nov. 26th, *Evidences of Immortality*, D. N. Dunlop. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 4th, *The Prodigal Son*, A. H. Ward; Nov. 11th, *Nature's Septenary Basis*, G. Dyne; Nov. 18th, *Is Theosophy Practical?* Mrs. Hooper; Nov. 25th, *Esoteric Religion*, P. G. Tovey. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N. The following lectures will be delivered: Nov. 9th,
. . . A. J. Faulding; Nov. 11th, *Indian Famines, some of their Causes and possible Cure*, Mrs. Mallet; Nov. 26th, V. J. J. Lewis. Debating class on Saturdays, at 6.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Nov. 1st, *The Worlds Visible and Invisible*, A. P. Sinnett; Nov. 8th, *Vehicles of Consciousness*, M. U. Moore; Nov. 15th, *Life after Death*, Miss E. M. Mallet; Nov. 22nd, *The Doctrine of Rebirth*, Miss Arundale; Nov. 29th, *Theosophy and Science*, G. Dyne.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., in Room 62, York Chambers, 27, Brazenose Street. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road: Nov. 10th, *Man's Larger Life*, Bertram Keightley; Nov. 24th, *God, Man and the Devil*, Miss Shaw.

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

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino, on Mondays, at 6.15 p.m. Class conducted by Signor D. Calvari on Fridays at 6.15 p.m. for study of *Dharma*. Conversazione on Wednesdays at 6.15 p.m.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., and on Saturdays from 3 to 5 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

I SHOULD like to say a few words in reply to A. M. F. C., who in the last VĀHAN dealt with some replies I had given in the previous issue concerning Question 142. The points on which A. M. F. C. expressly differs from me, relate, firstly, to the question whether it could be right to give an over-dose of opium to a person dying of an agonising malady. That question, let me point out, differs from the one which I answered in the affirmative. My problem was whether a person in the position to act for himself, would be justified in putting an end to his own life if he knew that his disease was incurable, and a cause of protracted suffering to others around him. I think my affirmative answer can be supported on the principle which is held sufficient for some geometrical proofs, the *reductio ad absurdum*. Suppose the man is not mistaken; suppose he could know that some kârmic penalty would attach to his act, and suppose him to say, "I would rather bear that kârmic penalty than let my friends suffer any longer," is it conceivable that such an act of self-sacrifice could really be held blameworthy in the sight of exalted intelligence. It may reasonably be asked whether such conditions are ever likely to arise: that is beside the question. I want simply to show that even some doctrines connected with the taking of life which do apply to the vast majority of cases that arise, may themselves be worshipped too unintelligently, that even in this domain of thought there can hardly be rules to which there is no exception. The problem raised by your correspondent is itself an interesting one, though differing from that with which I was concerned. It seems to me to come on to rather more debatable ground, but granting that no mistake is made in the conditions, I lean to think that the friend administering the over-dose might conceivably come into the category of those who, for the sake of another, are willing to run a personal risk, and in that way would approximate in its nature pretty closely to the simpler case with which I was dealing.

But this problem in either of its aspects lies almost outside the region of practical politics. The question whether it is right to destroy grievously

deformed infants, is one with which we are much more likely to have personal concern, and the idea I maintained, that in some cases such destruction would be quite justifiable—apt I know to shock long-established feeling and to conflict with some of the formal conceptions that have been developed with reference to the Law of Karma—is nevertheless one which can be brought to the test of the *reductio ad absurdum* like the problem before discussed. Can anyone in his senses pretend to think that, in some rare and distressing case, in which a woman gives birth to a creature which is not in any outward sense a human being, but simply a horrible monstrosity, such as we know have occasionally come into the world by an “accident of nature”—as I should be inclined to say—can anyone pretend to think that the duty of those around is to make all efforts in their power to preserve this wretched life and rear this hideous being to be a curse to all with whom it may have to do. Such a pretence would be a still more extravagant act of fanaticism than that of which we hear amongst the Indian fakirs, who will not move a step without sweeping the ground lest they unconsciously destroy some form of life. That, at all events, is a harmless folly. The act of preserving a monstrosity would be in its real nature, if properly understood, a crime against the community. For the rest, the question simply is one of drawing the line. What accident or deformity shall be held to constitute monstrosity of the kind which ought to be suppressed? It is quite outside the purpose with which I write to attempt to draw such a line. I am simply endeavouring to guard theosophic thinkers from a misdirected excess of veneration for a principle which, of course, in the vast majority of cases, is perfectly sound—the principle of allowing karma to take its course in regard to the form assigned by nature for any given entity. But it is a part of the whole scheme of evolution that, in its later chapters, the human beings who are its product, as they advance in wisdom and spiritual trustworthiness, shall help nature to accomplish her higher purposes. There are many tasks which at the outset of her great evolutionary undertaking she has to leave imperfectly fulfilled. As more and more of her human children attain to years of discretion, in which they can render her assistance, so these tasks become more and more satisfactorily fulfilled; and surely when the discretion has been sufficiently attained, one of the tasks to be performed will be the correction of accidental “errors and omissions” which may enter even into the mighty balance-sheet of human merit and mistake. This last idea is one which it is impossible to elaborate within the limits of such a letter as I am now writing, but it is one to which profound students of the Kārmic Law must sooner or later turn their earnest attention.

A. P. S.

With regard to Question 142 and its answer the writer does not wonder that A. M. F. C. is

not quite satisfied. It is one thing to lay down the law in the abstract, and another to be confronted with the awful problem of carrying it out in practice. The original question is divided into three parts:

- (1) Is it right to kill a suffering animal?
- (2) Is it right to commit suicide to relieve others' distress?
- (3) Is it right to kill a child born with repulsive deformities?

The answer to these problems the writer thinks is essentially one, and it depends on another question: “What is the object of physical incarnation?” As far as the writer can understand the teachings of theosophy, the object of life is to evolve new centres of consciousness in the Universal Mind. “The One willed to multiply,” and the whole Universe and all in it is the expression of that Will. If this is so, then the object of personal existence, either animal or human, is the evolution of the individual ego, the conscious centre; potential in the animal, actual in the man. The only thing which can cause the evolution of the ego is experience, whether pleasant or painful is immaterial from this point of view. “It sounds brutal to say so, but our feelings don't matter,” we have heard Mrs. Besant say. Experience, then, is the one thing needful, and experience is gained through the physical body. If therefore we kill an animal which is suffering, we rob it of experience, and so retard the evolution of its consciousness. This will be a “hard saying” to those who are “frightened at the sight of the hot tears of pain, and deafened by the cries of distress,” but if the evolution of consciousness is the object of life, it is true. If the enjoyment of physical pleasure and the avoidance of physical pain is the object of life, it is not true.

The same principle applies to the question of suicide; the incidental sufferings of the person involved, and of those kārmically bound to him, are beside the point. Suicide is shirking experience; it is also futile, since it only postpones the evil day for everyone concerned. The great law cannot be got behind, or evaded, or run away from; the conservation of energy rules on all planes, and action and re-action are everywhere equal and opposite. The uttermost farthing must be paid, just as water must find its level. There is no room for “accidents,” since there cannot be effects without causes. Either the universe is a coherent evolution, with cause and effect running straight on from first to last, or it is a fortuitous concatenation of atoms; that it can be partly one and partly the other is inconceivable.

Take the last question about the deformed infant. Would A. P. S. be prepared to strangle one with his own fingers? Would he further be prepared to state the *actual* cause of death on the certificate? Or would he put his name to a lie? These are some of the details which would confront a would-be “intelligent lieutenant of Providence” in cases of life and death.

If the object of life then is the evolution of consciousness, the writer joins A. M. F. C. in answer-

ing "No" to the last two questions. Brought to the test of practice, in the case of the animal, he would probably swerve from the straight line of abstract duty; but he would do it with his eyes open, and recognise that the selfish desire to escape the sight of its sufferings was his real motive. He entirely believes that the alleviation of human ills is part of kârmic law; what else than this is it to "help to lift the heavy karma of the world"? There is no labour too great, no patience too inexhaustible to lavish on such work. But the line must be drawn at murder and suicide. Who are we to dare to put a term to human life? It is our duty to preserve it as long as we can, painlessly if possible; to turn round and end it prematurely is to undertake the "dharma of another"—the hangman—"and the dharma of another is full of danger." Even in the case of a woman's suicide to escape dishonour, the law must hold; for what is even this from the point of view of the immortal ego? Such a calamity would inevitably be a kârmic debt, not to be escaped. "To gain knowledge we must have gone through *all* places, foul and clean alike." Again, it is obvious that a "monstrous" incarnation must be directly kârmic; could such a tremendous experience be an accident, unless every experience is the result of pure chance? The ego involved would only have to go through the same experience again if its physical life were destroyed. Happily such incarnations seldom last long; and it would seem wisest to allow the distorting energies to exhaust themselves, lest a second incarnation be spoilt.

How can we tell what experiences an ego has to go through? Would it not have been a mistake to have destroyed Byron, or the armless artist of Brussels? It is the writer's conviction, for the above reasons, that A. M. F. C. is perfectly right in striving to save life under all circumstances, regardless of the desires of the patient, or the miseries, labours, and expenses of his friends. These painful experiences are inevitable, and must be faced with fortitude; if evaded now they will only return later, since "no efforts, whether in right or wrong direction, can vanish from the world of causes."

A. H. W.

Referring to G. R. S. M.'s reply to Question 118 in the April VĀHAN, is it possible to state to what "vehicle" of consciousness—according to the generally accepted seven-fold classification—and what "state" of consciousness, the so-called fourth dimensional "plane" belongs; also whether the words "Three in One" (not three plus one) convey any accurate idea as to the term?

Perhaps it will help anyone favouring me with a reply to the accompanying question if I state one of my principal reasons for asking the same.

There are terms used in Theosophical literature to convey three distinctly separate ideas, *viz.* :

States of Consciousness,
Vehicles of Consciousness,
Planes of Consciousness,

which I have always found difficult to harmonise.

Practically speaking, many of us seem apt to get hold of one term of the equation to express indiscriminately either one or the whole three, and we sometimes misunderstand one another over the use of terms, resulting in unprofitable wrangling.

I realise the difficulty of making any accurately tabulated statement owing to the interpenetration of the "principles," and I see, on the one hand, that if we are to agree together in our Lodges we must have some basic principle upon which we may define the terms we use one with the other, and upon the other hand, that if we make permanent authoritative definitions we shall soon drift into stereotyped creeds and dogmas.

For myself, I define knowledge: first, as a process, the collection and classification of facts; second, the true relationship of one fact with another. Wisdom: The altruistic use of knowledge. The Hindu mind, with the terms Vidyâ and Avidyâ, would probably explain the relationship of knowledge and wisdom rather differently.

A. E. J.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 147.

J. H.—A person who has been brought up in the orthodox Protestant Christian Church, but who three years ago became a Theosophical student and believer, has to struggle against and to overcome serious temptation. When a Christian he used to pray much, and, being a firm believer in the Gospels, he found strength and help.

Being now convinced of the absolute error of the Christian Church teachings, he misses the personal God to pray to, misses the help, and wants to know how Theosophy can help him. As he has been trying to concentrate his will against that temptation and has found that in himself he has no strength, he is getting more and more disgusted at himself, discouraged, and losing confidence of any good being in him. Who will be so kind as to enlighten him?

A. A. W.—The difficulty which J. H. feels is one which is not confined to those who have lost confidence in the ordinary Christian teaching. He assures us that in prayer to Jesus Christ he, in old times, found strength and help. There are many devout Christians who cannot say so much for themselves. In my experience (and this has been a wide one) the discouragement which J. H. describes is a very common one amongst intelligent Christians. They, too, pray much; they, too, find they have no strength in themselves; but neither prayer nor concentration brings them the power to get rid of their incubus, and they come at last to despair, not only of themselves, but of their religion. When the Wisdom is presented to them, its charm—the hope it holds out—is not of any deliverance from error in Christian

teaching, but the much more practical one of deliverance from actual *sin*. With St. Paul, their cry is, "The things I *would* not, these I do." It is a question of action, not of belief.

Now if I were dealing with the querist in private conversation, instead of in print, I should say to him that if he really did find in his Christianity the means of vanquishing his tempter, he had suffered a great misfortune in allowing himself to be drawn away from it; that he had unhappily gained freedom before he was ready for it; and I should do my best to show him the higher and deeper meanings of the Christian faith, unknown to its professional defenders, which might enable him to return, for the time, to his abandoned creed. But (I hope he will pardon my incredulity!) I do not believe that this is what he means; and, at all events, my answer will be more useful to my readers if I take it that his complaint is that of so many of us, that our better knowledge of the Truth does not bring us the strength against temptation we hoped to obtain from it. But the fault is not in the Wisdom.

Modern Christianity regards human life as a competitive examination. If at its close we can show so many years clear of the transgression of a certain limited number of rules laid down by theologians as expressing the arbitrary Will of a God, to be read in a collection of books, not *very* old books, known as the Bible, we "*pass*" into an eternal Heaven. If we have not this record to show we fail, and suffer for ever in Hell for our failure. Further, the popular view is that a blotted record may be cleansed, and our "*passing*" secured by a process called "*Faith in the atonement made by the blood of Jesus*"; and this without any improvement in our character or habits. Now, as I have so often said here and elsewhere, this is not a view which can possibly commend itself to the conscience of an enlightened man or woman of the twentieth century; and the profession of it by such an one is as much an act of "*blind faith*," of "*subjection of the intellect*," as anything ever required by the grossest superstition of the dark ages. A conscientious Christian of the present day cannot be satisfied with any "*taking hold of the merits of Christ*"—he is not satisfied with some ideal purity to be received in another world; Religion is to him vain if it cannot purify him and strengthen him for his actual struggle with his known vices; and when he finds it cannot do that he despairs. For there are but a few years left him to obtain the victory, and each of these years will see him weaker, not stronger, in body and soul alike, until death ends all, and "*after that the judgment*."

Now, the essence of the querist's trouble is that he is bringing this view over into his new life. He has learned the Christian error, but he has not attained the truth of the Wisdom. He must learn that he—his Higher Ego, his true Self—lives, even now, in the Eternal, not in the temporal. It is perfectly possible—nay, even probable, that his struggle with the tempter may last, not one life only, but many lives; for when that is ended he

will be more than man. He has—it may be in this life, or it may have begun thousands of years ago—shaped for himself a tempting devil; and year after year he has put more and more of his life into the elemental he has formed, until it is far stronger than himself. That life should have gone to rule the beast, but instead of that he has spent his whole strength in feeding and cherishing it till he is its slave instead of its master. Now what the querist, as a student of the Wisdom, has to do, is to realise that this is so, and yet *not* to despair. He is "*disgusted at himself and losing confidence of any good being in him*." That simply means that he does not yet realise that the beast is *not* "*him*." There is no good in the animal nature; that is not under the sway of motives and considerations at all—morality is a word of no meaning to it. And he has let his mind, which knows right and wrong, become the slave of this soul-less monster; a horrible degradation, but still only an extreme case of the condition of every soul imprisoned in the flesh. His struggle is no exceptional one; it is the same fight which, on a higher plane, the highest saint has to wage. And it is just the one thing for which he came into the world, his means of growth upwards. He is yet a child, and his disgust with himself is simply that he cannot yet do a strong man's task. His defence against despair is that he is quite certain to grow stronger, life after life, till he does gain his victory. He himself, in his true Self, is the Warrior of *Light on the Path*, who cannot (with exceptions which do not practically concern him) finally be defeated. His one duty is to keep up the struggle, undismayed by his defeats, however many; every effort will come back to him as renewed strength hereafter. It is, even, not wise to wish for the shortening of the struggle—to desire immediate victory, even were it possible: far less to be impatient because we see no prospect of it in this short life. For it is the efforts we make in the struggle which form our treasure for the hereafter; our claim for further advance is that we have greatly dared and nobly fought; the physical-plane result of our fight means nothing for the soul.

It is true there have been (and are) abundance of holy souls in all religions who have passed through our stage of the fight and now hardly feel the temptations which are too much for us; but this is not because they *believed* this or that. It is that they are before us in the scale of evolution. Such chosen souls have been in previous lives as we are now; and as *they are now*, so shall we be in our turn. As is said of the Christ in the New Testament, they are the "*first fruits*" of the human race, and pledges of the time when we too shall "*tread Satan under our feet*."

For practical assistance J. H. will do well to refer to Mrs. Besant's papers "*On some Difficulties of the Religious Life*," pp. 260 and 308 in Vol. xxiv. of the *Theosophical Review*. May I venture to add a reference to one of my own, Vol. xxiii., p. 531, where I have spoken on this matter at greater length than is allowable here.

QUESTION 148.

F. L.—*I find all my efforts at leading the higher life—and they have been earnest and long-continued—made vain by an evil habit, contracted many years ago, and from which, do what I will, I cannot free myself. I am married and have had children, but they have all died; I had not the needful life to transmit to them. Since I have set myself on the Path, and done my best to sow good seed, I find this “giant weed,” instead of diminishing, growing stronger and stronger. In every other respect I seem to myself to have gained a certain amount of freedom; I can go on my way careless of pleasure or pain, but here I am helpless. I know well the ruin of body and soul it brings—all the wreck I have to expect in the remaining years of my life for myself and my family alike, but all considerations are useless to give me the victory. Is there no help for me? I have not yet lost all hope, but each failure weakens my confidence and brings me nearer to the abyss. For if I lose that, what is left for me?*

A. A. W.—I have placed F. L.'s question here, because I can thus refer him to my previous answer, which is as complete as I can make it in small compass, as far as the general principle goes. But his exceedingly touching appeal gives me the opportunity of viewing the matter from another side.

All these “crazes”—the drink craze, the opium craze, and the many more of the kind—have, I believe, a single cause, and that essentially a physical one. They are all illegitimate ways of obtaining relief from a condition of congestion of the capillaries of the brain and its consequent malnutrition. The drink-craving, the commonest of all, has most evidently this foundation, as the recognised working of alcohol is the very relaxation of the capillaries of which I speak. For the time, the circulation in the brain is restored to its normal condition by it, or even enhanced; and unless you can furnish the drunkard with some better means of attaining the same result, you cannot cure him. When a man, as is said, “takes to drink,” it is almost invariably, as doctors have long recognised, not the cause but a symptom of something wrong with the brain; and this is, I believe, where the mischief lies. In this connection Dr. Haig's book on Uric Acid will be found most interesting as suggesting a new cause for the sluggishness of circulation to which I refer, as well as a promising mode of treatment.

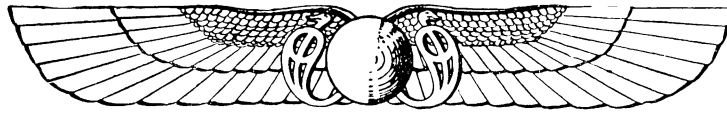
We have then in such a case as the querist lays before us a physical body in which (most probably by inheritance) the life force is scanty and the blood-circulation defective. It is on such an organisation that the temptation fastens; no one in perfect health can understand the fascination of the evil habit, and this is quite natural—how should he? And the vanity of attempting to cure it by exhortations or denunciations is equally clear; for to be able to prevent the body's indulgence in what it finds not only pleasurable but actually profitable for the time, simply because of future evil consequences, implies a power of the mind

over the body which is not to be expected at this stage of development. Now it is quite conceivable that one who finds himself in this melancholy condition may resolve to take it as his life's work, or the work of many lives, to conquer this by his own strength, and deny himself all assistance from outside. He must come to this sooner or later; he cannot pass forwards by any power but that of his own soul. But one who, like F. L., has undertaken duties to others, is (as it seems to me) bound to do everything in his power to gain relief at once, to enable him to fulfil those duties. To him I would say: It is your duty not only to strive for deliverance by meditation and prayer, but to use all the physical means which medical science can afford. It is (as I have said) mainly a physical matter; and, as you would call in the doctor if you were prevented from work by a broken arm or leg, so you should do now. Of course it would be much grander and more dignified to do it all alone, but you can't, and there is an end! And the doctor can do much for you; far more than the preacher.

In my reply to J. H., I have done my best to explain how each failure should not weaken our confidence. Every effort, even though it ends in failure on this plane, brings us new strength for next time. We must believe in ourselves—that the Divine spark, which is our life, can never be destroyed or defeated; our victory is certain, however long it may be delayed. But when F. L. tells us that this struggle seems to him to be the last—that he has conquered pleasure and pain save only this one weakness, I feel inclined to say something for which I can produce no authority, but which seems to me to be true. I think he may very probably be correct. In all histories of initiations, this is always the very last trial. Even on Dante's Mount of Purgatory, which is the parable of initiation most familiar to many of us, the fire which burns out this human weakness is the entrance porch to the Paradise. Only when he thinks all is done, he will find that it is only the entrance to new trials on a higher plane; it is probably well for us that we have no idea, no dream, of the purity we must attain before the gates actually open to us.

May I turn round from the stage, and for a moment address the audience? If every one of my readers would add to their daily devotions a thought—a prayer, if they prefer the word—for the two or three who have asked our help, and the many thousands who need it for the same reason, they would do more for the world's welfare than they have any idea of. For of all shapes of the World-sorrow, this is perhaps the most common; the most hopeless, if treated only on the world-plane, and at the same time the one in which a thought of encouragement, a breath of free air upon the mists of the soul, has most power to help. What such souls need is not exhortation or warning—that you cannot give—but spiritual strength, which is just what your loving interest is able to draw for them from the Sun of righteousness.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, DECEMBER 1, 1901.

NO. 5.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

CLOSING OF THE SECTIONAL ROOMS FOR CHRISTMAS.

The rooms of the Section at 28, Albemarle Street, will be closed during Christmas week from Sunday, December 22nd, to Saturday, December 28th, inclusive.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

TO UNATTACHED MEMBERS.

The following letters will explain themselves:—

DEAR MR. KEIGHTLEY,

The Council of the Blavatsky Lodge have asked me to write to you on a subject which has recently been discussed—a difficulty in which they hope that your advice as General Secretary may assist them.

The Blavatsky Lodge is rejoiced to welcome to its Thursday lectures members of other London Lodges and members of country and foreign Lodges who may be staying in or near London for a time. The opinion has, however, been expressed that it is scarcely right that *unattached London* members should continue to visit the Lodge during an indefinite period.

It is most natural that some members on joining the Society should wish to wait a month or two before joining a Lodge, during which time they are able to visit Lodges in order to decide which they prefer to support; but it is thought that after a reasonable period London unattached members should join some Lodge, and thus share its financial burdens as well as the benefits it confers.

Sincerely yours,
S. MAUD SHARPE,
Hon. Sec., Blavatsky Lodge.

DEAR MRS. SHARPE,

In reply to your letter, I think the best course will be to publish it in the VĀHAN, as I feel sure that when once attention has been called to the matter, everyone will realise that *continued* attendance at the meetings of a Lodge by unattached members is an abuse even of that wide courtesy which welcomes all members of the Theosophical Society to the meetings of any Lodge.

It is of course quite contrary to the spirit of our organisation for an *unattached* member residing for months in any place to attend the meetings of the local Lodge continually, without sharing in the burden which its keeping up must entail.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to November 20th:—C. W. G., £1; B. O., £1 1s.; C. A., £1 1s.; E. W., £2 2s.; A. W., £1; A. H., £5; J. X., £3; P. W. G. N., £2 2s.; J. Q., £2; H. S. W., £2; J. McC., £1; G. H. M., £5 5s.; M. H., £1 1s.; L. W., 5s.; M. M., 10s.; E. F., 10s.; A. C., £1 1s.; E. A. B., £6; J. T. P., 10s.; H. M. K., 5s.; M. M. C., £1 1s.; J. C., 5s.; E. G., £1; G. S., £5 5s.; N. G., £9; D. S., 5s.; T. C. S., £1; J. D., 5s.; W. H. T., £5; S. C., £1; J. B., 15s.; F. M. M. R., £1; H. S. W., 10s. Total: £62 19s.

Magazines for Disposal.

Odd numbers of the following Magazines may be obtained free by Branches on application to the Librarian of the Section Library, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

All the volumes are incomplete.

After the requirements of Branches are satisfied individual members may apply.

Lucifer, 1804, 1895, 1896; *The Dawn*, Vol. III.; *Theosophist*, Vols. X., XI., XII., XV., XVI., XVII., XVIII., XIX., XX., XXI., XXII.; *Modern Astrology*, 1899, 1900, 1901; *Notes and Queries*, Vol. XVIII.; *Theosophy in Australasia*, Vols. V., VI., VII.; *Sophia* (Spanish), Years 2 and 3; *Teosofisk Tidskrift*, 1899, 1900, 1901; *Teosofia* (Italian), Years 2, 3, 4; *Theosophia* (Dutch), 1899, 1900; *Theosophic Gleaner*, Vols. IX., X.; *Prasnotara*, Vols. VIII., IX., X.; *Review of Reviews*, 1897, 1898, 1899; *New Zealand Theosophical Magazine*, Vol. II.; *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society*, Vols. V., VI., VII.; *Theosophical Siftings* (odd numbers), Vols. II., III., IV.; some English Pamphlets; Convention Reports; odd numbers of different Magazines.

“Secret Doctrine” Class.

A class for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, conducted by Miss Goring, is held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Thursdays, at 5.30 p.m. Any members interested are invited to attend.

Correspondence Class.

A Correspondence Class for members of the Society who are unable to attend classes and lectures will be commenced after Christmas. Those wishing to join such a class should send their names to the General Secretary.

North of England Federation.

The usual quarterly meeting was held at Harrogate on November 2nd, under the presidency of Mr. Bertram Keightley. There was a large gathering of northern members, the following Lodges and Centres being represented: Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Athene (Bradford), Bradford, Harrogate, Leeds, York, Hull, Middlesbrough, Whitley and Edinburgh. The reports of Lodge activities were of a very cheerful nature and showed that much good work was being done. Miss Shaw gave an interesting account of a visit paid to the Dutch Section and waxed eloquent over the methods and good qualities of our brethren in Holland.

A discussion on “Thought Power, its Control and Culture,” was ably inaugurated by Mrs. Corbett, who was followed by Messrs. Marsden, Chaplin, Thomas, Keightley, and others. Unfortunately the time available proved far too limited for the adequate consideration of such an important subject.

At 5 p.m. the Federation adjourned to the Winter Gardens, where the members were entertained to tea by the Harrogate Lodge. On re-assembling Mr. Bertram Keightley delivered a most instructive lecture on “Friction and its Functions.” A short discussion followed, which

gave the lecturer a further opportunity of elucidating some of the more debatable points.

In connection with the Federation Mr. Keightley visited the Lodges and delivered public lectures to large audiences in Harrogate, Hull, Bradford, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Middlesbrough, and Leeds. Altogether the tour was most successful and in most of the towns there were larger audiences than on similar occasions in the past. Our General Secretary carried back with him the hearty thanks of all concerned for the able way in which he had fulfilled his arduous task, and also, we trust, the conviction that Theosophy was making substantial headway in the North.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On October 24th, Mr. Keightley lectured on “The Place of Religion in Man’s Evolution”; the subject is undoubtedly one of the most important that can engage our attention; it is unnecessary to say that on this occasion it was dealt with very ably.

On October 31st, Mrs. Hooper lectured on “Irish Other World Visions,” dealing chiefly with the visions of Irish saints. On November 7th, Mr. Worsdell read a most thoughtful and instructive paper on “Science and Poetry.” Mr. Mead addressed the Lodge on November 14th, giving the second of his course of three lectures, his title was “What do we believe?” The lecture dealt with the main points of the lecturer’s faith and drew a distinction between those facts (mentioned in his first lecture), which we might fairly assert to be matters of knowledge, and those (not perhaps less real to us) which we are prepared to declare we believe. The Sunday evening lecturers for the past month have been Mr. Keightley, Mr. Ward, Captain Lauder, and Mr. Moore.

S. M. S.

West London Branch.

In place of the usual Lodge Meeting on Friday evening, December 13th, at 8 o’clock, a special lecture, with copious lantern illustrations, will be delivered by Miss Edith Ward. Subject: “Thoughts are Things.” To accommodate the larger audience expected, a hall has been hired at 79, Queen’s Road, Bayswater (close to Metropolitan Station). Tickets for front seats, 1s.; admission 6d. Tickets may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., or the Librarian at Headquarters, or the Secretary, West London Branch, 8, Inverness Place, Queen’s Road, W.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lotus Circle.

In order to increase the usefulness of the Lotus Circle, it has been decided that some of its older members should form themselves into the Lotus Lodge of the Theosophical Society, which shall be open to younger members of the Society, and also to any non-members of suitable age who may wish to attend the meetings. Children who are too young to join the Lodge will be formed into a separate group under older members. Pending the formation of such a Lodge the usual meetings will be held on Sundays at 28, Albemarle Street, at 2.30.

HERBERT WHYTE,
Hon. Sec. (*pro tem.*)

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Class for study of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., and for general study at 3 p.m. at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at the "Downs" Café, 186, Whiteladies' Road, Clifton (first floor room). The Lodge Library is available at all times to members on application to the Manageress of the Café. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, on one Tuesday in each month, at 8.15 p.m.: Dec. 17th, *One of the Masters*, Mrs. Cuthbertson. Lodge meetings are held twice monthly for special study. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

FLORENCE LODGE. Lodge rooms at Via Venezia, 8, are open on Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m., for the exchange of books.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 23rd, *Symbolism*, E. J. Cuthbertson. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 9th, *Courage*, Mrs. Mackie.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Dec. 1st, *Pythagoras and his School*, W. H. Thomas; Dec. 8th, *Unity in Diversity*, Miss Pullar; Dec. 15th, *The Garden of Eden*, A. R. Orage; Dec. 22nd, *Responsibility*, Miss Woodhead; Dec. 29th, *Coloured Spectacles*, W. Bell. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 2nd, *The Norse Gods*, Baker Hudson; Dec. 9th, *Some Mediaeval Mystics*, H. W. Hunter; Dec. 16th, *The Teachings of Confucius*, C. N. Goode; Dec. 23rd, *The Future of Humanity*, A. R. Orage. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. W. H. Bean, 41, Kensington Terrace, Hyde Park, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Dec. 1st, *The At-one-ment, A Theosophic View*, P. G. Tovey; Dec. 8th, *The Symbolism of Ritual*, L. Stanley Jast; Dec. 15th, *The Symbolism of the Parables*, Miss C. E. Woods; Dec. 22nd, *But what of Man Himself?* D. N.

Dunlop. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanaeh, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings open only to members of the Society on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street.: Dec. 5th, *Lewis' Biography of Philosophy*, E. H. Bellairs; Dec. 12th, III.—*The Mysteries, Past and Present*, G. R. S. Mead. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., open to members and visitors; Dec. 1st, *Theosophy and Science*, Miss Ward; Dec. 8th, *Theosophy and the Churches*, Mrs. Hooper; Dec. 15th, *The Power of Thought*, Mrs. Sharpe.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m., at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 3rd, 7 × 7 (continued), G. Dyne; Dec. 10th, *Crime and Criminals*, A. J. Faulding; Dec. 17th, *Is Theosophy Practical?* Mrs. Hooper; Dec. 24th, no meeting; Dec. 31st, *Notes on the "Bhagavad Gītā,"* J. Hallawell. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 2nd, *Other States of Consciousness*, R. King; Dec. 9th, *The Rationale of Astrology*, Mrs. Leo; Dec. 16th, Papers by members. On Saturday, Dec. 21st, a *Conversazione* will be held. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.: Dec. 2nd . . . Mrs. Leo; Dec. 7th, Study of "Vibrations"; Dec. 9th, *Psychism, its Uses and Dangers*, Bertram Keightley; Dec. 14th, *Conversazione*; Dec. 16th, Study of *Thought Power*. Debating class on Saturdays, at 6.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Dec. 6th, *Theosophy in Daily Life*, Mrs. Sharpe; Dec. 13th, *Thoughts are Things* (with lantern illustrations, see special notice), Miss Edith Ward; Dec. 20th, *Conversazione*.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., in Room 62, York Chambers, 27, Brazen-nose Street. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

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

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino, on Mondays and Fridays, at 6 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*, conducted by

Captain Boggiani, and on Sundays, conducted by Signor Amendola.

ROME (BESANT LODGE). Meetings on Tuesdays at 9 p.m. for study of *The Seven Principles of Man*, conducted by Signor G. Colazza.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

I, writing as one of your readers, shall be sorry if the controversy between A. P. S. and A. M. F. C., and more especially A. H. W., should close with your November issue. The questions are of wider scope than appears at first sight. "Suicide" is a word applicable in its strict sense to the act of any man who voluntarily sacrifices his life for others, of which history, ancient and modern, furnishes sufficient examples, from the (possibly mythical, but still typical) case of Curtius down to the self-sacrifice of a miner to save his mates in a mining disaster. Such acts have generally been regarded as acts of heroism, but if A. M. F. C.'s conclusions are to be admitted, must be regarded as violations of the "Law." Moreover, we must change our ideals, and deeds hitherto held up for admiration by some of our best writers must be reprobated. Thus, the author of *Jackanapes* set a bad ideal in making her hero say, "Leave you, to save my skin! No! not to save my soul!" and even in a recent number of the *Theosophical Review*, "Michael Wood" gave an immoral lesson (?) in his story of the Water Gates, and the "suicide" of the Prince to save his country. Ruskin has even gone so far as to call "grand" the Captain of the "London" electing to go down with his ship, instead of saving himself, a case in which there was not even any justification of saving others thereby, but only a possibly mistaken sense of honour. Geo. Macdonald, who is certainly a writer of pure and lofty mind, in one of his faery tales, says that when a country cannot find a man willing to give his life for her, it is time for her to suffer. Such are examples of the trend of opinion among our best and wisest.

According to A. H. W. it is an unjustifiable interference with the "Law of Karma" to kill either man or animal, under any circumstances. The argument, or position rather, if true, applies equally to a noxious insect, a dangerous reptile or animal, and to a man, although he would perhaps admit that there might be degrees of turpitude in the several cases. Then we must have no soldiers, no navy, no defences that might endanger life to an aggressor. It might be said that if England adopted these views, it would not be long before some foreign nation took us in charge, and conscripted our men to fight their own battles. But, it may be held, we have only to do what is right (absolutely right, irrespective of circumstances) and have nothing to do with results. Good; but before doing what must necessarily bring disaster,

let us at least be sure that we are acting in obedience to Divine Law; and not merely to a, possibly erroneous, conception of that Law.

To examine the premises taken, and to follow them to the conclusion, would be an undertaking not less onerous than a corresponding examination of, say, Calvinistic teaching. Certainly it is no proof of error that the conclusions arrived at by A. H. W. are opposed to popular opinion; or to material interests. But, although a critical examination cannot be made in little space, it may be permitted to suggest that *possibly* we do not know *quite* all about "Karma" and its working. And, in view of the truly diabolical cruelty exercised by man on man—as for instance to allude only to the doings of the Spanish Inquisition, established under Ferdinand and Isabella, during some centuries—it may even, perhaps, occur to some as just possible, that even the Universe is not perfect, and that the wisdom regulating it is not *absolute*, though far greater than it is possible for any of us even approximately to realise.

Be this as it may, such questions as those referred to, need to be dealt with somewhat at least in conformity to what is practical, in the existing condition of society. Otherwise, they are purely academical, as to which volumes might be written to the benefit of no one.

I should like to make a remark or two on the quotation made by A. H. W. from Mrs. Besant, that "our feelings don't matter." The context to this statement is not given. Standing by itself, it must be regarded as meant in reference to the illimitable future; that no happening in time can matter in respect to Eternity, except in so far as the infinite future is thereby modified. Mrs. Besant's record does not permit us to believe that she can view with indifference either human or any other suffering. The expression is a grand and elevating one, and such as realised by a martyr at the stake might enable him to triumph over and even to exult in his present torments. But the expression cannot have been intended to encourage indifference to suffering, or to weaken the hands of such helpers as would strive to mitigate remediable pains. Hence it is out of place in its present connection.

E. S.

Since reading F. L.'s question, No. 148, in the November VĀHAN and the reply, I have felt a certain interest in the case. Alas! how many cases in one single earth life do become hopeless? More than we at once think. Make a general survey over our asylums and ask—why so much insanity? and the answer comes that one of the main predisposing causes is an "evil habit contracted many years ago." When a greater purity of body and mind reigns in our midst, then, and only then, shall we have a decrease in certain forms of insanity.

Long continued habits undoubtedly cause "brain and nervous diseases" in the long run, but from a careful study of facts, we must look behind the scenes of the disease—be it functional

or organic—and view the antecedents—and one of those antecedents in the equation of such a problem is an "evil habit contracted many years ago."

The questions: What is normal health? and What is a form of inebriety? are very difficult to answer to the general public, because the premises from which the conclusion must be drawn are too technical and scientific for them to understand.

When F. L. definitely states that "each failure weakens his confidence and brings him nearer the abyss," is there not reason to think that his mentality is becoming affected—in a degree at least?

I think F. L. should learn that the way to overcome an "evil habit" is not to stand up and fight it, for in reality he is fighting himself, but to study some definite method and resolutely act on it, which will transmute its power, and so turn its force into another channel. Many failures in overcoming "habits" are experienced by our students by not beginning low enough—more attention should be paid to the physical organism, which must never be neglected when endeavouring to fix the mind and meditate on the loftiest ideal. Dietetic and hygienic measures should always be seriously considered, as well as the loftiest ideal to be attained by him who is seeking the Path—for sooner or later the lesson has to be learned that the Path is himself, and not something extraneous to his being. It is my humble opinion that if a determined concentration of mind is engaged in, and the necessary attention to the little things of the body not taken into account—but utterly disregarded—the day will come when they will make themselves heard and will have to be reckoned with. They will assume the aspect of giant weeds growing in the garden of the soul—and no cutting down will stop their growth, but they will have to be uprooted by the hand of wisdom, and that uprooting will only come about by a careful study of the body as well as of the mind, the training of both, and this may prove a long and laborious task.

This has been done, and can be done even by F. L.—so even this knowledge should inspire him and prevent his "losing confidence." "What man has done, man can do," should be F. L.'s watchword, so let him press on, gain confidence in himself, gain strength in himself, and then, and only then, will he break down the existing barriers, surmount his obstacles and go on from victory to victory until he finds a realisation of his now existing ideal.

As is said in A. A. W.'s answer it may be necessary to resort to physical means. Well! I have long ago come to the conclusion that drugs are very inadequate in curing by themselves and are only helps—it must be the person's mentality which is so strengthened that he can overcome—in other words, drugs are only means to an end.

M. W. S.

I read the answers to J. H. and F. L., Questions 147 and 148, and they struck me as being

very good so far as they go; but that A. A. W. had left the seekers as helpless as before, in that he had given them no hope of advance in the struggle that had compelled their piteous cry for help. I, too, have had my times of desperate struggle; and perhaps something of what I learned in those times may be of use to J. H. and F. L.

It seems to me that both seekers and helper have not yet realised the only possible way of advance, *i.e.*, by the law of substitution. Has there ever been any progress made by destroying? It is worse than useless to rail at a bad habit, the evil is only increased by the power of the emotion in the repeated thought. Take the attention away from the evil, only holding it as a rock against it, and fix both thoughts and desires on a suitable substitute, cultivating it actively and steadily. Theosophy teaches that all evil temptations and desires belong to the astral, or emotion plane—no such things exist on the real thought plane—and being astral they are changeable and impermanent as the physical body. Now nothing lives unless fed—therefore, to get rid of a bad habit, starve it of its food of emotional consideration. When it is considered at all, let it be from the mental plane of purely scientific investigation, as if it belonged to someone else, taking great care to keep out of such consideration all emotion whatsoever—do this and the evil, or temptation, will shrivel up and lose all power. Paul exhorted his disciples “whatsoever things are holy, lovely, etc.”—to think on those things. Why? Because of the power of emotion to create more of whatsoever things are thought of. Therefore all effort should be used to keep thoughts on the plane above the astral, as the astral emotion is what acts directly on the physical. So any evil habit can be made to die of inanition—not directly of course—but by refusing to feel any emotion of horror (for horror can create after its kind) towards the habit; even though we fall yet will we rise again; and it seems as if at present our strength is shown—not so much in never falling—but in how quickly we can get up again.

The secret of help through prayer seems to be that the effort raises the thoughts to the plane of higher emotion, creating for the time being a sense of safety; but it cannot be of any lasting good as the dependence is placed upon the idea of another—there is no strength grown within.

All the teaching and the bewailing of inherent evil, and dependence on the saving power of another—what has it accomplished? Constant increase in the weight of misery, and a steady loss of backbone; a grovelling, whining acceptance of self-created evils, and a grasping unprincipled ignoring of the responsibility of the individual to the community. Fortunate for the world that there has been better teaching to be had, and that the force of the life of the world has been greater than the false teaching. When will people realise that there is but one force in the world—Love—to be used, or misused.

If by misuse of this force in former lives of self-seeking a tempting elemental has been created, and

Kârmic Law necessitates reaction on its creator—well! as it was created by the power of the lower love, it can be scattered into nothingness again by the power of the higher love—for what says the Western Teacher? “Love is the fulfilling of the Law.”

Beware of accumulation. As parts of one great whole we should be in all our parts open avenues. If the organs of excretion of the physical body are closed, even in part, the body suffers; a something produced from what goes into the body should pass out. In like manner it would seem that a produce of what goes into the thoughts or emotions should pass out in thought, word and deed, for the use of others. As by care in diet, combined with a knowledge of the food eaten, and by exercise, etc., the physical body avenues can be kept open—so by care in mental and emotional food, and by steady use of both in the service of others, the higher avenues can be kept open—and evil habits, if contracted, starved to extinction. It is useless to attempt to fight the evil, but stand like a block against it, and put all energy into creating a counterbalancing good habit.

The power of affirmation seems great; and so long as people continue to cry “I am a weak sinner; I am full of evil”—needs must that they be so. But if instead they would cry when in distress “I am a part of God, and being so, no evil can have power over me unless I let it: I am strong with the strength of the mighty whole as it flows through “me”—there could be then no weak helpless bewailing over an evil shadow; nor looking to others to do for us, what can be done only by ourselves.

We are told that Those who can are constantly sending out to us the strength that flows through Them—but to benefit by it we must stand on our own feet, and lift desires and thoughts to the plane where that strength is—“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.”

E. S. G.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 149.

A. W. G.—Are the activities of his vehicles the thinker's answer to impacts and is he responsible for the attitude of his vehicles towards impacts, or have these vehicles each a will of their own which is responsible to the thinker for the vehicle's condition, whether gross or fine?

G. R. S. M.—I can do no better than refer A. W. G. to the answer of a young Christian theosophist who wrote eighteen centuries ago on the very same subject. We have still extant some fragments of a remarkable treatise written by Isidorus, son of Basilides, under the title *On an Appended Soul*. The theory of the appendages of the soul deals more particularly with the desire-nature or “body of the passions”; but the idea underlying it may be extended to include the full scope of A. W. G.'s question.

Clement of Alexandria tells us that the thinkers among whom Basilides was held in the greatest honour, were accustomed to give the name of appendages (or accretions) to the passions. "These essences, they say, have a certain substantial existence, and are attached to the rational soul, owing to a certain turmoil and primitive confusion." In other words, the passional nature is a living entity or organism, or rather a congeries of entities, a protean animal essence—the so-called astral vehicle.

On this important subject and the question of moral responsibility, Isidorus wrote as follows: "Were I to persuade anyone that the real soul is not a unit, but that the passions of the wicked are occasioned by the compulsion of the appended natures, no common excuse then would the worthless of mankind have for saying, 'I was compelled, I was carried away, I did it without wishing to do so, I acted unwillingly'; whereas it was the man himself who led his desire towards evil, and refused to do battle with the constraints of the appendages. Our duty is to show ourselves rulers over the inferior creation within us, gaining the mastery by means of our rational principle."

The main idea in the above is that every human entity is a small world in himself; he has so much of the great world entrusted to him, so that he may be schooled in ruling, and win his way to still vaster realms of conquest and ever greater responsibilities. The task is one of self-conquest. He is responsible for his world, for the "lower creation" entrusted to him; he must "set his house in order," or be content with chaos. It is no good his trying to shirk the task by fixing the responsibility on the shoulders of the "creatures" entrusted to his care; if he does so, it is they who will become the masters of his realm, and dethrone him from his high estate, so that he no longer will be the viceroy of the King but the slave of His servants.

A. H. W.—The writer understands that the three lower vehicles are severally the manifestation of the thinker or ego on the three lower planes, the three worlds of manifestation. The attitude of each of these vehicles to the corresponding environing world is the result of habit established in it by the ego's activity; the result, that is to say, of his responses to the stimuli, impulses or ideas which come from the three worlds. We observe stimuli, take impressions, and are struck by ideas. The responses which the ego makes through the medium of his vehicles correspond to the stage of evolution he has reached: if he has gained control of his vehicles he may be said to be responsible for their attitude, if not, then not. His will or energy expresses itself through the corresponding vehicle as thought, instinct and action; the vehicles have no will of their own apart from him; they have only tendencies to respond to certain stimuli, impressions or ideas in a certain way. Every time they so respond increases the force of the tendency; every time the ego restrains their response the tendency

is diminished. The grossness or fineness of the matter built into the vehicles depends on the action of the ego in restraining the lower modes of their activity in favour of the higher; this power of restraint depends on his stage of evolution; his stage of evolution depends essentially on his cosmic age.

The questioner may have a recollection in his mind of some statements about the "Kâmic Elemental," which leave the impression that there is a sort of quasi-independent "black dog" with a downward evolution of its own. It is an engaging notion, as who should say, "I sit upon the hill-tops clad in spotless robes—true, there is a little animal ramping about—but it's merely my kâmic elemental—it would be selfish to keep it on the chain or muzzle it, poor thing—it has really nothing to do with *me*, and its evolution, though a painful subject, should not be interfered with!" It is the writer's conviction that this kâmic elemental is the creation of clairvoyant error, and that it is nothing more nor less than the manifestation of ourself on the astral plane.

A. W.—The activities of his vehicles are the thinker's answer to impacts (*Ancient Wisdom*, p. 103). He could then be said to be responsible for the attitude of his vehicles, because the life that awakens them to respond is but himself in denser forms. It would also be true that the vehicles are more or less responsible, according to the degree that they are vivified by the thinker. A high officer of state, who keeps all power in his own hands has all the responsibility, but when he widens his sphere of operation and attempts to raise a subordinate by delegating some authority to him, the sub-officer becomes responsible to the chief for his use, or abuse, of the power entrusted to him, although the fundamental responsibility of the chief remains the same. All that is gained is growth and a widening out.

E. A. B.—We might perhaps consider the relation between the thinker and his vehicles as one of mutual responsibility; for the thinker has drawn these bodies round himself by the working of his own energies in the past, and he sends out continual vibrations to them, trying to impress his influence on them; and as their growing consciousness makes them more susceptible and responsive to this influence, the thinker himself grows by the experience he gathers through them. By degrees the whole lower nature learns that it merely "exists for the sake of the soul," and recognising this, it begins the loyal co-operation which ends in the complete merging of the lower in the higher.

B. K.—I am disposed to think that, *in a certain sense*, each of the thinker's vehicles has a "will of its own." Not of course a centralised, self-conscious will such as we know in ourselves, and therefore habitually associate with the term "will," but a directive and purposive energy more or less conscious though not self-conscious. This "will" of the vehicles seems to me to manifest

itself most prominently as the self-preservative instinct, which, for instance, will cause the physical body to endeavour to save itself from injury even against the conscious, deliberate effort of the thinker's will, or will sometimes assert itself in the demand for food or the satisfaction of other bodily needs in spite of his endeavours to control and subdue it. It is St. Paul's "Law of the members," which wages war against the over-ruling "law of the spirit." And thus one part of the task comprised in the thinker's own evolution is the learning how to guide and control this "self-will" of his vehicles," and the acquiring of the power to enforce obedience upon them.

Since, however, these vehicles exist only because of the thinker, and for his use and service, and their "self-will" is but, at bottom, the synthesis of the natural tendencies and modes of action proper to such a composite and built-up structure as are these vehicles, it seems obvious that the ultimate responsibility must rest with the thinker himself. For it must be remembered that when such a vehicle finally breaks up, there is *not* left any surviving "central" consciousness or "will," such as belongs to the thinker when he has cast off his vehicles. So when we speak of the "self-will" of a vehicle, that must not be taken to imply more than the fact, observable and demonstrable in every department of life, that any composite living structure—and for all I know, even so-called inorganic structures also—*acts as a unit* and exhibits tendencies and modes of action which certainly do not belong to the elements of which it is built up when studied separately and apart.

I am quite aware that, in connection with this view of the matter, there arise very grave *philosophical* difficulties, to which, so far, I know of no perfectly satisfactory solution. But I believe these difficulties arise mainly from the fact that in speaking or writing about such matters one is compelled to envisage them from outside, while if looked at really from within these difficulties would be recognised as due merely to the limitations of our present mental powers and faculties. At any rate there can, I think, be no doubt that our various vehicles, especially our physical bodies, *do* actually and frequently display a "will of their own," which it costs us—the thinkers using those vehicles—many a struggle and much long continued effort to overcome.

I cannot see how the idea of *responsibility* can accurately be applied at all to a vehicle—even when it has a "will of its own." For the idea of responsibility can only apply where there is *choice*, self-conscious and deliberate *choice*, and that as

we have seen is not the case with our self-willed vehicles. They are, of course, subject to the law of cause and effect or karma *in its widest sense*, but merely in the same way as is an atom of oxygen which severs its union with hydrogen in water in order to unite with an atom of potassium which happens to be thrown into the water of which it formed part.

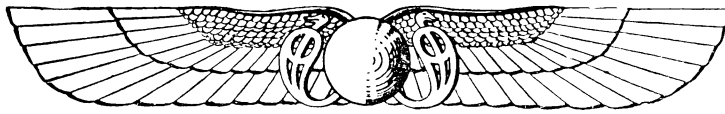
The domain of responsibility is that of moral choice; and such choice implies self-conscious determination, which belongs to the nature of the thinker alone, and accrues to him even only by slow degrees as his unfoldment advances.

There remains one more point, more or less raised in the question. We must clearly distinguish between the spontaneous activities of a vehicle in response to impacts from without, and those activities which the thinker sets going in the vehicle as *his* response to the impacts which the activity of the vehicle makes upon him. For—and this seems a very important point which we are often apt to lose sight of—for the *only* knowledge which the thinker *can* have of the outside world is precisely and exactly the *effect which the outside world produces upon his vehicles* and nothing more. Hence every limitation in the response of a vehicle to the world around it, every imperfection or distortion in its answer to external impacts, and only too often a large proportion of the spontaneous motions of his vehicles themselves, all these affect, distort, limit and colour the knowledge which the thinker obtains of the external world. Hence the enormous importance to his own growth and progress of systematic, careful and persevering purification and training of his vehicles. Each has its own line of evolution to follow, the life of the vehicles and the elements which compose them has one line, the thinker himself has a very different, in some aspects almost antagonistically opposite line which the Law lays down for his following. The Riddle of Life in one of its manifold aspects meets us here and the finding of a harmonious solution is one of the most difficult tasks that man has to accomplish.

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, JANUARY 1, 1902.

NO. 6.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

FORMATION OF A NEW SECTION.

An application has been made to the President-Founder by the Branches in Italy, which are now seven in number, to form an Italian Section in order that the work of the Society in that country may be under an Italian organisation. The Branches have asked that Captain Boggiani be appointed General Secretary *pro tem*. We shall no doubt have the pleasure of announcing in the next issue the actual formation of the Section. The seven Branches applying are Milan, Bologna, Florence, Rome, Besant (Rome), Dante Alighieri (Rome), and Naples.

ACTIVITIES.

New Charters.

November 22nd, 1901. Charter issued this day to Carlo Pilla, Riccardo Neva, Andrea Ettore Piotti, Roberto Mariani, Pio Ducati, Giuditta Stefani, and Gilda Sigre, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Bologna, Italy, to be known as the Bologna Branch.

November 26th, 1901. Charter issued this day to Arnaldo Cervesato, Decio Calvari, Vrouke Titsingh, Olga Calvari, Gretchen Boggiani, Elisa Carra and R. H. Swinton-Hunter to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Rome, to be known as the Dante Alighieri Branch.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to December 20th: I. H., £4; M. C., 10s.; G. L. S., 10s.; H. S., £2 2s.; A. W. G., 10s.; W. T., 5s.; J. D. C., £6 6s.; F. L. J. Z., £2; A. C. P., £12; E. M. T., £1; C. H., £1; L. W., £4; C. V. C., 10s.; M. S., 3s.; A. B. W., 10s.; C. M., £6; A. McD., £5; J. R., 15s.; R. A. H., £1. Total: £48 1s.

Practice Debating Class.

This Class will resume its meetings at Headquarters on Thursday, January 16th, at 6 p.m. Mr. Foster will open the debate.

In consequence of leaving London, Miss Ethel Mallet is reluctantly obliged to resign the post of Hon. Secretary, which Miss Elizabeth Severs has kindly undertaken to fill in future.

Afternoon Meetings at Headquarters.

The Afternoon Meetings for Questions and Discussion will be resumed on Monday, January 20th, at 3.30. On January 20th questions will be answered by Mr. Keightley, and on January 27th, by Mrs. Hooper.

"Secret Doctrine" Class.

The first meeting of *The Secret Doctrine* Class in the new year will be on Thursday, January 23rd.
E. G.

Class for Study at Headquarters.

A Class is being formed under the charge of Mr. G. Dyne to meet on Wednesday evenings, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, beginning on January 15th. The subject is "The Spectroscope and its Work," and the treatment will be elementary.

This class is open only to members of the Society. Any enquiries which may be made should be addressed to the Secretary of the Social Committee.

Mr. Mead's Lectures.

In February and March Mr. Mead will deliver a course of six Lectures on Tuesdays (February 11th to March 18th), in the Lecture Room, Albemarle Street, from 5 to 6 p.m. The course will be devoted to the exceedingly interesting enquiry: "Did Jesus live 100 years B.C.?"

Blavatsky Lodge.

On November 21st the debate on "Dogma or Fluidity" was continued, and many speakers gave their views. On Nov. 28th, Mr. Keightley dealt with a most important subject *viz.*, "Conceptions of Duty;" on December 5th, a new lecturer, Mr. Bellairs, a member of the Bournemouth Lodge, read a valuable paper on "Lewes' Biography of Philosophy." On December 12th, Mr. Mead gave an interesting address on "The Mysteries—Past and Present." The Sunday lecturers have been: Miss Ward, Mr. Dyne, Mrs. Hooper and Mrs. Sharpe. The Lodge closes till January 16th, when it re-opens with a night for Questions and Discussion. The first Sunday meeting of the new syllabus will be on December 19th, and the lecturer will be Mr. Keightley.

S. M. S.

Lectures in Düsseldorf.

Richard Bresch from Leipzig gave in the "Tonhalle" in Düsseldorf, on November 25th, 26th and 27th, three lectures on Theosophy, which created so much interest, that the spacious hall was not large enough to admit all those who wished to hear him.

Though each lecture lasted about two hours, the interest of the audience was well maintained. Herr Bresch gave a clear and definite outline of Theosophical teachings and explained the aim of the true Theosophist.

Chiswick Lodge.

At the General Meeting of the above, Mr. A. A. Harris and Mr. W. C. Worsdell resigned their posts of President and Secretary respectively, and Mr. P. C. Ward and Mrs. Marion Cox were elected in their place. Meetings for the future are on Monday, at 8 p.m., at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W.

M. C.

"At Homes" at Shepherd's Bush.

The Social Gatherings at Mrs. Bathe's, announced in the November VĀHAN, have been very successful. Over 450 visitors have attended on the three evenings, and it is felt that much good work has been done. Mr. Robert King, who conducted the proceedings, answered numerous questions, and many subjects of interest to both Spiritualists and Theosophists were discussed.

It has been decided to hold the "At Homes" monthly throughout the coming year.

All information as to dates and cards of invitation may be obtained on sending a stamped addressed envelope to Mrs. Bathe, 15, Ashchurch Terrace, Goldhawk Road, W.

W. M. G.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lotus Circle.

Meetings are held every Sunday afternoon at 3 p.m., to which young people, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not, are cordially invited.

H. W.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Jan. 5th, Miss Hustler; Jan. 12th, Members; Jan. 19th, Mrs. Alan Leo; Jan. 26th, A. R. Orage. Class for study of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., and for general study at 3 p.m. at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at the "Downs" Café, 186, Whiteladies' Road, Clifton (first floor room). The Lodge Library is available at all times to members on application to the Manageress of the Café. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, at 8.15 p.m. Jan. 16th, Questions and Discussion; Jan. 21st, *Swedenborg*, Miss Grant. Lodge meetings are

held twice monthly for special study. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

FLORENCE LODGE. Lodge rooms at Via Venezia, 8, are open on Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m., for the exchange of books.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 27th, *Theosophy in Daily Life*, A. Wallace. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 13th, *Our Privileges*, J. Wilson.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Jan. 5th, *The Power of an Endless Life*, Mrs. Bell; Jan. 12th, *The Making of Man*, Baker Hudson; Jan. 19th, *The Egyptian Religion*, Hodgson Smith; Jan. 26th, *Christian Dogmas*, by Members. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 6th, *Is Man the Maker of his Destiny?* Hodgson Smith; Jan. 13th, *The Law of Expression*; Jan. 20th, *Nietzsche*, A. R. Orage; Jan. 27th, *The Training of the Emotions*, Mrs. Corbett. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings open only to members of the Society on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street.: Jan. 16th, *Questions and Discussion*; Jan. 23rd, *The Harmony of Thought and Gesture*, Miss E. Houston; Jan. 30th, *The Real Francis Bacon*, A. P. Sinnett. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., open to members and visitors:

Jan. 19th, *Personality*, B. Keightley; Jan. 26th, *Theosophy and Christianity*, G. R. S. Mead.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 7th, *The Prodigal Son*, A. H. Ward; Jan. 14th, *Man's Mind and Man's Heart in Relation to Religion*, B. Keightley; Jan. 21st, *Immortality*, L. S. Jast; Jan. 28th, *St. Paul*, H. C. Whyte. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 13th, *From Dust to Divinity*, Miss Houston; Jan. 20th, *The Prodigal Son*, A. H. Ward; Jan. 27th, *Time*, Miss Arundale. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.: Jan. 10th, Annual General Meeting; Jan. 13th, *Education*, A. J. Faulding; Jan. 18th, *Theosophy and Chemistry*, G. Dyne; Jan. 11th and 25th, *Vibrations*, A. M. Glass; Jan. 6th, 20th and 27th, Class for study of *Thought Power; its Control and Culture*. Debating class on Saturdays, at 6.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Jan. 10th, *From Dust to Divinity*, Miss E. Houston; Jan. 17th, *A Theosophic View of the At-one-ment*, P. Tovey; Jan. 24th, *Why do Animals exist?* E. Bell; Jan. 31st, *Unification*, Miss Lowthime.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., in Room 62, York Chambers, 27, Brazen-nose Street. Information from Mrs. Larmuth, 24, Eccles Old Road, Pendleton.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road: Jan. 5th, *The Making of Man*, B. Hudson; Jan. 19th, *The Future of Humanity*, A. R. Orage.

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

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino, on Mondays and Fridays, at 6 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*, conducted by Captain Boggiani, and on Sundays, conducted by Signor Amendola.

ROME (BESANT LODGE). Meetings on Tuesdays at 9 p.m. for study of *The Seven Principles of Man*, conducted by Signor G. Colazza.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

I have followed with much interest the discussion raised by Question 142 in these pages, and if space can be granted I would like to draw attention to one or two views of the subject, which have not yet been touched upon. Firstly, with regard to: Is it right to kill a suffering animal? To me it seems that a decided yes or no cannot satisfactorily cover the whole ground included in this question—that modifications must arise. For example: Surely some distinction would be drawn between the moth burnt in the candle, fluttering in physical agony on the table, and the dog or horse, the friend and comrade of years, in whom we have watched the dawning intelligence, and noted the upward climb. The first would only be a setting free of the life essence to evolve perchance in new and happier form, the second *might* be the retardation for untold millenniums of an individual soul. We do not hesitate to annihilate by thousands lice and such like vermin, the carriers of disease and the direct outcome of dirt, but it is a very different matter to take upon ourselves the limitation of a line of experience, which is within measurable distance of self-consciousness.

The second point, whether suicide is right in order to relieve the distress of others, suggests at once the counter question "Does suicide save the situation?" According to A. P. S. man has reached that point in evolution when, to put it plainly "he may have a finger in the pie." But has he? For the sake of argument let us grant him the right to interfere on the physical plane. He looks round, he considers that with his ripe judgment he may make some improvements, and so he acts. But what is the immediate result of his action? What about the planes he cannot see; the forces let loose in the astral world; the disturbance set agoing in the mental world? Even on the physical plane, the combination will have to be worked through, some time, in some future life! Would it not be better to wait patiently till the outward body perisheth, and the inward man, renewing day by day, shineth with a lustre that the eyes of those around must be blind indeed not to see. It seems to me, that not until a man can consciously function in the three worlds is he in a position to remedy "Nature's mistakes," and when that moment of wider consciousness arrives is it not as workers together *with* Him and not in re-arranging His work, that we shall be employed.

Of the third question I will not speak. Both A. M. F. C. and A. H. W. have fully dealt with the subject, and their conclusions, if I understand aright, follow the lines indicated above.

M. E. G.

I cannot feel satisfied with A. A. W.'s reply to J. H.'s question (No. 147, November). I do not see why any Theosophist should deny himself the help of prayer to God, though the term personal may well seem too narrow to apply to the All-Consciousness. But J. H. may still say that such

a being is too far beyond humanity to be realised and felt as a friend and a brother—a warm hand in the darkness, a very present help in trouble—as Christ (sometimes) is to Christians. Can Theosophy do nothing to meet this need also? It seems to me that it offers such help abundantly. What of the Elder Brothers who have trod long since our toilsome road, and been tempted as we are tempted? What of Christ Himself, a Master among Masters, far removed from human weakness, yet touched with a feeling of our infirmities? Can no help come to man from these? Was it only in distant ages that they stooped from their high abode to help and guide humanity? Does the cry of the struggling and aspiring soul not penetrate to their sublime world to-day? Or hearing, do they refuse to send a thought of help, a wave of inspiration? It cannot be. The Invisible Helpers are a living reality to-day, as in all the history of our race. One great weakness of modern Protestantism, and especially of Unitarianism, has been that, apart from Christ, it has beheld between God and man only a great void. Why should Theosophists, who know better in theory, repeat the mistake in practice? Why should we be dead to the inspirations that are ever poured from the invisible world; why should we live alone when around is the great cloud of witnesses; why remain unhelped when help, the wisest and the tenderest, is close at hand?

All help that can come to us in God's universe can have only the One Source, whether it reach us through our own Self, or through another individual on the physical or any higher plane. It is surely pedantry to insist that enlightenment and inspiration shall come to us only through our own individuality. Who of us is strong enough to uphold such a position? I cannot help feeling that the Theosophic movement would become a greater power, and needed strength be brought to many individual lives, if we more often remembered and opened our hearts to the Mighty Helpers who never view unmoved the hard-fought conflicts of any human soul.

J. F. S.

The subject raised by J. H. in Question 147, November VĀHAN, is certainly one of extreme importance, as it reveals a danger that may be more general than we hope it is. Surely it is one of the primary principles in Theosophy that it disclaims being a new religion at all, either ready to supplant, or at enmity with other religions. Its mission is rather to throw light on the basic truths to be found in all the great faiths of the world, and to us Christians it can give a broader and deeper insight into the verities of our religion. At the same time it brings forward a great mass of teaching and explanations on the origin and principles working in nature, making a grand unity of both science and religion. Its chief aim, however, is to proclaim the immanence of the Divine, to exalt the spiritual, and to teach the sweet reasonableness of a life in which the self is surrendered to God.

Because we may be dissatisfied with the little moulds into which at various times man has tried to pour the limitless volume of Truth—that if possible he may fix it once for all in some form convenient to his mental grasp,—we err if we turn aside with disapproval or contempt when with more insight we might behold the truth they contain. Theosophy may use terms other than those to which we have been accustomed, and oftentimes they express ideas less easily rendered in our language, but nevertheless its voice is in harmony with all true religion and all great seers in proclaiming that the human soul cannot in its own power become united with God. But that this union arises by virtue of life in the Christ power—the link by which the lower self is carried upward to be one with the Higher Self—the consciousness then actively alive in the higher principles. The great initiate St. Paul warns us lest we be beguiled into the mistake of supposing that the possession of all knowledge of mysteries, or philosophy, can take the place of the inner spiritual light and life of Divine love. Concentration and meditation will strengthen the powers of mind—in the just and in the unjust—but their chief value is obtained when they are directed upon the highest. Why delay to some future life, and many failures, the learning of the lesson that we may know now, and by which we may conquer,—that it is “Christ in you the hope of glory,” that “without me ye can do nothing,” and that man does not rise in his own strength? The soul uplifted by the Christ communes by the Spirit with the Father in prayer, receives aid and strength, aye, even partakes of the Divine power. In the words of one of the greatest seers and teachers of modern times “the soul speaks through this door (the Christ) to God within herself and during this inspeaking to God within herself she is nourished, restored, illumined, and renewed by the outspeaking of God.”

The subject is far too large to be dealt with in the VĀHAN, but, if before discarding the Christian teaching a careful comparison between its inner meaning and eastern teaching be made, a striking harmony and analogy will be found between them.

A. H.

A. E. J. asks in the November VĀHAN: “Is it possible to state to what ‘vehicle of consciousness’—according to the generally accepted seven-fold classification—and what ‘state’ of consciousness, the so-called fourth dimensional ‘plane’ belongs; also whether the words ‘Three in One’ (not three *plus* one) convey any accurate idea as to the term?” The writer has some hesitation in trying to answer this question, because to give a rational reply involves the relinquishment of a cherished dogma, and also compels him to refer to his own classification of the principles of man, which he has no desire to impose on anyone. However, if A. E. J. wants to harmonise the states, vehicles, and planes of consciousness, he can do it by referring to the abstract scheme published under the title of “The Evolution of Consciousness,” in the *Theosophical Review* for April and May last. The

dogma he will have to relinquish, is, that the ego or causal body is purely mānasic; and, that the ego-consciousness does not “touch” the buddhic plane. On the writer’s hypothesis, the ego is the buddhic vehicle in process of development, and its abstract ideas combine the qualities of the mānasic and buddhic planes; that is why it is called “buddhi-manas.” On this system the fourth-dimensional plane is the buddhic, its vehicle of consciousness is the buddhic vehicle; the states of consciousness corresponding to the lower sub-planes of this vehicle, which gear in with the higher sub-planes of the mānasic vehicle, are abstract or ideal; the state of consciousness of the fully formed buddhic vehicle, working apart from manas, is called Divine Wisdom. This state is superhuman, and is conferred in its faintest manifestation at initiation.

An example may make this notion of the fourth-dimensional ego-consciousness more easy to grasp. Suppose we are given an object which we have never seen before, something totally unknown to us. We examine it by bringing all our senses to bear on it in turn. We turn it over, we weigh it in our hand, we feel it, we take it to the light and look at it, possibly we smell and taste it. By so examining we make a number of percepts, and so “get an idea” of the object. This idea is made of the matter of the mental plane, and if our powers of acute perception are cultivated, we can carry it away in our memory as an exact image of the object, with its shape, size, colour, smell, taste, weight, and all other details complete. This is a three-dimensional idea, which we can write a description of, or reproduce in kind from memory. Now suppose we contemplate this idea, holding it up before the mind’s eye, just as we held the original object before the physical eye. It is a complete image, and our mind contacts it in three dimensions. Now suppose someone comes and says “that strange object was for such and such a purpose.” Instantly our mind contacts the image in a totally different “dimension.” “That’s what it’s for, is it?” we exclaim, “Now I see!” The fourth dimensional consciousness of the abstract reason of the existence of that object, and of all others like it, is added to the three-dimensional consciousness of the details of its form; we can instantly fit the idea into its place in the intelligible world, and relate it with its likes. This “seeing” is, the writer believes, the beginning of the “inner sight.” When all the personal experiences of life are seen in the same way, when we understand the reason of it all, then we have attained knowledge. The “three in one” may perhaps mean that the three-dimensional idea is gained by the working together of the three lower vehicles, when the acute vibration of the physical sense-organs is transmuted into acute sensation of the physico-astral region, and thence into the acute perception of the astro-mental region. The idea, taken entirely into the mental vehicle, is then comprehended in its essence by the ego, and we understand the abstract reason of the existence of the original object.

A. E. J. remarks on the necessity of "some basic principle upon which we may define the terms we use one with the other." It is indeed a vital necessity. The writer has tried to evolve one, and has published it in the article referred to above. It is a perfectly symmetrical symbol on the side of form, and an unbroken series of pure abstractions on the side of life, hence it is as wide as the world, and covers all details of human manifestation. Theosophists who want to think for themselves might do worse than provisionally accept it as a working hypothesis, till they can evolve something more far-reaching. But to do so they will have to sacrifice clairvoyant dogma on the altar of the Pure Reason.

A. H. W.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 150.

H. E.—I should be glad to know A. A. W.'s definition of "Modern Christianity," referred to in his answer to J. H. in the VÂHAN for November, and where he finds authority for the remarkable statements he makes regarding it. These views may be the property of some Protestant sects, but it is not fair to attribute them to a vague entity called Modern Christianity, without further explanation.

A. A. W.—My reply to H. E.'s question is a very simple one. I take my statement of Christianity, as I should take my statement of any other of the religions of the world, from its authoritative documents; for the Catholic Church, the Creed of Pope Pius; for the Anglican Church, the Thirty nine Articles, to which every clergyman has declared his "unfeigned assent," for the Dissenting bodies their various formulæ, and in default of these that well understood if not always clearly defined "Gospel" which their ministers must preach under pain of losing their places. That these documents actually contain the doctrine I have set forth, not infrequently in a still more offensive form than I have given it, is a simple matter of fact. I am quite aware that a very large number of persons who set much store on the name of Christians heartily repudiate it; but these (very naturally) are not aware of their real position. They have grown through Christianity into a more or less perfect possession of the Wisdom which is above all forms of religion. St. Paul's words express this condition when he says: "The Law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." It is a popular error to take the "Christ" in this passage as meaning Jesus of Nazareth. The man who wrote it was the same who said to his disciples that he travailed in birth with them until Christ was formed in their hearts; he was a teacher of the Wisdom, even as Jesus himself was. So now to those who think with H. E. (and we are happy and thankful to know how many there are) the technical Christianity of the day had been a schoolmaster—a good and useful one, who has taught them at length to be wiser than their

teacher; has educated them to be able to conceive a higher Deity than the Christian "God," a more perfect system of morals than the theologians of earlier ages could deduce from texts of Scripture, a "love of the Father" manifested by something greater than any physical bloodshed and torture of his Son. We have every sympathy for those who are trying to widen out the formulæ of the old Christianity to contain the new, and thus to help the more backward "Christians" easily and safely to pass from its sectarian limitations to the freedom of the new life. But when we try to help them in their work, they must not turn round upon us and say that it is "Christianity" which has brought about the change. Such a confusion of ideas is a serious hindrance to their own advance. For nearly two thousand years Christianity has been the medium through which the West has learned some (but not all) of the doctrines of the Wisdom and been trained in the morality which was not invented by the Christian teachers and will not be lost when Christianity (like all other formal "religions") comes to an end—the true "Light that lighteth every man that comes into the world." The gain of the twentieth century is that there is now an increasing number of souls so far advanced as to be ripe for the teaching of the true Wisdom, unmixed with the error and faults of all the "religions" which have been hitherto its very partial and incomplete manifestation. But what such as our querist are doing is not, as they suppose, the developing of Christianity into some height unknown before, but the liberation of its followers from the sectarian limits which at the present time hinder, instead of help, them in their struggle for the "liberty of the Sons of God."

QUESTION 151.

H.—What is the Theosophical definition of conscience and which principle is its source?

B. K.—Webster defines "conscience" as "the judgment of right and wrong; or the faculty, power or principle within us, which decides on the lawfulness or unlawfulness of our own actions and affections and instantly approves or condemns them. Some writers call it the moral sense." This then is the meaning and definition of the term as an English word, and I presume that what the question aims at in reality is to ascertain what light can be thrown upon the phenomena of conscience as observed in the actual life-experience of the individual, from the Theosophical stand-point.

On analysing the "dictates of conscience" as they present themselves in the concrete, they will be found to proceed from two main sources: (1) the innate moral sense or conscience of the individual himself; and (2) the ideas and conceptions of right and wrong which have been more or less deeply and thoroughly impressed upon him by his bringing up, education, social and national environment, religious training and other similar external in-

fluences. It may not always be easy, or even possible, to draw in any given case an exact line of demarcation between these, but the broad distinction seems sufficiently clear and obvious for purposes of general reasoning. As an illustration take the "dictates of conscience" in regard to the keeping of Sunday or the Sabbath of the conscience of (say) a strict Scotch Presbyterian and a Frenchman. They are almost diametrically opposed. Yet, if a Scotchman happens to have been bred and brought up entirely among Frenchmen, his conscience will not dictate to him that the French mode of keeping the Sunday as a fête-day is *morally* wrong. Clearly, therefore, such dictates of conscience have their root in elements which have been, so to say, educated into the character and are due to environment and not to the inborn nature which the individual brings with him into the world. And though I shall now dismiss all such dictates of conscience from our consideration as irrelevant to the main scope of the question, I cannot refrain from remarking that most of us fail perpetually, in enunciating our moral judgments, especially of condemnation, to apply this important distinction or to realise how far-reaching and deeply penetrating is its scope.

Taking then solely the dictates of conscience proper, those moral imperatives which are *really* part of our being—essential, living, unswerving elements in our deeper nature, which stand in judgment over our lives and actions whether we obey or disregard them—taking these alone they are, from the Theosophical standpoint, the slowly and painfully accumulated results of our past experiences throughout many, many lives, of the *results* ensuing from different lines of conduct, from indulging in or refraining from different emotional and mental habits, moods and activities, from the innumerable acts of choice which we are ceaselessly engaged in making day by day.

During the *post-mortem* intervals which separate our successive earth-lives the ego assimilates, builds into his very nature, the quintessence, the aroma of all his experiences on earth. At first, in the earliest rudimentary stages of human evolution, the process is very slow, mechanical and automatic in character rather than consciously intelligent; as the ego grows, gathers strength and unfolds his powers, it becomes more and more rapid, in proportion as intelligence develops, and the ego becomes capable of taking ever-widening surveys of past experience and tracing effects back to the causes. Step by step the character is formed, and character, in other words the nature which the ego has developed through the evolutionary process, in its bearing upon conduct is conscience.

Theosophically speaking, then, conscience is the nature, the very being of the ego applied to conduct and life. And since the ego is the Monad *vehicled* in the causal body or higher manas, it is the same causal body or vehicle of the Monad on the higher mânasic plane which is the source of conscience—in other terms the higher fifth principle of our original nomenclature.

E. A. B.—What we know as "conscience" may, I think, be considered as a development of the mânasic principle, the sense of "right and wrong" growing up as *kâma* (the desire-nature) is gradually worked on by the lower manas, which in its turn becomes later on guided by the higher manas. Beyond that, "conscience" is transcended by a higher consciousness, and the conflict between right and wrong, as we know it, is over.

A. B. C.—Surely "conscience" *per se* is no other than the stored experience of the ego—the memory of the Man himself which he is ever striving to force down into the consciousness of his lower vehicles. The perverted forms which it appears to take in the concrete mind being no more than distortions due to the channels through which it flows, just as the energy of the mountain torrent may be made to manifest itself in a hundred different ways as it flows to the level of the sea.

G. R. S. M.—For those who believe in reincarnation, conscience is generally said to be practically the sum total of the garnered experiences of the ego in all its various lives on earth. Now it is very evident that an experience to the body or the passions is not necessarily an experience to the ego, that is to say, to the "rational man." The "experiences of the ego," therefore, are not to be regarded as the mechanical record of everything that has happened to its "bodies" in its lives on earth, also presumably in its intermediate states. Experiences in this connection must be limited to the sense of the lessons it has learned. Conscience, as we generally use the term, is frequently found to be anything but an infallible guide, for we are to beware, as Ruskin says, lest our conscience in many things may not be "the conscience of an ass." The daimon of Socrates—the "that which prevented him if he were about to do a thing not rightly"—according to this view, would be an ideal definition of conscience, for it is a notorious fact that in the name of conscience (and that too when men have been quite honest with themselves) some of the greatest crimes have been committed—witness the lives of some of the great inquisitors. Conscience in any case, therefore, is not merely knowledge in the general sense of a knowledge of the physical facts, even of past existences, but rather the deductions we have made from these facts. Our deductions may be true or false, but whatever they are, they are all the "knowledge" we (science or conscience) have to go upon. But if it should seem more desirable to confine the definition of conscience to the "still small voice" of that which is better than ourselves, then we must advance the whole conception a grade and take it in the lofty sense of Socrates; we must abandon the conception of an evolving ego and look upon it from the ideal standpoint of a perfect soul obscured in matter; or again we may look upon it as the voice of God Himself. But are not the conceptions of an "evolving ego" and of a "perfect soul fallen into matter" merely the looking at the same problem from two

opposed view points—one permitting us to see the external aspect, the line of form, and the other presenting us with the internal, the line of life? As for the third view—surely this is rather what conscience *ought* to be rather than what it is in actual experience.

QUESTION 152.

J. H. E.—As the physical body rapidly passes through the stages of previous evolution, does the re-incarnating ego sum up its previous experiences in the early years of physical life? And if so, is it possible for the average person to be guided to a knowledge of his Dharma from the consideration of his early life?

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that the ego must go through the lower stages of the evolution of consciousness in the early years of life; otherwise it could not regain its adult status. But these stages are, broadly speaking, savage, semi-civilised, and more or less civilised, as the study of the ordinary boy clearly demonstrates. It would seem, therefore, that the “Dharma” of an ordinary person could hardly be diagnosed from considerations drawn from such experiences.

On this subject Mrs. Besant writes: “I must know the stage of my growth, and I must know the law which will enable me to grow further: then I know my Dharma.” It is evident, then, that to know one’s “Dharma” it is necessary to have retreated to that inner fortress whence the personal man is viewed with impartiality. For it is impossible to realise the stage of one’s growth till one can stand aside from one’s personality and examine it. And the same applies to the understanding of the law. But when the stage of impersonal understanding is reached, the eternal ego looks out and sees clearly, and realises his business—to understand the great manifestation and to help on the great evolution. And at this stage it seems all “Dharmas” are laid aside.

We must therefore conclude that a person’s “Dharma” can only be diagnosed by an outside authority, and imposed upon him. This, we may be glad to think, is not apparently thought necessary for us, as it is not done. After all, the ego has to learn to stand alone, and the only way to achieve this is to “go and find out and be damned.” So knowledge is attained.

QUESTION 153.

E. G.—Is it possible for bodies or forms in the astral world to get smashed up by collision as in the physical world, and can a resident there lose his astral body by an accident of that sort? Also, is suicide possible

there as in the physical world, e.g., by taking an astral poison, or cutting one’s astral throat, or getting “choked to death” by an astral gas, or “burning to death” by an astral fire? If none of these things occur what are the astral analogues of such events upon the physical plane?

E. L.—The only information I can remember having on this subject was a story related by Mrs. Besant of a case coming under her notice where a person having received a violent shock of some kind suffered an injury to the astral vehicle. A “polarisation” (the nearest analogue possible to describe it by) of the particles of the astral took place, and they received a twist or jerk so to speak, out of their normal position with regard to each other. Certain currents on that plane would be injurious to the vehicle belonging to it if it came in their vicinity. “Accidents” (if you like to use this expression belonging to limitation) must occur, one would think, on other planes besides the physical.

If we believe in any connection between the different planes at all, it seems reasonable to suppose that one cannot be affected without the others being affected in some analogous manner peculiar to *their* nature. A first-hand knowledge of the law of reaction is wanted here. The question is, how long would that law continue operating, and how far do its effects extend?

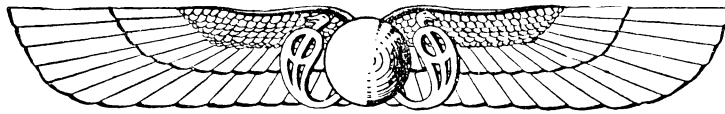
In other words, since a suicide down here is determined by an impulse towards such an act, and by something else, perhaps many other things *behind* the impulse, linked in orderly succession unto it, and secondly, the fact that suicide taking place in one life can result in a morbid tendency in that direction in another, we can infer that many, if not all, events taking place here have their appropriate *correspondences* on the higher level.

E. G.’s question opens up an interesting field of inquiry, concerning which either one or the other of two conclusions (or both) may be stated, *i.e.*, that very little is *known* of this region, or else much known is not given out by those who are trained investigators. Of such we can safely say there are few.

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 1, 1902.

NO. 7.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

THE ITALIAN SECTION.

As notified in our last issue a new Section has been formed in Italy, Colonel Olcott having granted a charter to the seven Branches now existing there. The first Convention of the Section is to be held on February 1st. Mr. Leadbeater, who is now in Italy, has been appointed by the President-Founder to represent him at the Convention, and the European Section will also be represented. A report of the meeting will be given in the March VĀHAN.

The members in Italy are to be heartily congratulated on the result of the work of the past few years. The movement has spread with remarkable rapidity and the growth of the Society has been most constant and vigorous, and there is every reason to look for a successful future for the new Section. Congratulations are especially due to its General Secretary, Captain Boggiani, and to Mrs. Cooper-Oakley for the excellent progress of the work they have undertaken.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GENERAL FUND.

In November a circular was sent out to members of the European Section residing in England who had joined the Society since the appeal for regular contributions was issued upon the removal from Avenue Road, inviting those who felt so disposed to promise donations at regular intervals for the expenses of the Section. This circular was not sent to members joining during the current financial year. As most members are aware, the heavy expenses of the Section are met largely by donations, the annual subscription of 5s. covering only a small part of the expenditure. About £600 annually

was promised in answer to the appeal in 1899, but naturally from various causes some members have dropped off the list and others have not fulfilled their promises, so that only about three-quarters of the total amount has been received. To make up for those the newer members were invited to assist in order that the financial position of the Section might be assured. The result of the new appeal has so far not been great. The following is a list of the amounts promised: J. R., 15s.; H. L., £1; D. S., £3; C. A. J. D., 5s.; E. M. T., £1; J. H. H., £2 2s.; E. R. McN., 5s.; Ss., £6; I. H., £4; E. K., £2; C. J. C., 10s.; H. W. H., £2 2s.; J. T. D., 10s.; A. S., £1; J. E. S., £1 1s. Total: £24 10s.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

DONATION TO THE CENTRAL HINDU COLLEGE.

Mr. Bertram Keightley wishes to acknowledge with thanks the receipt from an anonymous "member of the Blavatsky Lodge," of £5 for the Central Hindu College, which has been duly forwarded.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branch.

January 15th, 1902. Charter issued this day to William Walker, Joseph Taylore, Joshua Watson, Alice Doeg, Joseph P. Sleigh, Jane Mattison, and Jane Young, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society at Whitley, Northumberland, to be known as the Tyneside Branch.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to January 20th: A. V. H., £12 12s.; Ss., £1; A.

T. H., £1; B. P. M., 10s.; R. T. P., 5s.; M. H. L., £2 10s.; A. L., £1; D. S., 10s.; M. H., £1 1s.; M. S.-K., £1; E. K., £2; E. S., 5s.; E. M. M., £1; E. M. J., 10s.; London Lodge, £34 15s.; A. E. T., £1 1s.; D. G., £10; J. T. D., 10s.; A. S., 10s.; J. E. S., £1 1s.; E. T., £4.
Total: £77.

Correspondence Class.

A Correspondence Class has been arranged for members of the Society and others who are unable to attend classes and lectures. The book selected for study is the *Growth of the Soul*, by A. P. Sinnett. The Class was started in January, and the first set of questions will be sent round on or about February 20th. Those wishing to join the Class should send their names to Miss Lilian Lloyd, 28, Albemarle Street.

Afternoon Meetings.

Meetings for discussion and questions on Theosophy will be held on Monday afternoons in February and March, at 28, Albemarle Street, from 3 to 5 o'clock, open to all members of the Society and their friends. The speakers will be: Feb. 3rd, Mr. Mead; Feb. 10th, Mrs. Hooper; Feb. 17th, Mr. Mead; Feb. 24th, Mr. Sinnett.

Class for Study at Headquarters.

A Class formed under the charge of Mr. G. Dyne meets on Wednesday evenings, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street. The subject is "The Spectroscope and its Work," and the treatment is elementary.

This class is open only to members of the Society. Any enquiries which may be made should be addressed to the Secretary of the Social Committee.

Practice Debating Classes.

A Debate will take place at Headquarters, on Saturday, February 15th, at 5 p.m., between the members of the Practice Debating Class, meeting at Headquarters, and the members of the North London Lodge Debating Class. The subject is, "Should a member of the Theosophical Society take a part in public affairs?" Members of the Society are invited to be present.

E. SEEVERS,
Hon. Secretary.

Mr. Mead's Lectures.

During February and March six lectures will be given in introduction to and in consideration of the question "Did Jesus live 100 years B.C.?" by Mr. G. R. S. Mead, on Tuesday afternoons, from 5 to 6, in the Lecture Room of the Theosophical Society, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Synopsis of the Lectures: Feb. 11th, "Was Jesus an Essene?" Feb. 18th, "Was Paul a Gnostic?" Feb. 25th, "What is the Talmud?" March 4th, "The Talmud Jesus Stories." March 11th, "The Mediaeval Jewish Jesus Legends." March 18th, "Did Jesus live 100 years B.C.?"

Course tickets, 7s. 6d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W. Admission to each Lecture, 2s.

Northern Federation.

The quarterly meeting will be held at Harrogate on Saturday, February 15th, at 3.30 p.m. Mr. A. P. Sinnett will preside. All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

From Sunday, December 15th, till Thursday, January 16th, there were no meetings of the above Lodge. On the latter date it re-opened with an open night for discussion. The subject debated was the proposition: "It tends to restrict the spread of any great truth to make it the subject of debate."

Mrs. Lauder, Mr. Leo, and Mr. Hogg, opened the discussion, which was then thrown open to debate by all members who desired to speak on the subject. A very interesting and well sustained discussion followed; amongst those who spoke were Miss Samson, Mr. Keightley, Miss Goring, Madame Schack, Miss Severs, Captain Lauder, and Mr. McConechy.

The next Debate night is February 20th, and the subject selected is: "Is pain or pleasure the most important factor in evolution?"

S. M. S.

North London Lodge.

This Lodge has had a good year. The most noteworthy event has been the transference of the Saturday meeting from the room so kindly lent by Mr. and Mrs. Garlick at Gospel Oak to the Lodge quarters, the change resulting in a considerably increased attendance. We have lost several members, principally through removals, only one having left the Society. New admissions leave the membership very nearly where it stood at this time last year. The Debating Class continues to prosper.

W. M. G.

Didsbury Centre.

A second course of private study meetings, and also one of drawing-room meetings, have been held fortnightly in the afternoon and evening respectively since last October. By the generosity of a

friend the nucleus of a small Lending Library has been formed. A course of five public lectures will be given fortnightly at the Didsbury Liberal Club, to commence on January 27th with a lecture by Mr. Mead on "Theosophy and Christianity."

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lotus Circle.

Meetings are held every Sunday afternoon at 3 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, to which young people, whether members of the Theosophical Society or not, are cordially invited.

H. W.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Feb. 2nd, *Edward Carpenter, A Study*, B. Hodson; Feb. 9th, *Egypt and the Great Pyramid*, T. H. Duffell; Feb. 16th, *The Secret Doctrine among the Mahommedans*, J. H. Duffell; Feb. 23rd, *The Causal Body*. Class for study of the *Bhagavad Gita* on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., and for general study at 3 p.m. at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at the "Downs" Café, 186, Whiteladies'

Road, Clifton (first floor room). The Lodge Library is available at all times to members on application to the Manageress of the Café. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, at 8.15 p.m.: Feb. 18th, *The Law of Change*, Miss Dundas Grant. Lodge meetings are held twice monthly for special study. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

FLORENCE LODGE. Lodge rooms at Via Venezia, 8, are open on Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m., for the exchange of books.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 24th, *Self Reform*, J. P. Allan. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 10th, *A Homeless Nation*, A. Duke.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 2nd, *The Christ Within*, W. Bell; Feb. 9th, *The Building of Mind and Character*, Mrs. Corbett; Feb. 16th, *The Questions that a Religious Philosophy should answer*, A. P. Sinnett; Feb. 23rd, *The Religions of India*, Miss Shaw. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 3rd, *Theosophy from the Outside*, A. T. Marles; Feb. 10th, *The Future of Religion*, H. W. Hunter; Feb. 17th, B. Keightley; Feb. 24th, *Self-Reliance*, Miss Shaw. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIK CENTRE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Feb. 2nd, *Self Knowledge*, Mrs. Leo; Feb. 9th, *The Factors of Religion*, B. Keightley; Feb. 16th, *Religion and Religions*, Mrs.

Sharpe; Feb. 23rd, Questions and Answers. Meetings for study of the *Bhagavad Gītā* on Wednesdays, Feb. 5th and 19th, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanch, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings open only to members of the Society on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street.: Feb. 6th, *Brāhmanism and the West*, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 13th, *Some of our Responsibilities*, Miss E. Mallet; Feb. 20th, Open night for Discussion; Feb. 27th, *The Proper Uses of Revelation*, Bertram Keightley. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., open to members and visitors: Feb. 2nd, *Ancient Symbols and Modern Science*, G. Dyne; Feb. 9th, *Forgiveness*, A. J. Faulding; Feb. 16th, *Reincarnation*, Miss Arundale; Feb. 23rd, *Theosophy in Relation to Modern Thought*, Miss Ward.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *The Symbolism of the Parables*, Miss C. E. Woods; Feb. 11th, *Notes on the "Bhagavad Gītā,"* J. Halliwell; Feb. 18th, *Our Psychic Heritage*, R. King; Feb. 25th, *The Wheel of Destiny*, Mrs. Leo. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 3rd, *Evolution*, A. P. Cattanch; Feb. 10th, *Immortality and Memory*, B. Keightley; Feb. 17th, *The Spiritual Life*, Mrs. Leo; Feb. 24th, *A Theosophic View of the Atonement*, D. N. Dunlop. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.: Feb. 1st, *Spiritualism and Theosophy*, R. King; Feb. 10th, *Religions and Religion*, Mrs. Sharpe; Feb. 15th, *Scientific Evidence for "Lemuria" and "Atlantis,"* W. C. Worsdell; Feb. 3rd, 17th and 24th, study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*; Feb. 8th and 22nd, study of "Vibrations." Debating class on Saturdays, at 6.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *Responsibility*, Miss E. M. Samson; Feb. 14th, "*H. P. B.*" and a *Scrap-book*, Miss Ward; Feb. 21st, *The Physical Basis of Mind*, Miss Pope; Feb. 28th, *Light Rays—What can we do with them?* Max Gysi.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., in Room 62, York Chambers, 27, Brazenose Street. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

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

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

ROME LODGE. Meetings at 72, Via S. Niccolo da Tolentino, on Mondays and Fridays, at 6 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*, conducted by Captain Boggiani, and on Sundays, conducted by Signor Amendola.

ROME (BESANT LODGE). Meetings on Tuesdays at 9 p.m. for study of *The Seven Principles of Man*, conducted by Signor G. Colazza.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

In attempting to reply to A. E. J. in the last VĀHAN the writer stated that to understand the points in question it is necessary to relinquish the dogma that "the Ego or causal body is purely Mānasic; i.e., that the Ego-consciousness does not "touch" the buddhic plane. Since writing these words he has read Mrs. Besant's new book, *Esoteric Christianity*, and there finds an authoritative pronouncement of such essential importance to those who "desire to learn," that he asks permission to quote it *verbatim*. On page 238, *et seq.*, Mrs. Besant writes:—"When a man is busy in the physical world, his vehicle is the physical body, and his consciousness works in and through that body. When he passes into the world beyond the physical, in sleep and at death, his vehicle is the desire body, and he may learn to use this consciously, as he uses the physical consciously. He already uses it unconsciously every day of his life when he is feeling and desiring, as well as every night of his life. When he goes on into the heavenly world after death, his vehicle is the mental body, and this also he is daily using when he is thinking, and there would be no thought in the brain were there none in the mental body.

"Man has further a spiritual body. This is made up of three separable portions, each portion belonging to one of, and separating off, the three Persons in the Trinity of the human Spirit. St. Paul speaks of being caught up to the third heaven, and of there hearing unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter. These different regions of the invisible supernal worlds are known to Initiates, and they are well aware that those who pass beyond the first heaven need the truly spiritual body as their vehicle, and that according to the development of its three divisions is the heaven into which they can penetrate.

"The lowest of these three divisions is usually called the Causal Body, for a reason which will be only fully assimilable by those who have studied the teaching of Reincarnation—taught in the Early Church—and who understand that human evolution needs very many successive lives on earth, ere the germinal soul of the savage can become the perfected Soul of the Christ; and then, becoming perfect as the Father in Heaven, can realise the

union of the Son with the Father. It is a body that lasts from life to life, and in it all memory of the past is stored. From it come forth the causes that build up the lower bodies. It is the receptacle of human experience, the treasure-house in which all we gather in our lives is stored up, the seat of Conscience, the wielder of the Will.

“The second of the three divisions of the spiritual body is spoken of by S. Paul in the significant words: ‘We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.’ That is the Bliss Body, the glorified body of the Christ, the Resurrection Body. It is not a body which is made with hands, by the working of consciousness in the lower vehicles; it is not formed by experience, not builded out of the materials gathered by man in his long pilgrimage. It is a body which belongs to the Christ life, the life of Initiation; to the divine unfoldment in man; it is builded of God, by the activity of the Spirit, and grows during the whole life or lives of the Initiate, only reaching its perfection at the Resurrection.

“The third division of the spiritual body is the fine film of subtle matter that separates off the individual Spirit as a Being; and yet permits the interpenetration of all by all, and is thus the expression of the fundamental unity. In the day when the Son Himself shall be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all, this film will be transcended, but for us it remains the highest division of the spiritual body, in which we ascend to the Father, and are united with Him.”

A reference to the abstract scheme of the “Evolution of Consciousness”—which the writer ventured to recommend as embodying a basic principle on which the terms we use may be defined—will show that this new teaching of the three divisions of the spiritual body exactly accords with it. The first division corresponds to the section marked “The Ego”; the second division corresponds to the “Vehicle of Understanding”; the third division to “The Christos.” This last is essentially nirvāṇic, and is sometimes called the “Ātmic Sheath,” or the *Ānandamāya Kosha*. While combined with the higher *Buddhi* it is in process of development; when *Buddhi* is at last transcended, then the new centre of consciousness will function in the macro-cosmic vehicle of the Supreme Omniscience, and “God will be All in All.” So the writer thinks.

A. H. W.

As the discussion of the morality of sacrificing another's life to save him from pain is being continued in your December number, I trust you will allow me to add my quota. I knew, a good many years ago, an Englishman in India who told me that his wife once gave birth to a living child, whose jaws, nose and temple had failed to meet in the front of the face from chin to top of head. It was a case of hare-lip in excess. The babe could not have suckled and must have died of starvation. The father, with the knowledge of the doctor, put the babe into a bucket of water, and advertised in the “Domestic Occurrences” the birth of a child

“still born.” In this, in my humble opinion, he acted wisely. Such things, fortunately, happen very rarely. But I can conceive of no case of malformation, such as want of a limb or limbs, or no severity of disease which would warrant the medical man to consent to the life being taken.

I think we shall be helped if we look at the question from the theosophical standpoint. The soul is the Master, the Lord of that bundle of minute living cells each with its own separate soul and body, life which in their aggregate is called the body—“my body”—and from the moment of conception, this body is being watched over by the Lord who is in due course to inhabit it. As my body grows, my mind has, during this or future lives, to grasp the fact that “my body is mine, but it is not I myself.” The recognition of this fact, that my fleshly body is dominated by my spiritual entity, is the first step in the reception into the heart of the Wisdom-Religion, of “conversion” so-called in the New Testament, of being “thrice-born” as taught in the Vedānta of the Sanskrit scriptures. My spiritual Lord enters my body for the purpose of gaining experience on the physical plane. Yes, and much more. He, knowing in past lives the sin and misery that reigned here, temporary no doubt but none the less real for all that, is sent by the Supreme as a Christ to bear the trouble and shame of my upbringing, to witness the miserably foolish way in which time after time I, refusing to think, fall into errors of diet and drink, of sexual and other unwise indulgences of many kinds. He bears with my folly, puts heart into me again and again, and helps me to recover from sicknesses which are the karma, the plain result of my foolish ignorance. It is not the medicine which cures, but the warmth, the perspiration, the necessary partial or total abstinence from food, the excretions of uric acid through the skin in the form of eruptions, boils, and infectious diseases, and, above all, the visible presence of a kind-hearted doctor and sympathetic nurse which are my real medicine.

So after accident or sickness of the most wasting and wearisome kind, my Lord, who has watched over me and carefully tended me during the long preparation of childhood and youth or maidenhood, will not leave me in my manhood or womanhood. He will not leave me during sickness, nor after a so-called fatal dose of poison, nor the bite of a poisonous snake, if I am willing to stay on, to bear the intense pain of corrosive arsenic, or the heavy sleep supervening upon snake poison, chloral or opium. If we have learned to look to Him, the poison or the uric acid will work off painfully or painlessly, we shall be taught to sleep, through the collapse stage of cholera and the intense headache of plague. The inflammation of the mucous membrane will cease, the weakness change to strength and we shall recover. It is most common for people to die from the bite of harmless snakes, of hydrophobia from the bite of dogs free from rabies, and the heart of a Hindoo plague patient often ceases to beat as soon as he realises that he is in a cot in a plague hospital. It is fear

that kills, fear is the cause of severe sickness in the large majority of instances. We take chills because we fear to expose ourselves to the chilly air, we die because we fear death. As St. Paul says, "fear hath torment," but he adds, "perfect love casteth out fear." Love, reverence and devotion to my Lord within, who is for me the Angel Messenger of the Supreme, sent to me for my salvation from physical and moral disease. The knowledge which grows with our spiritual growth of the immanence of the Indweller gives the meaning of the Lord Christ's saying, "the kingdom of God is within you." And then when we learn to look to Him for wisdom, He teaches us to avoid, to abstain from harmful foods and practices, and so keep body and mind in health, until in old age, or even in middle age when no more useful experience is obtainable for us or Him in this incarnation, and *we are ready to go*, He gives us a painless passing away, free from disease.

It is such experience that we have to look forward to hopefully in the future. The work of the fifth race is to prepare the merging into the sixth. It has already begun. The four last verses of St. Mark's gospel are true. The Christian scientists have grasped their truth as the foundation of their medical practice in the cure of physical and moral disease. They have learned as a principal part of their teaching that "Pain has no reality, there is no such thing as pain." This fact makes cure from accident and disease so wonderfully rapid, as in many cases to bear the appearance of miracle. I am not connected with them, but have read their books. I have recovered from a bad railway accident, and know that their above-quoted formula is true. All disease, all pain is caused by *want of willingness* to ask *within* for wisdom and strength. The suggestion in thought to myself immediately after my accident on recovering consciousness was "Is it possible that for me pain does not exist?" The answer came instantaneously in absolute cessation of pain.

D. G.

May I thank A. P. S. and very specially A. H. W. for the attention and trouble they have given to my difficulty in seeing all round the subject of suicide and the taking of life.

In reply to E. S. I must disclaim any idea of controversy in the VĀHAN, and call attention to the fact that the "taking," not the "giving," of one's life is the subject under discussion; I think none of us who discuss these questions are likely to criticise acts of devotion to duty, involving death, or of giving one's life for the saving of another's. I may remark, too, that anyone who thought he knew all about the Law would not need to ask others what they knew of it, in order to compare notes! And why assert a fact so obvious as the imperfection of the government of the universe judged by the conduct of man? The cattle market in this cathedral town is sufficient evidence of that fact, without going, some centuries back, to Spain—or even less than a century, to Ireland.

It was from A. P. S. long ago in an Italian village, that I learnt my first lessons in Esoteric Buddhism. His opinions on any subject must have weight with me. Yet, having read all that has been written in this discussion, I am convinced that it is better not to take one's own life under *any* circumstances, because even the trouble one might wish to save one's friends is probably part of their karma, and will only be put off: and any such violent and ignorant action, intended to end trouble, is just as likely to prolong it.

And I withdraw my one former exception, and hold that it is better to suffer any dishonour than to cut one's life short in order to escape it. Life is so hard and death so full of interest and possibilities, that heroism and duty seem to be on the side of the resolution to live.

A. M. F. C.

I cordially agree with J. F. S. in his remarks upon "Prayer" in the January VĀHAN. No persons, opinions or communities can forbid us to pray, inasmuch as the impulse to do so is an inherent principle in our nature. "Can Theosophy do nothing to meet this need also?" he asks. Yes, only in thinking of the meaning of real prayer, it is important to remember the vast area covered by the words: the difference between the anguished cry of the human heart for help—whether the need arises from physical, moral or mental causes, matters not—and the calm, sustained communion of the evolved soul with the God within. Yet the latter condition is the sure guarantee that the former will receive prompt attention. We are assured and may also learn from experience, that an appeal to the Highest is more easily made than to any intervening agency. In a real extremity of any kind, why should it be amiss to make a direct appeal to the Logos of our system? "He in Whom we live and move and have our being." We need not fear to strike so high a note! The answering vibration it calls forth will, no doubt, come down through those lower Hierarchies and Masters, but none the less the answer is certain if the demand rings true.

The more direct the force sent out—the higher the aim—then all the surer will be the rebound upon the sender out of that force we call Prayer.

F. M. M. R.

The subject reopened by H. E. in Question 150 in the January issue of the VĀHAN, and to which A. A. W. has fully replied by sweeping Christianity from the field, is of such tremendous import to thousands in the present day, that I venture to try to express what I feel must be the unanimous voice of those to whom Christianity is no dead letter, but a living, revealing Truth "by which they are saved, and in which hope they stand." Does not A. A. W. confound the man-woven and now moth-eaten garments of Christianity with the thing itself—garments that have doubtless fulfilled their purpose, as the casket preserves the jewel till the youthful owner is of full age and can understand its

worth? These garments are worn-out and quite past patching, and yet were they roughly handled and ruthlessly torn down, what pain, what torture would it be, what "offence" to the "little ones" who cannot yet bear the Unclothed Vision. They *are* ready to vanish away, and they will vanish away when the time is ripe. Again, why talk of the Christ revealed 2,000 years ago as belonging to the West? Surely, in the Great Spiral of Evolution there is neither East nor West! Civilisations come to the front and nations rise and fall, and we who have realised the great pilgrimage, must know that we have passed through each in turn, whilst ever and anon the Christ Ideal has been held up before our gaze, lived out amongst us in human form, ever the "Outcome" for the moment's need. The name signifies not by which It is called, for the Ideal is always one, but is It not an evolving Ideal, as all else evolves? Is it too much to say that Christianity is *not* dying, but only now for the first time putting away childish things, and that the mustard seed of Galilee will yet become a mighty tree—not, however, we venture to think, till the Sixth Race has so far run its course, and the Christ is born in the heart of each; then, perhaps, when we have attained the measure of the stature of His fullness, we may say, Christianity has completed its work, for we shall have learnt to know as we are known.

M. E. G.

I think that, on mature consideration, A. A. W. will find that his reply to my question is not so simple as he believes. My question was, I suppose, unavoidably cut down, owing to lack of space, and this was unfortunate, as it has rather obscured the point.

A. A. W. is perfectly at liberty, if he chooses, to take his definition of modern Christianity, as regards the Roman and Anglican Churches, from the doctrines which are contained in the Thirty-nine Articles and the Creed of Pope Pius; though his choice of the Thirty-nine Articles is not very fortunate, as it has been said, with some justice, that anything can be proved from them.

But these documents will not help him, or support the presentment of modern Christianity, given in his reply to J. H., and on this point I join issue with him. It is impossible to go into this at length in the pages of the VĀHAN, but I recommend him a study of Catholic theology, and I shall be very pleased to give him the name of a book on the subject, where he will find the various authorities quoted. His ideas of Christianity are, in fact, pure Calvinism, and these sorts of statements have been refuted over and over again.

As to the rest of his reply to my question, it is sufficient to observe that he has apparently taken great pain to impute opinions to myself and others for the pleasure of attempting to demolish them, and, of course, for these I decline to be responsible.

I am pleased to see that in this month's VĀHAN, both J. F. S. and A. H. take a less dogmatic Theosophical line, A. H. especially appears to me to be entirely correct in his ideas as to the position

of Theosophy in regard to religion; and I feel sure that such views are more likely to advance its cause than the very narrow and erroneous statements of A. A. W.

H. E.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 154.

E. J. P.—In the *Twelfth Discourse of the Bhagavad Gītā*, 17 par., the words occur "he who neither loveth nor hateth." How can we reconcile this with Christ's words "thou shalt love," etc. And John says "let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God," also 13, 1st Corinthians. Not being quite clear on the matter, I should be glad of an interpretation.

G. R. S. M.—The question is a good one, but it does not bring out all the difficulties which confront the student of comparative theology. For instance, Christian tradition preserves for us also the saying that if we "hate not father and mother" we cannot be disciples of the Christ. Further, in one passage, it is implied that it is God who leads us into temptation, while in another it is squarely asserted that God tempts no man at any time. Nor is it only in the Christian scripture that we are confronted with absolutely contradictory propositions which completely baffle the intellect, it is equally the case in all scriptures of any compass. The difficulty involved in the first saying I have quoted was in early days met by a mystical exegesis which asserted that it did not refer to our physical parents but to the "parents" of our lower nature. It was believed by these early followers of the inner teaching that the soul fashioned for a man in any birth was a mixture of good and evil tendencies determined by his actions in past lives. They, however, were not content to leave the matter in the pure domain of philosophical speculation, and to talk about tendencies, but, being seers of the psychic life, they were strongly impressed with the living actuality of these "tendencies," which they saw as essences and substances. Those tendencies which they considered of an evil nature they traced to an evil source; they were actual substances, or grades of matter, worked into the soul-plasm by certain intelligent powers to whom this function was assigned. These were the "parents" we were to hate.

There are, however, further difficulties involved in this exegesis. If the view given above was the correct one, then the saying itself would seem to encourage a somewhat erroneous view of the matter, for surely the "parents," so far from being regarded as the sources of evil in us, should rather be regarded as the servants of the law. They are simply carrying out their appointed task; they are not to blame, and therefore not to be hated; we ourselves are the causes of the "evil" in us, for we are not our psychic vehicle, any more than a man is his coat; we are of pneumatic or spiritual essence, and our psychic vesture is woven for us

according to the pattern of our past good and evil deeds. We should not then hate these "parents," for it is really we ourselves who have given them the plan of the weaving. There is therefore some confusion in the above Gnostic interpretation of the matter; it is, however, a step in the right direction. The next stage is the thought that the best use we can make of the force which in the natural man expresses itself as hate of persons and things, is to turn it against the doing of such deeds as past experience has taught us to be evil for us; we shall thus avoid the foolishness of hating, in the literal sense of the words, either the flesh, or the world, or even the devil! It is now only a question of following the right path to understanding and avoiding the folly of expending our energies in useless directions.

But how shall we explain the mysterious words of the most general prayer of Christendom which beseech God not to lead us into temptation? Here we are face to face with the mystery of evil, the mystery of that insoluble riddle which made one of the old Hebrew prophets proclaim squarely in the name of his God, "I create evil," and which made the inspired author of the *Gita* state at great length that the deity whose mouth-piece he was, was all things evil as well as good. We are elsewhere told that the wise man must see the Self in all things, both in the seemingly bad as well as in the seemingly good. These are hard sayings, and it is only for those who are winning towards the heart of things that a consideration of them is without danger. For the mass of mankind instruction has ever been given in the form of exaggeration and in the intensification of the opposites. But here and there in the scriptures of the nations we come across a hint of a mysterious wisdom which seems to take away all our prior certainty. Nor is there any real danger in this, for the man who has once experienced the enormous inner power and peace that comes to him who learns to love an enemy, will not hesitate to continue on that path and will readily grasp the notion that perhaps after all the Devil is only man's Saviour in disguise, and that God is indeed one. Along this line of thought some explanation of the prayer "not to lead us into temptation" may be found; but even so, it is a somewhat weak-kneed request compared with the glorious self-surrender when true manhood wakes and the wisdom of the Self, even in apparent evil, is recognised with the words: "Not my will but Thine be done."

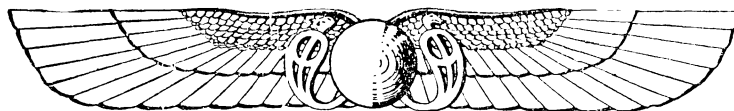
It is this idea of the Self, who alone knows His own purpose and His ways, which has led the Indian philosophers to refrain from definition. "Not this; not this," they say in answer to every definition of what He is. So then, if it be said "God is love," they answer "No; he who would be the Self should neither love nor hate." We are, therefore, confronted with apparently contradictory assertions, and are thrown back on ourselves for a solution, if indeed any solution can be found. It would seem that the form of the teaching of a Master of Wisdom is determined by

the nature of His pupils and their immediate needs. If it is addressed to those whose emotions are more active than their reason, then it is by the intensification of the higher emotions that their evolution is most easily advanced; if, on the contrary, it is addressed to those whose reason is stronger than their emotions, then the effort seems to be to develop them along the line of the intensification of the reason. Perhaps some solution of the difficulty may be found along this line of thought. The positive command "Love your enemies," carries with it the feeling of such an intensification of life that the negative *ahimsa* or "harmlessness" ideal, which teaches simply to refrain from doing injury, seems a poor thing; but the doctrine that God is love, if God is to be taken as the Self, is so utterly inadequate to explain the existence of hate, that it is but consistent to eliminate all pairs of opposites in contemplation of the mystery, once the idea is grasped that all pairs are mutually self-determined. For if all hate ceases, what is left is not love, but something else of which both love and hate are equally manifestations. All of this accentuation of love, then, is exceedingly unsatisfactory to one who perceives that this line of thought is only begotten by the false supposition that the Self Itself is one of a pair of opposites. For by the gradual elimination of all pairs of opposites we arrive at apparently the last of all opposites, the One Self, as opposed to the Not-One, not, mark you, to the One as opposed to the Many, that is a far cruder conception. Ah! will say the lover, that proves it, for the One is love and the Not-One hate. By no means, will say the philosopher, the One is wisdom and the Not-One is ignorance. And so others with different ideals—such as power, goodness, beauty—will claim that their ideal is the One and the opposite the Not-One. But reason says: May not the Self be the All?—a new point of view, and then it whispers: The opposite of All is nothing, and I can go no further. If, however, you love the play of words, you may say that as nothing is the opposite of All, All has no opposite; so, then, if you would joy in the fathomless ocean of wisdom seek to exclude nothing from the Fullness of God. There is a mystery; nay, all is a mystery—to me; if you, my other self, learn this great lesson, you will be ready to go on to the next grade of instruction: I am that mystery; and finally to the solution of all doubts, where there is that Silence which becomes all sound.

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, MARCH 1, 1902.

NO. 8.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

New Branches.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

On and after March 15th, all correspondence for the Editors of *The Theosophical Review*, or for Mr. or Mrs. G. R. S. Mead, should be addressed to 28, Albemarle Street, W., until further notice.

ACTIVITIES.

Federation of London Branches.

On Wednesday, January 29th, a preliminary meeting was held at 28, Albemarle Street, to inaugurate a Federation of the Lodges in or near London on the lines that have resulted in such marked success in the North of England.

There was a short business meeting of the Presidents and Secretaries of the London Lodges, and it was agreed that there should be three meetings of the Federation each year, the next to be held on April 16th, at 8 p.m.

It is proposed to have a certain time devoted to discussion of a given subject, which will be announced beforehand, and that tea and conversation shall occupy the remainder of the time. Miss Arundale was elected Secretary to transact the necessary business of the Federation and to be in touch with the various Lodges.

It is hoped that in this way the members of the outlying Lodges may become better acquainted with each other and that the social gatherings will be characterised by increased intimacy and friendliness.

There was a large attendance of members on Wednesday, and Mr. Bertram Keightley put before them in a short speech the objects of the Federation.

F. ARUNDALE,
Hon. Secretary.

February 12th, 1902. Charter issued this day to Carl Schwabe, Frau Franziska Vormbaum, Mlle. Granet de Gandolphe, Johannes Ulrich, Robert Sobczak, Frau Alice Henzel and Frl. Selma Doenicke, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Cassel, Germany, to be known as the Cassel Branch.

February 14th, 1902. Charter issued this day to Carl Schmieder, Wilhelm Floetgen, Ernest Klapheck, Hermann Westenfeld, Bruno Berg, Bernard Lohf and Arthur Dux to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Düsseldorf, Germany, to be known as the Düsseldorf Branch.

February 20th, 1902. Charter issued this day to Dr. F. Löhnis, Richard Bresch, Oskar Heyne, Emil Gentzsch, Hugo Aurig, Max Haunstein and Frl. Hedwig Kolbe to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in Leipsic, Germany, to be known as the Leipsic Branch.

February 24th, 1902. Charter issued this day to C. W. Leadbeater, Herbert Whyte, Miss Daisy Whyte, J. M. Rae, Mrs. Kate E. Whyte, Miss Annie J. Willson, Miss Ethel M. Mallet, G. Dyne, Miss Marguerite A. Sidley, Miss Daisy J. S. Dyne, Godfrey W. Dyne, Miss Winifred M. Sidley, Harold V. Sidley, D. Spence Whyte, Miss Constance M. Garlick, F. A. Garlick, Miss Gladys E. Garlick, Basil Hodgson-Smith, Miss Violet Hope, Laurence N. Hope and Herbert Sidley, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society in London to be known as the Lotus Branch.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to February 20th: C. D., £2 2s.; H. B., £2; E. D., £2 2s.; E. J. C., £2 2s.; G. F. S., £2; A. H. W., £3 3s.; J. G., 5s.; M. A. L. G., 5s.; W. V.

£1 1s.; F. L. B., £1; H. and K. D., 10s. 6d.; F. L. J. Z., £1; A. P. C., 10s.; Ss., 10s.; E. A. B., £8; K. B., £5; J. V. I., 5s. Total: £31 15s. 6d.

Correspondence Class.

Anyone wishing to join the Correspondence Class which was started in February should send their name to Miss Lilian Lloyd, 28, Albemarle Street. This Class is open to members and friends.

Afternoon Meetings.

Meetings for discussion and questions on Theosophy will be held on Monday afternoons in March, at 28, Albemarle Street, from 3 to 5 o'clock, open to all members of the Society and their friends. The speakers will be: Mar. 3rd, Mr. Bertram Keightley; Mar. 10th, Captain Lauder; Mar. 17th, Mr. Sinnett; Mar. 24th, Mr. Ward.

Class for Study at Headquarters.

A Class formed under the charge of Mr. G. Dyne meets on Wednesday evenings, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street. The subject is "The Spectroscope and its Work," and the treatment is elementary.

This Class is open only to members of the Society. Any enquiries which may be made should be addressed to the Secretary of the Social Committee.

Practice Debating Class.

A Practice Debating Class meets at 28, Albemarle Street, every alternate Thursday, at 6 p.m. All members are invited to attend.

E. SEEVERS,
Hon. Secretary.

Mr. Mead's Lectures.

During March the concluding series of these lectures in introduction to, and in consideration of, the question, "Did Jesus live 100 years B.C.?" will be given by Mr. G. R. S. Mead, on Tuesday afternoons, from 5 to 6, in the Lecture Room of the Theosophical Society, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

Synopsis of the Lectures: March 4th, "The Talmud Jesus Stories." March 11th, "The Mediæval Jewish Jesus Legends." March 18th, "Did Jesus live 100 years B.C.?"

Admission to each lecture, 2s.

North of England Federation.

The Quarterly Conference was held at Harrogate on Saturday, February 15th, under the presidency of Mr. A. P. Sinnett. There was a large gathering of delegates and members from the principal Northern Lodges. An application for affiliation was received from the newly formed

Tyneside Branch and the Council duly elected it to membership.

Miss Shaw (Harrogate), read a paper on "The Esoteric Basis of Christianity." In the discussion which followed Messrs. Marsden, Dunn, Orage, Nichol and Sinnett took part.

The members afterwards adjourned to tea in the Winter Gardens.

On re-assembling Mr. Sinnett delivered a most instructive lecture on "The Educational Value of Occult Phenomena." After the short discussion the formal proceedings were terminated by a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer.

The remainder of the evening was spent in social intercourse. Refreshments were kindly provided by members of the Harrogate Lodge.

On the following day Mr. Sinnett and Mr. Bertram Keightley spoke at an afternoon meeting in the Harrogate Lodge Room, when many interesting accounts were given of their recollections of Madame Blavatsky. In the evening Mr. Sinnett addressed a public meeting in the Swedish Gymnasium on "The Questions that a Religious Philosophy should answer." There was a large and appreciative audience.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

South-Western Federation.

The seventh annual meeting of the South-Western Federation was held at Bath, on Tuesday, Feb. 11th. There was a very good attendance, delegates being present from Plymouth, Exeter, Bristol, Bath and Bournemouth. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Bertram Keightley. Very encouraging reports were received from the Lodges and Centres in the West; especially gratifying was the success in Exeter, also the formation of a Centre in Southampton. During the course of the business some very valuable suggestions were given by the Chairman (Mr. Keightley), who made us all feel how very necessary such a Federation was, if we wanted to propagate theosophical thought in earnest.

The business being concluded, the Chairman gave a very valuable address on "Yoga," pointing out that ere we should be ready to start the practice of Yoga, we had much work to do in gaining control of the mind and subjugating our carnal desires.

A public lecture was given in the evening by Mr. Keightley on "The Evolution of the Soul"; a good audience listened with great attention while he unfolded to them the mystery of the soul's progress. Many pertinent questions were asked at the close of the lecture, eliciting lucid and satisfactory answers.

If any Theosophical friends who lecture or read papers, ever travel into the West, we should be very grateful if they could give us their help on such occasions in any of the lodges or centres of the South-Western Federation.

Kindly address all communications to the Sec-

retary, J. Walter Cock, 14, Divinity Road, Oxford, who will gladly make all arrangements.

J. WALTER COCK.
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On Jan. 30th, Mr. Sinnett gave an exceedingly interesting lecture on "The Real Francis Bacon." He laid before the Lodge very clearly the strong evidence that exists in support of the contention that Francis Bacon was the author of the plays attributed to Shakespeare; one of the most interesting points to Theosophists lay in the suggestion that Bacon was the founder of the Rosicrucians. On Feb. 6th, Mr. Mead delivered a most valuable and instructive lecture on "Brâhmanism and the West." This was the first of the series of three which Mr. Mead will give on the present syllabus. On Feb. 13th Miss E. Mallett read a paper on "Some of our Responsibilities," dealing with a few of the pressing problems of the hour, and discussing whether or no Theosophists as a body gave a due amount of attention to them.

The Sunday evening lecturers have been: Mr. Keightley, Mr. Mead, Mr. Dyne, Mr. Faulding, and Miss Arundale. Some of these meetings have been very well attended, and where there was a falling off, the weather evidently furnished an adequate reason.

S. M. S.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Mar. 9th, *Brotherhood*, Miss J. Keeley; Mar. 16th, *The Philosophy of the Vedânta*, J. H. Duffell; Mar. 23rd, *Karma, Friend or Foe*, Miss F. Lankesheer; Mar. 30th, *The Mirror of the Self*, B. Old. Class for study of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., and for general

study at 3 p.m. at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at the "Downs" Café, 186, Whiteladies' Road, Clifton (first floor room). The Lodge Library is available at all times to members on application to the Manageress of the Café. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 170, rue Royale, the first and third Saturdays in the month at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, at 8.15 p.m.: Mar. 4th, Questions and Discussion; Mar. 18th, *Recent Explorations in Ancient Egypt*, W. F. Miller. Lodge meetings are held twice monthly for special study. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 24th, "*The Great in the Little*," a Lesson from *Magnetic Science*, J. Graham. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 10th, *Happiness, and how to find it*, J. Wilson.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Mar. 2nd, *Physical Indications of Character*, A. Osborne Eaves; Mar. 9th, *The Republic of Plato*, Alfred R. Orage; Mar. 16th, *The Path of Beauty*, W. H. Thomas; Mar. 23rd, *The Evolution of the Soul*, Miss Hilda Smith; Mar. 30th, *Christ, our Passover*, Hodgson Smith. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the

Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 3rd, *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Geo. H. Popplestone; Mar. 10th, *Conventionality*, A. W. Waddington; Mar. 17th, *Friedrich Nietzsche*, A. R. Orage; Mar. 24th, Members' Evening. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIK LODGE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Mar. 2nd, *Forgiveness*, A. J. Faulding; Mar. 9th, *Mediumship*, R. King; Mar. 16th, *Karma*, J. M. Watkins; Mar. 23rd, *The Value of Environment*, P. G. Tovey; Mar. 30th, Questions and Answers. Meetings for study of the *Bhagavad Gītā* on Wednesdays, Feb. 5th and 19th, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings open only to members of the Society on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street: Mar. 6th, *The Divine Economy*, Mrs. Lauder; Mar. 13th, *Buddhism and the West*, G. R. S. Mead; Mar. 20th, Open Night for discussion. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., open to members and visitors: Mar. 2nd, *Science and Poetry*, W. C. Worsdell; Mar. 9th, *Impersonality*, Bertram Keightley; Mar. 16th, *Highways and By-Paths*, Mrs. Hooper; Mar. 23rd, *Theosophical Conceptions of the Atom*, Miss Ward.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 4th, *Science and Poetry*, W. C. Worsdell; Mar. 11th, *Glimpses of the Greeks*, Rev. E. S. Lang Buckland; Mar. 18th, *The Divine Economy*, Mrs. Lauder; Mar. 25th, *The Power of Suggestion*, Philip Tovey. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 3rd, *Man's Higher Development*, D. N. Dunlop; Mar. 10th, *Mathematics and Ghosts*, L. S. Jast; Mar. 17th, *Limitations*, M. U. Moore; Mar. 24th, *Highways and Byways*, Mrs. Hooper; Mar. 31st, *Arjuna's Question*, Alan Leo. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for young people are held on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W. The Lodge will be addressed on Mar. 2nd, by Mrs. Whyte; Mar. 9th, Miss Pope; Mar. 16th, G. Dyne; Mar. 23rd, H. Whyte; Mar. 30th, no meeting. Particulars may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Miss Daisy Whyte, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.: Mar. 1st, *Music, Ancient and Modern*, H. Dawson; Mar. 10th, *Our Threefold Life*, Miss E. Ward; Mar. 15th, *Some Notes on the Central Nervous System*, Mrs. Betts; Mar. 29th, *An Ideal Theosophist*, G. Taylor Gwinn. Mar. 3rd, 17th, and 24th, Study of *Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*. Debating class on Saturdays, at 6.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Mar. 7th, *Highways and Byways*, Mrs. Hooper; Mar. 14th, *Some Aspects of Brotherhood*, Miss Mallet; Mar. 21st, "*H. P. B.*" and a *Scrap-book*, Miss Ward.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., in Room 62, York Chambers, 27, Brazenose Street. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

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

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE.

On reading G. R. S. M.'s learned exposition of the exegetical interpretation of Question 154, the writer thinks that there is perhaps still another way of reconciling the difficulty.

The contrasted pronouncements are as follows, in full: "He who neither loveth nor hateth, nor grieveth, nor desireth, renouncing good and evil, full of devotion, he is dear to me." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

The passage from the *Bhagavad Gītā* is part of a description of the condition of a man who is "best in Yoga," that is to say, one who has unified his consciousness with his Ego, and looks out on life from the impersonal point of view. Consequently he neither loves nor hates *personally*, because he can see the One Self in all selves, and through his knowledge and devotion has the good-will to help everyone impartially.

The saying of the Christ was in reply to a lawyer who asked him a question tempting him. Hence the answer was directed to a man shut up in his personality, a devotee of the law and the prophets. To such a man the idea of impersonal good-will to all that lives would be unintelligible. Consequently a narrower ground was taken.

The passage from *St. John* is addressed to "little children" who had overcome the false prophets of the world; to disciples, therefore, who had attained some degree of the selfless attitude which carries with it the love to all that lives, the love that is truly "of God." For the idea that the All-Father can "love" in the sense of *favour* one of His manifestations more than another is incredible.

This ideal love is also the burden of *St. Paul's* magnificent description of charity which "never faileth." Such a love is again of the eternal impersonal world, for what personal love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things?

A. H. W.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 154.

(Continued from p. 56.)

E. J. P.—In the *Twelfth Discourse of the Bhagavad Gītā*, 17 par., the words occur "he who neither loveth nor hateth." How can we reconcile this with Christ's words "thou shalt love," etc. And John says "let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God," also 13, 1st Corinthians. Not being quite clear on the matter, I should be glad of an interpretation.

R. B.—The love meant here in the *Bhagavad Gītā* can only be the love of one alone, which is never free from selfishness. In Buddhistic writings the necessity of keeping free from this, of overcoming it, is frequently pointed out. For example, it says in verse 2 of the *Rhinoceros Song* (*Khaggavis-ānasutta*): "In him who has intercourse (with others) affections arise (and then) the pain which follows affection: considering the misery that originates in affection let one wander alone. . . ."

And in verse 37: "Like a lotus not stained by water, let one wander alone. . . ."

In the *Questions of King Milinda*, iv. 2, 30 (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxv., p. 226) in the well-known weighty mode of expression, it says: "Attachment" (or love) "is a frame of mind put away by the Tathāgata, he has put away clinging, he is free from the delusion that 'This is mine,' he lives only to be a help to others. Just as the earth, O King, is a support to the beings in the world, and an asylum to them, and they depend upon it, but the broad earth has no longing after them in the idea that 'These belong to me'—just so is the Tathāgata a support and asylum to all beings, but has no longing after them in the idea that 'These belong to me.' And just as a mighty rain cloud, O

King, pours out its rain, and gives nourishment to grass and trees, to cattle and to men, and maintains the lineage thereof, and all these creatures depend for their livelihood upon its rain, but the cloud has no feelings of longing in the idea that 'These are mine'—just so does the Tathāgata give all beings to know what are good qualities and maintains them in goodness, and all beings have their life in him, but the Tathāgata has no feelings of longing in the idea that 'These are mine.' And why is it so? Because of his having abandoned all self-regard."

In Christian and Brāhmanical writings there is no lack of references to this distinction between the two kinds of love; for example, the much discussed passage in *St. Luke*, xiv. 26, can be thus taken: "If any man come unto me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children," etc.; moreover we have in the *Mahābhārata*, that richest treasure trove of sacred wisdom, the legend of King Bhārata, who, after a long reign rich in blessing, leaves all his castles and followers to dedicate his life in solitude to his deliverance. Yet that affection which he withdrew from his dear ones he now turned upon a fawn that he had rescued from drowning in the river; his love for this wild animal became so strong that he neglected his daily religious exercises for it, lost control of himself and continually directed his thoughts to the animal. This seemingly harmless but yet selfish attraction drew the great king irresistibly downwards and made him quite forget the aim for which he had left the world and his treasures. As before his death his mind was quite full of thoughts about the animal, we see him after death wandering through the forests as a beautiful roebuck, tasting the pleasures of the lower life until the Wheel of Karma drives him on, and his pious meditation and early aspirations towards a godly life make themselves felt, and in his next human life he attains at last that deliverance which he ought to have attained as King Bhārata. The love of God does not permit near it a love of individual beings. Universal love and compassion for all creation form a part, or result, of the love of God, in so far as God dwells in All and All in God, in other words because of the mystic unity of all with God. In the preference for one lies a neglect of others. We may here remember the beautiful words of the still living Swabian peasant poet, Christian Wagner, in the *New Faith*:—Question: "What high purpose does the new Faith recognise in painful loss, in the death of those belonging to one? Answer: The universalisation of the love of the individual."

That giving up of the love of the one will frighten many away from Theosophy, and, to the children of this world, seem to be the hardest requirement. The feeling that this teaching calls up, may, however, serve as a measure of how deeply they have penetrated into esotericism.

E. L.—It does not seem to be very essential that the *Gītā* and the Christian Scriptures should be made to fit in with each other, since presumably

both have suffered much in the course of the long centuries of reproduction and translation which they have been subject to, this in many instances altering entirely the teachings which the Great Ones gave when on earth. But one thing should be clear to a thinker and one who has some acquaintance with Theosophic writings, and it is this, that loving and hating, forming the two sides of evolution, would necessarily be imperfect where each was taken *alone*, and studied alone, and that the ideal position must necessarily be to see the use of both, and not to be swayed to either side if one would reach the true Yoga. The words "He who neither loveth nor hateth" delineate such a Yogî; but the position and the ideal are only for those who appreciate the significance of them, and we begin by swaying continually between the two. If the attitude of perfect balance repels you as cold and undesirable then it is not for you at present.

A. W.—It might be easy to give a wrong impression in answering this question and either freeze aspirants into unripe isolation, or cause them to pretend to an expression of universal love before they are capable of understanding what it means. We find that love and hate, in the ordinary sense of both terms, equally bind us to earth, and it is perhaps an interesting sign of our stage of development that we have only one word for the ordinary love of man and for divine love. We may gather from the quotations given by the questioner, and from other passages in the world's scriptures, that the love of one human being to another—what we call selfish love—has a place in the evolution of the perfect being, and in its proper place is a virtue. It is only when a higher field of usefulness is opening out before us that we begin to find our virtue of the past fading into nothingness, our righteousnesses that we rejoiced to clothe ourselves in are seen to be but rags, and then, if we would advance, an expansion is required that will throw down the walls of mere personal attractions and take in all, instead of isolated fragments. It would seem to be not so much a question of giving up, though it bears that aspect viewed from below, as of growing strong enough to be able to give to all that which at first had to be jealously husbanded for the few.

G. L. S.—In most English translations of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, the passage in the Twelfth Discourse referred to is rendered "He who neither exalteth (rejoiceth) nor hateth." To render it "He who neither loveth," etc., does not seem advisable and is apt to convey quite an erroneous impression. But in any case, if the questioner will look a little more closely at this discourse he will find that the devotee is enjoined to be "full of brotherly love and compassionate." This is not a strained quotation, but, on the contrary, breathes the spirit of the whole teaching of the *Gîtâ*; so that the necessity does not arise to reconcile that work with Christ's words. If it be said that other passages in the *Gîtâ* seem to contradict the above injunction, what are we to say in like manner to the words of Christ: "If any man hate not his

father, mother, etc. he cannot be my disciple" ? The truth is that if isolated texts be taken either from the *Gîtâ*, Bible, or any other sacred book, they may, as is well known, be made to prove anything. Secondly, the idea that the words of Christ embody the only gospel of love which has ever been given out to the world is not founded on fact. One has only to read the *Gîtâ* with an unprejudiced mind to perceive that this is so. Undoubtedly many Christians are unwilling to admit this, just as there are many unwilling to believe that there can be any "true" religion other than the Christian one. The advance of knowledge has rendered a modification of this opinion necessary, and so we find the assertion frequently made now-a-days that Christianity is at all events the "highest" religion; and as proof of this we are as often told that the Eastern religions contain no teaching of love. But even this modified claim will have to be given up, if Christians are to abandon sectarianism; and Christianity will lose nothing by such a surrender.

The idea insisted on in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* in regard to the point raised, is not that the devotee shall be devoid of love in the sense in which E. J. P. uses that word, but that he shall be "without attachment." There is a difference between Divine Compassion and human loves, and the distinction lies in the fact that the latter in all their variety, from the highest—such as mother-love—to the lowest, are all more or less mixed with the alloy of self. It is this alloy which is meant by "attachment"; it is in this sense that the devotee must be without love as he is without hate; and it is in this sense that a man must "hate his father, mother, wife, brothers, sisters and even his own life also," if he would be a follower of the Christ.

QUESTION 155.

E. O.—It has been stated that part of the punishment, say of a drunkard, after death, lies in his inability to gratify his appetite for drink; but if every material particle has an astral counterpart, why should not the astral drunkard gratify his taste with the astral counterpart of his favourite beverage?

G. R. S. M.—It is said that in the opinion of topers who have taken up their abode on the "astral," the liquor there does not taste "so good" as that to which they have been accustomed "down below" or "up above" (whichever is the right direction of space in this connection). We have no personal experience ourselves.

A. A. W.—So far as I am aware, we have no direct teaching on this point, and we, who cannot see for ourselves, must be content with conjecture. The first point I would raise, in trying to give an answer, is "Is there such a thing as an astral counterpart of whisky?" This is not decided by the admitted fact that there are astral counterparts of every particle of the physical plane whisky. We are authoritatively informed that the astral

body of a human being does not consist of *organs* corresponding to the physical ones; that whilst the astral body does possess an astral counterpart of every particle of the physical body, these astral particles are in perpetual motion all over it, the only trace of organisation being the "wheels" through which all pass, and by which they are kept in relationship with the corresponding Chakrams in the physical body. It seems evident from this that there can be nothing corresponding to the mechanical or chemical workings of the organs of the physical body, and I think we may fairly conclude that "astral whisky" is probably not an intoxicating drink.

But there is another question, of still greater importance. On this plane the direct effects of whisky are purely upon the gross and etheric bodies. It is the modification produced by it in the circulation of the blood, and (probably) also of the Prāna along the nervous system, which is translated by the desire-body into pleasure. Now, have we any reason to suppose that this feeling of pleasure can be produced in the astral body by anything which is not physical? We are told that the first thing a pupil has to learn when beginning to go about consciously in his astral body is that physical fire will not burn him, nor physical water drown him. But these also have their astral counterparts, which seem to be equally innocuous. When we speak of *mental* pleasure and pain, I strongly suspect this is a confusion; that mental pleasure differs from physical enjoyment in kind, not in degree, and does not come down into the desire-body at all. If this be so, it is plain that E. O.'s question is fully answered;—there is nothing in the drunkard's astral surroundings which can make him *feel* at all.

It may, however, be asked, "What then is it which the lower creatures seek in hanging about gin-palaces, butchers' shops, etc., as we are told they do?" Well, we might answer that the whole history of magic and folk-lore suggests that the beings referred to are *not* wholly immaterial; that they are not freed from the etheric body and that the fumes of blood, etc., have something which gives them actual nourishment, and hence—pleasure. But we need an explanation which covers the case of those who are truly "disembodied spirits," and it is not far to seek. Though the whisky itself can no longer give pleasure, there are the *drinkers* with astral bodies thrilling all over with the vibrations, which of all others, are most nearly attuned to those of the dead drunkard's astral body, and hence most easily transmitted to it. Thus the dead and living act and react on each other, the dead receiving pleasure and the living being confirmed in their evil habits. There are grim stories in spiritualistic literature which illustrate this; of the "spirits" of men who have died of drink having been evoked at séances, and the rash invokers "possessed" by them and driven, in their turn, to ruin and death. Nor can we doubt that in the frequent cases of lifelong and unavailing struggle against evil habits we are often dealing, not only with the elemental tempter,

formed and maintained by the unhappy victim himself, but with true obsessing beings, who need, not his *soul*, but the enjoyment which his sin thus gives them. His ruin is nothing to them—when he is used up they will get another. The consolation the Wisdom has for these poor souls is that this ruin is not eternal, as the vulgar religions would have it, but only a sorrowful episode which delays for a moment the pilgrimage which *cannot* fail of its appointed end—in God.

QUESTION 156.

H. H.—*How is it that the astral body, irrespective of the resistance of other grades of matter, annihilates distance with such instantaneity; and what is the nature of the force propelling it?*

C. W. L.—The astral body does not annihilate distance, though it does move very rapidly. A certain time is undoubtedly occupied in the transit across the Atlantic ocean, for example, though it is probably hardly more than a minute. It is probable that even on the mental plane movement is not truly instantaneous, although from our present point of view it seems to be so; but on the astral plane there is distinctly the consciousness of passing through the intermediate space when moving from one place to another. The matter of other grades does not exist for the astral body, and its own particles are so arranged that it readily interpenetrates other astral matter. The force which propels it is simply the human will, though the detail of the action of that will is hardly more readily explicable in this case than it is in the moving of the hand or the foot on the physical plane.

QUESTION 157.

H. H.—*Does the dreaming of ordinary events interfere at all with astral work?*

C. W. L.—The dreaming of ordinary events does not interfere with astral work, because that dreaming is all taking place in the physical brain while the real man is away attending to other business. Of course if the man, when out in his astral body, devotes himself to thinking over the events of his physical life, he will be unable during the time of such thought to do efficiently any other work, but that is a totally different thing from a mere ordinary dream of the physical brain. But when the man awakes in the morning it is frequently very difficult for him to distinguish between the two sets of recollections, as is mentioned in the little book on *Dreams*. It really does not matter what the physical brain does, so long at least as it keeps itself free from impure thoughts, but it is undesirable that the man himself should waste his time in introspection when he might be working on the astral plane.

QUESTION 158.

H. H.—Are there any means, other than the bringing back of consciousness to the physical brain, by which one can assure himself of the actuality of his astral work?

C. W. L.—Men have frequently assured themselves of the actuality of their astral work through hearing of its results upon those whom they have tried to help. It will often happen that, when a determined effort has been made on a certain night to reach and assist some friend who is in trouble, that friend will mention in physical life how much he felt strengthened and comforted by a dream which he had on that particular night. He may or may not remember enough to associate this happy change with the friend who is really its cause; but in any case a series of such coincidences will gradually prove to the operator that his efforts are not without result. A simple experiment which has sometimes been successful is to resolve to visit astrally some well-known room, and note very especially the arrangement of furniture, books, etc.; or if, without previously intending it, the experimenter finds himself in a spot which he recognises (that is to say, in ordinary parlance, if he dreams of a certain place) he may also set himself to observe it with great care. If everything remains exactly as when he last saw it physically, he has no definite proof; but if he observes any decided change—if there is anything new or unexpected—then it is distinctly worth his while to step round in the morning and visit that place physically in order to test whether his nocturnal vision has been correct.

QUESTION 159.

H. H.—Is utter fearlessness absolutely necessary for work on the astral plane, and does action thereon imply such a condition? Would a physical coward be able to function on the astral plane?

C. W. L.—Courage in man seems to be very largely a question of habit. A man who would be entirely fearless in a battle, is often terribly frightened of a ghost. It may be supposed that the converse might possibly be true, and a man who was not brave in physical danger might be perfectly self-possessed upon the astral plane, though I do not recollect having seen such a case. Probably no man can say with certainty that he is absolutely fearless; nevertheless, if his nerves have been subjected to many trials and have stood the test successfully, he feels that he can rely upon them. This is all that we can hope for, on the astral plane as on the physical, and true fearlessness probably remains a counsel of perfection.

Many of us have often been very badly frightened, though we have so far contrived not to show it, which is always the main point in dealing with unpleasant entities.

QUESTION 160.

H. H.—Are there any other means, besides the hardening of the outer surface of the aura, by which extraneous thoughts can be prevented from entering the brain and so blurring the impression that might be made by the astral brain?

C. W. L.—The formation of the shell is always an effort of the will, though that will may be applied in various ways. The thought of hardening the outer surface of the aura is simply one of the easiest ways of directing this will. Another though more difficult method would be to manufacture an artificial elemental who would act as a kind of watch-dog, to prevent the entrance of extraneous thought. But even then recollections will well slowly up into the physical brain.

QUESTION 161.

H. H.—Is there any system by which distinct consciousness of astral work can be developed?

C. W. L.—Certainly there are efforts of Yoga by which continuous astral consciousness may be attained; and to the man attaining this, night and day would be as one. But these Yoga practices should be undertaken only under the direct supervision of a Master, as there would be very serious danger connected with any mismanagement of them. There is, however, a very simple method with which some of our people have had great success. If when the man is out of his body and just about to return to it, he can check himself just before entering it, with the resolve that the moment he passes into it he will make it sit up and write down all the events which have taken place, he will certainly find himself able immediately to carry out his wish. But if he delays the writing down even for five minutes, the whole chain of events may pass from his mind, and he will probably be quite unable to recollect them.

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, APRIL 1, 1902.

NO. 9.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

MRS. BESANT'S LECTURES.

We are glad to announce that arrangements are being made for several series of lectures by Mrs. Besant during the months of May and June. There will be six public lectures on Sunday evenings in the Small Queen's Hall, beginning on May 25th, and concluding on June 29th. To these the usual arrangements as to admission will apply. There will also be four lectures on consecutive Thursday evenings, in the Elysée Gallery, Queen's Road, Bayswater, to which members of the Theosophical Society only will be admitted by ticket. These will commence on Thursday, May 29th, and conclude on Thursday, June 19th. All particulars will be announced in the next issue of the VĀHAN.

In addition, there will be a series of afternoon lectures at Albemarle Street, for which course tickets will be available, but the dates and other details are not yet definitely arranged.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

In future all correspondence, etc., intended for the Editors of *The Theosophical Review*, or for Mr. or Mrs. G. R. S. Mead, should be addressed to 59, Cheyne Court, Chelsea, S.W.

ACTIVITIES.

Federation of London Lodges.

The next meeting of this Federation will take place at 28, Albemarle Street, at 8 p.m., on Saturday, April 12th, *not* on April 16th, as announced by mistake in last month's VĀHAN. The Council will meet at 7.30 p.m.

The subject for discussion will be: "Does Pleasure or Pain contribute most to the real Growth of the Ego?"

FRANCESCA ARUNDALE,
Hon. Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to March 20th: C. B. I., £6; M. A. B., £2 2s. 6d.; F. K., £20; H. L., £1; A. N., £1 1s.; I. F. B., 5s.; Ss., 10s.; D. S., 10s.; J. Z. T., 10s.; E. D., 10s.; A. D., 7s.; E. W., £10; J. E. H., £5; T. J., 15s.; W. B. and E. L., £7 10s.; A. J. V. R., £3 3s.; Hampstead Lodge, £5 5s.; H. B., £3 3s. Total: £67 11s. 6d.

Practice Debating Class.

The meetings of the Practice Debating Class, meeting at 28, Albemarle Street, are discontinued until the Autumn, when notice will be given of their resumption.

E. SEVERS,
Hon. Secretary.

Correspondence Class.

Anyone wishing to join the Correspondence Class which was started in February should send their name to Miss Lilian Lloyd, 28, Albemarle Street. This Class is open to members and friends.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On February 20th, there was an open night for discussion, the subject was: "Is Pain or Pleasure the more important factor in evolution?" The openers were Miss E. Severs, Miss A. J. Willson, and Mr. J. R. Foster; the subject was then thrown

open for general discussion, and a good debate followed, in which much diversity of opinion was expressed. On February 27th, Mr. Keightley gave an interesting lecture on "The Proper Uses of Revelation"; Mrs. Lauder read a paper on March 6th, the subject was: "The Divine Economy," and the lecture contained much careful and admirably expressed thought. On March 13th, as Mr. Mead was unable to give his announced lecture on "Buddhism and the West," Mr. Keightley kindly took his place and delivered the address which he intended to give on March 10th; it was an important and instructive lecture on "The Tools of the Occultist." The Sunday evening lecturers have been: Mrs. Hooper, Mr. W. C. Worsdell, and Mr. Keightley.

The Lodge closes on April 3rd and 6th, and re-opens for the usual Lodge meeting on April 10th, and on Sunday, April 13th.

S. M. S.

West London Lodge.

The meetings of this Branch will be resumed on Friday, April 18th, when Mr. G. Dyne will commence a series of six lectures on Theosophical Teachings as exemplified by the recent results of spectrum analysis. The weekly addresses on this subject which Mr. Dyne has been giving at Albermarle Street have been greatly appreciated by the somewhat restricted audience which has assembled, and it is felt that many members and others who found it impossible to take an additional evening per week will be glad to have an opportunity of hearing these lectures on Friday evenings. The Committee of the West London Lodge will heartily welcome members of other branches or visitors who are interested in this field of research, which, in Mr. Dyne's capable hands, is shown to be so pregnant with corroborations and illustrations of the teachings of occult science. It is extremely desirable that those really interested should make a point of attending the whole course of lectures—which will be illustrated by a large number of elaborate diagrams—in order that the study should be made as profitable as possible.

Meetings on Friday at 8.15 prompt, 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, Bayswater.

E. W.

Lotus Lodge.

As announced in last month's VĀHAN a Charter has been granted to the Lotus Lodge; perhaps a few additional words as to the methods and purpose of this new Lodge may not be out of place. The Lotus Circle for children was started in London by Miss Anna Stabler in 1893, and several of the original members are still associated with it. It was suggested that the older members of the Lotus Circle might very well form themselves into a Lodge, and this they were very willing to do if those who had hitherto conducted the class would continue to give their assistance. Mr. Leadbeater very kindly consented to become President, and

Miss Willson, Mrs. Whyte, Miss Mallet and Mr. Dyne to give the Lodge the benefit of their experience and help. The Lodge meetings, which are open to all of suitable age, are devoted to systematic study along Theosophical lines and are usually conducted by an older member, who speaks on a particular topic or perhaps undertakes a course of lectures. All members of the Lodge are encouraged to take an active part, either by taking their turn in reading a selected passage or writing a short paper, while all join in the music which is a feature of the Lodge methods. A monthly journal has been started, to be devoted to careful reports of addresses delivered to the Lodge.

Already a number of young people in the country and abroad have joined the Lodge, and will be in touch with the Lodge work by reports of lectures or by correspondence. To be a centre of Theosophic life is the primary object of the Lotus as of every other Theosophical Lodge, the only difference is that this new centre is formed principally by young folks.

Subscriptions to the *Lotus Lodge Journal* (2s. per annum), and all enquiries to be addressed to Miss Daisy Whyte, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, London, W.

H. W.

Section Reference Library.

We have much pleasure in acknowledging the presentation to the Library of the following books:—*Wie ich mein Selbst fand. Aussere und innere Erlebnisse einer Okkultistin*, Berlin, 1901; *The Great Epics of India*, Romesh C. Dutt, London, 1900; *Die Mystik*, Dr. Rudolf Steiner, Berlin, 1901; *Le Sentier du Disciple*, trs. de l'anglais par H. D., Annie Besant, Paris, 1900; *La Thésophie Pratique Journallement*, comp. Countess C. Wachtmeister, Paris, 1900; *L'Histoire de l'Atlantide*, W. Scott-Elliot, trs., Paris, 1901; *Les Grois Sentiers*, Annie Besant, trs., Paris, 1902; *Conférences du Congrès théosophique de 1900*; *La Thésophie et ses Enseignements*, Annie Besant, trs., Paris, 1900; *A Ceux qui Souffrent*, Aimée Blech, Paris, 1901; *La Lumière sur le Sentier*, trs. M. C., Paris, 1900; *Dialogues on the Supersensual Life*, Jacob Behmen, trs., London, 1901; *Bhagavad Gîtâ* in Sanskrit; *Memoir and Correspondence of Caroline Herschel*, Mrs. J. Herschel, 2nd ed., London, 1879; *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold*, A. P. Stanley, 11th ed., London, 1880; *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, Count Leo Tolstoy, trs., London, 1894; *Shakespeare Studies in Baconian Light*, R. M. Theobald, London, 1901.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *Nature's Mysteries*, A. P. Sinnett, London and Benares, 1901; *The Gospels and the Gospel*, G. R. S. Mead, London and Benares, 1902; *Esoteric Christianity, or the Lesser Mysteries*, Annie Besant, London and Benares, 1901; *L'Inconnu, The Unknown*, Camille Flammarion, trs., London and New York, 1900; *The Book of the Master, or the Egyptian Doctrine of the Light Born of the Virgin Mother*, W. Marsham Adams,

London and New York, 1898: *The Vishnu Purana*, trs. H. H. Wilson, 6 vols., London, 1864; *A Comprehensive Commentary on the Quran*, The Rev. E. M. Wherry, 3 vols. (Trübner's Oriental Series), London, 1896; *Alberuni's India*, ed. Dr. Edward C. Sachan, 2 vols. (T.O.S.), 1888; *Lays of Ancient India*, Romesh Chunder Dutt (T.O.S.), 1894; *A History of Civilisation in Ancient India*, Romesh C. Dutt, 2 vols. (T.O.S.), 1893; *English Intercourse with Siam in the Seventeenth Century*, John Anderson (T.O.S.), 1890; *The Sarva-Darsana-Sangraha, or Review of the Different Systems of Hindu Philosophy*, trs. E. B. Cowell, A. E. Gough (T.O.S.), 1894; *Hindu Philosophy*, John Davies, 2nd ed. (T.O.S.), 1894; *Tamil Proverbs*, Herman Jensen, (T.O.S.), 1897; *The Psychology of the Saints*, Henri Joly, London, 1898; *The Germ-Plasm*, August Weismann, trs., London, 1893; *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*. Vol. 1., ed. James M. Baldwin, New York, 1901; *A Year amongst the Persians*, E. G. Browne, London, 1893; *The Light of the World*, Sir E. Arnold, London, 1891; *The Song Celestial or Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Sir E. Arnold, London, 1894; *The Divine Adventure*, Fiona Macleod, London, 1900; *Ramakrishna, his Life and Sayings*, F. Max Müller, London and Bombay, 1901; *Zuñi Folk Tales*, Frank H. Cushing, London, 1901; *Stray Leaves from Strange Literature*, London, 1884; *Chita*, 1889, *Out of the East*, 1895, *Kokoro*, 1896, *Exotics and Retrospectives*, 1898, *In Ghostly Japan*, 1899, *Shadowings*, 1900, *A Japanese Miscellany*, 1901, Lafcadio Hearn.

ANNIE J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: April 6th, Bertram Keightley; April 13th, H. M. Chaplin; April 27th, G. H. Ross. Class for study of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* on Saturdays,

at 7.30 p.m., and for general study at 3 p.m. at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at the "Downs" Café, 186, Whiteladies' Road, Clifton (first floor room). The Lodge Library is available at all times to members on application to the Manageress of the Café. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 170, rue Royale, the first and third Saturdays in the month at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, at 8.15 p.m.: April 1st, Questions and Discussion; April 15th, *Yoga*, R. F. Sibbald. Lodge meetings are held twice monthly for special study. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: April 28th, *The Quest for the Holy Grail*. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: April 14th, *Mesmerism*, Neil Black.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: April 6th, *Christianity in the Light of Theosophy*, Mrs. Bell; April 13th, *Tennyson's Holy Grail*, H. Ernest Nichol; April 20th, *Common-Sense Theosophy*, Charles N. Goode; April 27th, *Conventionality*, A. W. Waddington. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in

the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Athenæum Restaurant, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIK LODGE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: April 6th, *Theosophy and Children*, Mrs. Whyte; April 13th, *Universal Brotherhood*, A. P. Cattanach; April 20th, *The Value of Environment*, P. G. Tovey; April 27th, Questions and Answers. Meetings for study of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* on Wednesdays, Feb. 5th and 19th, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings open only to members of the Society on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street: April 10th, *Buddhism and the West*, G. R. S. Mead; April 17th, *Mohammedanism and the West*, G. R. S. Mead; April 24th, Open Night for discussion. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., open to members and visitors: April 13th, *Practical Theosophy*, Mrs. Sharpe; April 20th, *The Mirror of the Mind*, A. H. Ward.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Students' Class on alternate Thursdays. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: April 7th, *Nature's Finer Forces*, R. King; April 14th, *Some Aspects of Brotherhood*, A. J. Faulding; April 21st, *From Osiris to Christ*, W. B. Lauder; April 28th, *The Silent Speaker*, Mrs. Leo. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for young people are held on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W. The Lodge will be addressed on April 6th, by Miss Willson; April 13th, Mrs. Hooper; April 20th, Max Gysi. On April 27th, papers by members. Particulars may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Miss Daisy Whyte, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings

on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.: April 12th, *An Ideal Theosophist*, G. Taylor Gwinn; April 14th, *Our Threefold Life*, Miss Ward; April 26th, *The Scientific Basis of the World*, W. C. Worsdell; April 7th, 21st, and 28th, *Study of Thought-Power, its Control and Culture*. Debating class on Saturdays, at 6.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m. On April 18th, Mr. Dyne begins his special course of lectures on "Spectrum Analysis in Relation to Theosophy."

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 154.

(Continued from p. 62.)

E. J. P.—In the Twelfth Discourse of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, 17 par., the words occur "he who neither loveth nor hateth." How can we reconcile this with Christ's words "thou shalt love," etc. And John says "let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God," also 13, 1st Corinthians. Not being quite clear on the matter I should be glad of an interpretation.

F. S. P. T.—The difficulty raised by this question, and shown by G. R. S. M. to be of considerable extent, does not seem to have been satisfactorily elucidated. There is a view, however, which has not been mentioned, and as it appears to me to be of fundamental importance perhaps I may be allowed to briefly outline it.

It seems to me that the teaching of Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* is, on this point, the negative view of what has been called the doctrine of the Middle, whilst that of Christ is the positive view of the same. The doctrine of the Middle, viewed negatively, seems to be the intermediate condition between love on one side, and hate on the other, and which is neither entirely love, nor entirely hate, but which seems to partake of both, and so to be neither considered separately. Viewed positively it is both, both love and hate existing simultaneously together. If what has been called the doctrine of the Middle were termed the doctrine of the Whole, then the difficulties as to having

neither to love alone, nor hate alone, which is exclusive emotion, nor, on the other hand, to annihilate all emotion, and become like a stone, but to both love all and hate all, would be cleared up. The Whole may best be conceived under the symbol of the sphere. The sphere has a single centre and many parts surrounding that centre in the field of the circumference. Each one of us is a part of the sphere, a part which lies at its periphery. Each is a part of the Whole. But since the microcosm is a copy of the macrocosm, each one of us is a centre of consciousness, a centre, spectator, observer, thinker, of thought, emotion, and perception. The contents of consciousness, our states of consciousness, correspond to the contents or parts of the sphere, whilst our centre corresponds to its centre. Now we find that the centre of our consciousness instead of being at the centre of the sphere which is the Whole is only in the periphery of the sphere, forming part of the Whole. It is limited to one human form, and although this limitation has enabled us to attain to self-consciousness, to consciousness of ourselves as separate individuals distinct from all others, yet its purpose having been achieved the time has come for dispensing with this limitation. The part having attained to consciousness of Itself as a whole, a unit, and as a part of a Greater Whole, its next step is to expand itself inwards and towards the centre of the Whole. From this position it will be within not only its own human form, but within that of all the rest of mankind.

From the point of view of the Centre of the Great Whole it is obvious that there can be neither loving nor hating, for the simple reason that, the Whole being inclusive of all, there are none outside of it either to love or hate, and since it is one, its action with regard to itself can neither be designated loving alone nor hating alone, but both together. So that Krishna's advice is that of the Whole as a unit. Jesus' teaching is by analogy, the human family being the example. The Centre of the Whole is the Father in Heaven. This Centre is apart from all the part centres as being their common centre, and yet is in each and is each part centre as well.

Consequently, if we wish to be like the Father in Heaven, the Great Whole, we must love Him, and that means must desire to be one with Him. As the Centre of the Whole is the centre within each of us, getting to that centre means that we have got within each one of our brethren. But it is obvious that whilst we hate our brother as having nothing whatever to do with us and simply want to be separated from him, we are unfit to come inside him. So we must love our neighbour as ourself, because from the point of view of the Centre of the Great Whole he is ourself. On the other hand, since the Father is within each one of his children and was also within his special peripheral manifestation, Jesus, through Jesus the Father separates himself and keeps himself distinct and apart from all other men, and so from the point of view of God the Son we must hate all our brethren. As Sons of God we must all keep

ourselves distinct and separate from each other and maintain the isolation and separation by hate. Our aim is to enable others to separate and distinctly recognise themselves as units. But from the point of view of the Father in Heaven which each one of us will become in time, all men are our children and we separate ourselves from our children which are ourselves. But as each is himself the Father, and the Whole, we all love and are one with each other as the Whole.

The doctrine of the Whole is the Unity which exists in and through a difference, the love which is only maintained in and through separation or hate. It is not a doctrine of impassive, insensible, unconscious indifference.

QUESTION 162.

F. M. F.—In the case of Curative Mesmerism what happens, exactly, to the physical body, the etheric double, and the prāna specialised by the spleen, of the operator and of his subject?

Also what happens when Mesmerism is used as a local anæsthetic in the case of slight operations?

Is the "magnetic fluid" spoken of in Mr. Sinnett's Rationale of Mesmerism the specialised prāna? and what is "bad magnetism"?

A. P. S.—The more we study these phenomena the more difficult it seems to be to define exactly what takes place. I regard the mesmeric fluid as identical with prāna or the specialised jīva. It is projected against the subject by the operator's will—there we have to do with another mystery we do not in the least understand—and apparently displaces the corresponding fluid circulating in the nerve system of the patient's etheric double. We have to assume or guess that in disease the prāna of the patient becomes itself diseased, so that its expulsion is desirable. That view seems supported by the certain fact that important curative results are to be obtained sometimes by a process almost the reverse of that just described. If the mesmerist knows that the evil he has to deal with is seated in some particular organ of the patient, he may effect good results by using his will, not to drive in prāna from himself, but simply to withdraw that of the patient. Somehow it does come away, and if with every pass the operator has the thought of drawing it away and throwing it off into infinite space, striking curative effects will sometimes ensue.

It will be seen that I leave as a mystery, the details of which it is impossible for us to explain, in the present state of our knowledge, the manner in which the etheric double acts on the denser physical matter of the external body, but a fundamental assumption guides us to the idea that the condition of the etheric double must always react on the denser physical.

The anæsthetic phenomena of mesmerism are explained as fully as I could explain them now in *The Rationale of Mesmerism* (see p. 97).

"Bad magnetism" is a loose expression we all

of us use from time to time to cover deficiencies in our knowledge, but in mesmerism I suppose it must be taken to mean diseased prāna—if there is such a thing.

QUESTION 163.

M. R. K.—To what extent can one give earnest support to Theosophy before becoming dogmatic? In other words: Can one who knows the verity of, say, reincarnation, teach the same as Truth?

A. F. K.—Dogmatism, to my way of thinking, is the assertion of what cannot be proven. Apart from the powerful proof of reasonableness and philosophical necessity, reincarnation and most of the other fundamental teaching can be proven by personal experience. By following the lines of procedure set down by any true School of Occultism the necessary proof will, in time, be obtained. Having obtained the proofs should one still hold and teach these truths as merely working hypotheses, “till some great intellect brings science to bear on it and gives it a scientific standing”? Personally I would not. To the world at large go slowly, to the mind entirely unprepared for the teaching bring the subject up gently. But when a group of students is gathered together it should surely be permissible to say: These are the laws and theories, to me they are living verities. And would a reasonable man call that dogmatism? The charge of dogmatism is an easy missile. Is it not possible that some who hurl it are too indolent or self-satisfied to make the necessary investigations.

The world is large and the subject of Theosophy is larger still. Is there not room for all workers and all kinds of teachers? The one who knows it to be true, and he who knows it not to be true; each and all have their place in the Society. Even the man who objects to all that Theosophy teaches can stay in the Society, but then the question: What does he wish to stay in it for? is also in order.

A. A. W.—The question, as it stands, is an illustration of the well-known fact that the American and English are languages which, though closely allied, are fundamentally different, and I am by no means sure that my acquaintance with the American tongue is sufficient to enable me correctly to translate it. I should be inclined to answer that the querist's best support to Theosophy will be given before he has the misfortune to become dogmatic, and that I hope he will succeed in avoiding that fate altogether. But this cannot be his real meaning. I fancy that what he has in his mind must be the difficulty we all of us have often felt in dealing with others. We have convinced ourselves of the truth of reincarnation—so completely as to be able to say, as he says, that we *know* its verity; whilst yet we are conscious that the process has been a long one—one which no short form of words or arguments can convey to anyone else. We cannot give a brief and overwhelming *demonstra-*

tion of it, as if it were a proposition in Euclid; and yet we feel that this is what will be demanded of us, if we undertake to teach it.

Well; a careful study of such books as the little treatise on reincarnation in our series of Theosophical Manuals, or any of our larger works, will show the querist that there is a much closer approximation to actual *proof* of reincarnation than he is, perhaps, aware of. But he must remember that there are but comparatively few to whom these evidences appeal; he must be prepared to teach, with full conviction that most of those to whom he speaks will call it nonsense. And I think he will find it wisest not promiscuously to “cast his pearls before swine”; and to speak only to those who *wish* to learn. The Wisdom is not a “Gospel” to be forced on the world at large “in season and out of season,” but a help for those who are sufficiently advanced in their evolution to need something more than the popular religions and philosophies can give them. And a truth forced prematurely, on a mind not ready for it, is often more mischievous than many an error.

G. R. S. M.—I have of late written so much on this subject in *The Theosophical Review* that I somewhat fear my readers will become restive and desire me to remove my ever-twanging one-stringed harp far from their neighbourhood. Certainly “one who knows” can teach what he knows as knowledge. But that is not precisely the question that has troubled our philosophic calm. Those “who know the verity, say, of reincarnation,” in the Theosophical Society can be reckoned almost on the fingers of one hand. “Knowing,” in this case, is not “believing”; it is not “feeling sure”; it is not “being convinced of the truth of”; but it is the definite possession of an extended consciousness exercisable at will. These have every right, nay it is their duty, to state what they know, what is a permanent fact of consciousness for them, as a definite truth of their cosmos. But, in my opinion, all others who do so are not strictly honest either with themselves or others. Moreover, they do Theosophy no good. Theosophy is wisdom; and if a man only believes a thing, or feels a sure confidence in a hypothesis, or relies on the *bona fides* of others for his faith in a theory, then he is unwise to cry aloud: “This is the truth,” when the actual fact he desires to convey is: “I believe”; “I am quite satisfied that”; “This theory really does explain the facts.” The very refraining from dogmatism is the essence of giving “earnest support” to Theosophy in the best meaning of that transcendent ideal. Let me repeat it once more, though I may sicken some by the reiteration: Theosophy is *not* the statements of H. P. Blavatsky, of Annie Besant, of C. W. Leadbeater, of A. P. Sinnett, and the rest, it is not even the doctrines of karma and reincarnation and such like, even though such statements and such doctrines may be true. Theosophy is realised in the saying or thinking or doing of the right thing at the right time in the right place, and is known only in the unwearying attempt at this self-

purification. You may reassert the assertions of others with all intensity, but so at best you will be nothing but a loud-screaming parrot, and the "men" who hear you will stop their ears to escape deafness. The voice of truth is a "still small voice," and has no need of formal dogmas.

QUESTION 164.

R. B.—Men sometimes become childish in old age—the so-called second childhood—and this falling off and lowering of the intellectual powers and functions does not seem to be adequately explained by the fact that the sense organs have become dulled and lost much of their sensitiveness. Is the real explanation to be found in the commencing withdrawal of the ego into itself?

A. A. W.—The question is a little indiscreet. R. B. can hardly expect young people to be able, or old ones to be willing, minutely to analyse the condition of second childhood for the benefit of the general public. Our friend's puzzlement arises from the fact that he has forgotten or never learned that we do not see with our eyes, nor hear with our ears, nor think with our brains. The eyes and ears have each little brains of their own; when outward things make an impression on the eye and the nerves carry the news to the optic thalami, the "little brain" belonging to them, we see. Now when by advancing age sight is dimmed, it may arise from one of two causes: the physical organ and nerves may be getting worn out whilst the brain may still be in condition to see, or the brain itself may be wearing and hence not see, or see incorrectly what the eye transmits faithfully; or both may be wrong. Now the great brain is related to the mind merely as the eye is to the little brain; impressions made on the brain pass through the astral to the mental body, and the orders of the mind have to pass through the brain before they can reach the nerves of the body. As, then, the great brain gets worn out, the communications are disturbed. The ordinary case is as in the question; not only are the senses dulled, but the work of the brain is hindered. Even when a question is distinctly heard, it takes time for the worn-out brain to understand; the "conductivity" is reduced, the mind does not receive the message at once, and can reply only slowly or not at all. But that this need not imply any loss of power in the mind itself (a thing which we do not admit), is suggested by another case, not at all uncommon, and very painful, where the outer connections go first, whilst the brain is in full activity. The sufferer understands all that is said to him and yet cannot utter an intelligible word in reply; and this may last for years. Now let us put it that it is possible in this very same way that when the brain also in turn loses its sensibility and the mind has *no* means of manifesting itself to the outward world, though living and active as ever on its own plane; we have then the condition which in its earlier stages is second childhood, in its completion, death. I should prefer to say that the outer world is by degrees shut

to the ego; the withdrawal of the ego into itself is a process which begins much earlier, and is a more or less conscious action of the self, which thinks less and less of the things of the world, not because they cease to touch its senses, but because they no longer satisfy its heart.

QUESTION 165.

A. S. F.—It is written in The Devachanic Plane: "There are some things an evolved man cannot do . . . he cannot lie or betray or do a dishonourable action." May not an evolved man be placed in such a position as to make a lie advisable and almost necessary? He may be obliged to tell or act an untruth for wholly unselfish purposes, for instance when by so doing he can save a friend from dishonour. Is the principle of doing evil that good may come, to be in every case condemned?

A. H. W.—So far as the writer can understand an "evolved man" is one who can "see the things of the flesh with the eyes of the Spirit," who can in other words review the whole of life from the impersonal standpoint of the Ego. Thence things in general are seen as they really are, and the interests of the personality and the Ego of a friend are obviously identical. The interests of the erring personality are often apparently different, if not opposed, to those of the Ego; but the evolved man has gained the true discrimination, and knows the real from the false, for "the wise ones heed not the sweet tongued voices of illusion."

Such a man cannot lie, because he knows that the eternal harmony can only temporarily be so disturbed, and that suffering is inevitable before it can be restored. A lie is injurious, inharmonious, or utterly futile, according to his leading ideal, whether it be the Good, the Beautiful, or the True. Similarly, he cannot betray, because he sees the One Self in all selves, and realises that to betray one is to betray all. He cannot do a dishonourable action because it is against the nature of things, and he comprehends that nature. This impersonal point of view is the "Key of Knowledge," because thence all things are seen in their true light; to take it, even for a moment, is to "see the Soul in its bloom, to catch a momentary glimpse in oneself of the transfiguration which shall eventually make one more than man." For these reasons it is impossible that, to an evolved man, a lie could ever appear either advisable or necessary.

No amount of lying can *really* save a friend from dishonour, because if he has done a dishonourable act he is dishonoured; lies can only save him from exposure—till he is found out. Sooner or later he must suffer the consequences of his act. To try to cover it up with lies, is really to push him down the broad road; while to insist upon the truth is possibly to drive him to make the *amende honorable* and so retrieve his position. Which is the most "unselfish," to yield weakly to personal affection, and by lying sink your friend deeper in the mire of

deceit; or to endure if necessary his reproaches and cries of anguish, and drag him out in spite of himself?

The "principle" of doing evil that good may come is self-condemned. "Good" is all that makes for the evolution of the Ego, "evil" is all that hinders it. When taking a light into a room makes it dark, and lighting a fire makes it cold, then, and not till then, will an evil cause produce a good effect. If it were right to lie in defence of a friend, it would be equally right to lie in defence of a stranger or an enemy; the incident of personal friendship does not affect the question. An attempt to speak the impersonal truth is always sure to upset someone's personal preconceptions. But if we dally with the deadly illusion that evil can directly produce good, the question will soon arise as to whether it can ever, under any circumstances, be right to try to speak the truth. Then the blind will be left to lead the blind, and both will fall into the ditch.

Those who dare to take the two-edged sword of occultism in their hand, must expect to find that, sooner or later, it will cut their own prejudices and preconceptions up by the roots. Indeed, if it did not do so, what would be the good of it?

I. H.—I cannot answer, because I do not know, whether doing evil that good may come is in every case to be condemned; personally, I believe that it is. May I, however, suggest to A. S. F. that no lie, either told or acted, could save another from dishonour that he had incurred, but simply from his dishonour being known; which might, or might not, be a good thing for him. If, however, we are linked by a common life and separateness is an illusion, then a lie, thought, told or acted, affects the whole race and sends throughout the community an impulse to untruth; if thought be a force and the spoken word or the action is but thought manifested on the physical plane, then by untruth a force has been set free which will bring about its natural results; a seed has been planted which must bear fruit after its kind.

A. R. O.—The question turns as usual upon definitions. What is it to lie? Certainly the nursery-room conception of lying will not stand the wear and tear of life; nor does the commonly accepted definition that lying is a wilful intention to deceive fare much better. On the other hand, it is scarcely conceivable that an "evolved man" should be "obliged" to tell an untruth even for "wholly unselfish purposes." The only obligation an evolved or any other man is under is to do the best he can in given circumstances with the knowledge he has, without reference to theories about lying or anything else. So long as a man does not deceive himself, and is really choosing a course of action because he believes it to be the best under the circumstances, any action may become honourable. The danger for us lies in imagining we are choosing when in reality we are being driven by cowardice or by desire.

A. W.—No man, evolved or unevolved, could be placed in such a position as to make a conscious untruth advisable and almost necessary. Our blind eyes may see no other way, but there are always those more advanced than ourselves who walk in light, where to us all is darkness. Recorded observations show that even in the daytime we are working in our subtler bodies, as well as in the gross one we think we know so well, and during the nightly period of repose, this subtle life is intensified, so that in truth we never pick up our outer activities in the morning just where we dropped them over night, but always plus the unseen influences we have been working with.

An untruth merely shows ignorance of, or a want of practical belief in, the help ever ready for those who make the necessary conditions. And these conditions are merely that we do our highest and best—and leave the rest. We but tangle our own lives and those of others by lies, and the untruth told to save a friend may be seen by clearer eyes so to complicate the strands of fate, that the needed touch to put things right cannot be given.

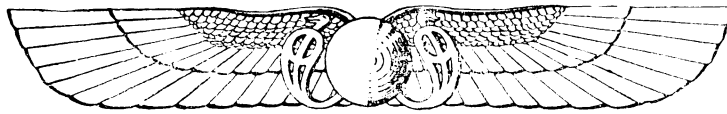
The principle of doing evil that good may come, is in every case to be condemned. It is merely the ignorant wisdom of the earthly blind.

E. A. B.—One would be slow to condemn a man who "for wholly unselfish purposes" incurs the self-degradation of a lie; yet I think a deeper and clearer insight would show him that it was a mistake, and that the only safe rule of conduct is never to "do evil that good may come." He would see too that the evil done is deeper and more far-reaching than the good he tries to gain by it. It is our own conduct that we are responsible for, and that only; the results we cannot really control, and must leave them to the Wisdom that can and does. This may seem an unpractical "counsel of perfection" to the average man; and indeed pure, entire truth is most difficult to attain and at best we are but striving towards it, as it were, from afar; but to the really "evolved man" I think the necessity and the power of the Eternal Law of Truth must be so realised in his own consciousness that he simply "cannot lie." Falsehood is cowardice; we dare not trust ourselves—or our friends—to the Eternal Law. Yet that "Good Law" will ever justify itself—could we but trust it utterly!

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, MAY 1, 1902.

NO. 10.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

NOTICE.

THE CONVENTION.

The next Annual Convention of the European Section will be held on Saturday and Sunday, July 5th and 6th. The business meeting will be held on Saturday morning at 28, Albemarle Street. Full information will be given in the June VĀHAN.

CONVENTION OF THE ITALIAN SECTION.

The following account is abstracted from a letter from the General Secretary of the new Section, Captain Boggiani:—

The Convention was held on February 1st and 2nd, and all members in Italy who were on the list of the European Section were invited to attend. Delegates of the seven Italian Branches were present with a right to vote, and a good number of other members attended. Mr. Leadbeater acted as chairman and was expressly empowered by the President-Founder to represent him at the meeting.

According to the programme prepared the Convention occupied two days. At the first meeting the official proclamation of the formation of the Section was made by the chairman, who gave an address on the duties of members of the Society. After the nomination of a Committee to prepare rules for the Section, the members were invited to a social reception.

The second meeting was devoted to the discussion of the rules, the election of officers and reports of delegates. Captain Boggiani was elected Secretary, and Signor Calvari, Treasurer. All the reports showed the great spread of the Theosophical movement in Italy.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

MRS. BESANT'S LECTURES.

Up to the time of going to press we have no further details to hand which will enable us to indicate the subjects with which Mrs. Besant proposes to deal in her lectures to members on Thursday evenings at the Elysée Gallery, Queen's Road, Bayswater. Members, however, will kindly note the following arrangements:

1. The lectures will be for members of the Theosophical Society *only*.
2. Admission to all four lectures will be by *non-transferable* course ticket.
3. The cost of a course ticket will be 2s. (in order to cover the hire of the hall).
4. All tickets must be secured in advance, as *none can be sold at the doors*.
5. Tickets may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., on and after May 15th. Members requiring tickets sent by post are requested to enclose a stamped and addressed envelope.
6. The lectures will be on Thursdays, May 29th, June 5th, 12th and 19th, and will begin at 8.15 p.m.

The Elysée Gallery is at the top of Queen's Road, close to the Central London Electric Railway Station. All Shepherd's Bush omnibuses from the City stop close by and an omnibus from Holloway to Bayswater passes the door. Queen's Road Station on the Metropolitan Railway is within about 100 yards.

Mrs. Besant will also give six public lectures in the Small Queen's Hall, on Sunday evenings, at

7 o'clock, commencing on May 25th. For these lectures the usual 2s., 1s., and 6d. tickets will be obtainable, on and after May 15th, from the Theosophical Publishing Society, together with particulars as to subjects of the lectures.

The afternoon lectures at Albemarle Street will probably commence on Tuesday, May 27th; the subject will be announced later. Having regard to the very limited accommodation and the many complaints of overcrowding received in connection with Mrs. Besant's last series of lectures in this room, the number of tickets issued will be strictly limited, and the price for a course ticket of six lectures will be 20s. This course will be open to the public..

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to April 20th: K. B., £1; E. P., £1; M. S., 4s. 6d.; A. T. O., £1 1s.; K. and H. D., 10s. 6d.; M. E. T., £1 1s.; G. P. E., £5; B. P. M., £1; A. C. P., £6; Mr. and Mrs. H., £1; E. B., 10s.; W. D., 5s.; M. S., 10s.; G. T., £10 10s.; Ss., 10s.; O. L., 3s.; J. B., £5; E. R. McN., 5s. Total: £35 10s.

The London Federation.

The first meeting of the newly formed London Federation was held on Saturday, April 12th, with Mr. Bertram Keightley in the chair.

There was a large attendance of members from the Lodges in and round London, and it seems that this new activity will prove useful as a means of bringing the more distant members to a social gathering at Headquarters. The proceedings commenced with a short debate on the relative efficacy of pain or pleasure in the development of the Ego. Mr. Mead opened the discussion and many members followed with interesting remarks on the various aspects of the subject. The general consensus of opinion seemed to be that as the Ego progresses by experience, both pain and pleasure are equally necessary factors in its development.

The next meeting of the Federation is fixed for Saturday, October 18th, the Annual Convention of the Society taking the place of the Federation Meeting in July. The subject for discussion will be "Propaganda."

F. ARUNDALE,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

There was an open night for discussion on March 20th. The subject discussed was the proposition: "Great men suffer in their disciples." The openers were Miss Goring, Mrs. Duddington and Mr. Herbert Whyte, all of whom dealt with the subject very ably; a good debate followed. The Lodge closed on March 27th and April 3rd, also

on March 30th and April 6th. It re-opened on April 10th with a lecture by Mr. Mead on "Buddhism and the West"; Mr. Mead raised many interesting points in the course of his lecture, which was the second of his series of three; he expressed regret that the study of Buddhism was not more diligently followed in the Theosophical Society, since of all the great world-religions it was the faith which, at present, seemed to be attracting the least number of students among the ranks of present day Theosophists.

The Sunday lecturers since the last report of Lodge activities have been Miss Ward (who lectured on March 16th and March 23rd), and Mrs. Sharpe.

S. M. S.

City of Liverpool Lodge.

On April 7th Mr. Bertram Keightley gave a Lecture on "Man's Larger Life." Putting aside the materialistic and ordinarily received orthodox views he spoke from the standpoint of human evolution. In this way he showed how man grows, develops and expands, and there is useful and valuable gain achieved by the soul.

The members and their friends were deeply interested in the lecture and several questions were asked which the lecturer kindly answered.

Mr. Keightley also gave a "Question Meeting" the same afternoon, and a very profitable time was spent by the members.

On April 2nd a social meeting was given by a few of the members.

On April 16th the study of *Esoteric Christianity*, by Mrs. Besant, was begun, and Mr. Kinnish gave a short paper on the "Foreword" and the first chapter and read extracts from the chapter.

The Nottingham Centre.

The inaugural meeting of this Centre was held on April 17th, at Town Club Chambers, 8, Wheeler-gate. About thirty were present. Mr. F. A. Johnson presided. The Secretary stated the object of the meeting and it was decided that the Centre should consist of members and associates. After the business arrangements were settled Mr. Johnson read a paper by another member entitled "What Theosophy is," and a discussion followed. Twenty-four names were given in as members and associates. Enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, Mr. J. V. Paul Mitchell, at the above address, where meetings are held on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

J. V. P. M.

Section Reference Library.

We have much pleasure in acknowledging the presentation to the Library of the following books:—*El Poder del Pensamiento su Dominio y Cultura* (version Castellana), A. Besant; *Evolución de la Vida y de la Forma*, A. Besant; *Algunos Problemas*

de la Vida, A. Besant; *El Hombre, Fragmentos de una historia olvidada*, por Dos Chelas, tr. de D. C. M.; *Cartas Rosacruces*, tr. F. H.; *Ciencia Oculita en la Medicina*, tr. F. Hartmann; *Historia de una Maga Negra*, tr. Mabel Collins; *La Magia Egipcia*, tr.; *Lay Down Your Arms*, tr. Bertha v. Suttner; *Egypt Exploration Fund Report, 1900-1*; *Archæological Report, 1900-1*; *The Royal Tombs of the Earliest Dynasties*, Pt. 2, ed. W. M. Flinders Petrie; *The Temple of Devi el Bahari*, Pt. 4, ed. Edouard Naville; *Studies in the Bhagavad Gîti: The Yoga of Discrimination*, The Dreamer; *Historic, and other Doubts; or, The Non-Existence of Napoleon Proved*, tr., introduction by Richard Garnett, LL.D.; *The Horoscope, and How to Read It*, Alan Leo; *Everybody's Astrology*, Alan Leo; *Four Lectures on Astrology, Exoteric and Esoteric*, Alan Leo; *The Degrees of the Zodiac Symbolised*, "Charubel"; *Prognostic Astronomy "Sepharial"*; *Casting the Horoscope*, Alan Leo; *Complete Dictionary of Astrology*, Alan Leo.

ANNIE J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Chiswick Lodge.

A new departure in London Lodge work was inaugurated on Saturday evening, April 19th, at the headquarters of the Chiswick Lodge, Adyar Studio, Bedford Park, when a joint meeting of the North London and Chiswick Lodges took place. The discussion was opened by Mr. Lewis of the North London Lodge, with a brief address upon the "Purpose of Life." The Studio was crowded, and the meeting was a pronounced success, it being evident that the introduction of visitors greatly added to the general interest and animation of the proceedings.

The scheme of joint meetings will, it is hoped, be extended, and is an outcome of the Federation of London Lodges.

MARION E. L. COX,
Hon. Secretary.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be

addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: May 11th, *The Philosophy of the Vedântas*, J. H. Duffell; May 18th . . . Mrs. Besant (public lecture, Birmingham Town Hall); May 25th, *The Positive Existence of Evil*, Mme. de Steiger. Class for study on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at the "Downs" Café, 186, Whiteladies' Road, Clifton (first floor room). The Lodge Library is available at all times to members on application to the Manageress of the Café. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 170, rue Royale, the first and third Saturdays in the month at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Open meetings at Room 13, Dowell's Rooms, 20, George Street, at 8.15 p.m.: May 13th, *Recent Explorations in Ancient Egypt*, W. F. Miller. Lodge meetings are held twice monthly for special study. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: May 26th, *Rounds and Races*, J. Handyside. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.: May 12th, Annual meeting.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: May 4th, *Friedrich Nietzsche*, A. R. Orage; May 11th, . . . Mrs. Besant (or C. W. Leadbeater); May 18th, *Conscience*, Hodgson Smith; May 25th, *Originality*, Miss Pullar. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Town Hall Restaurant, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIK LODGE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street, for the study of *Esoteric Christianity*. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings open only to members of the Society on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street: May 1st, *Root Ideas of Hindu Philosophy*, B. Keightley; May 8th, White Lotus Day; May 15th, . . . ; May 22nd, *Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.?* G. R. S. Mead; May 29th, Lecture at the Elysée Gallery, by Mrs. Besant. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., open to members and visitors.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., at Adyar Studio, Flanders Road, Bedford Park, W.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: May 6th, *The Tools of the Occultist*, B. Keightley; May 13th, Questions and Answers; May 20th, *The Acceptance of Life*, A. Threadkell; May 27th, . . . L. Stanley Jast. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for young people are held on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W.: May 4th, *The Septenary Order of Nature, I.*, G. Dyne; May 11th, . . . Mrs. Leo; May 18th, *The Septenary Order of Nature, II.*, G. Dyne; May 25th, Study of *Karma*. Particulars may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Miss Daisy Whyte, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings

on Mondays and Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.: May 10th, *An Ideal Theosophist*, G. Taylor Gwinn; May 12th, *St. Paul*, H. Whyte; May 24th, *Women's Questions from a Theosophic Stand-point*, Mrs. Pooley; May 3rd and 17th, *Atoms and Molecules*, A. M. Glass; May 5th, 19th, and 26th, Class for study of *Thought-Power: its Control and Culture*.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m. Mr. Dyne continues his special course of lectures on "Spectrum Analysis in Relation to Theosophy." Members of other Branches and visitors are cordially invited.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Lintorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Oddfellows' Hall, Morley Street, and on Wednesdays (students' class) at 8 p.m., at Dr. Mariette's, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

CORRESPONDENCE.

S. S.—May I ask the favour of a few words from C. W. L. to clear up a matter that has been a great puzzle to me. He has assured us that "every wrong which we suffer is entirely the effect and consequence of our own action at some period or other of the long life-story which lies behind us; for, if it were otherwise, it simply could not happen to us," (VĀHAN, January, 1898, p. 7), and it has troubled me considerably to find that, in one case at least, he admits the possibility of our suffering undeservedly. See VĀHAN, of May, 1897, p. 5, where, speaking of an injury done by A to B, he says: "This may be a spontaneous act of injustice on A's part, for which karma will assuredly have to repay him in the future, while B's *undeserved* suffering will also be made up to him in a future life." Now, I can easily see how A's action may, on his part, be the commencement of new karma, but I fail to see how that action can affect B, unless in response to B's own doings somewhere in the past, and, accordingly, I should esteem it a very great favour if C. W. L. would kindly explain the apparent contradiction.

C. W. L.—I am quite prepared to adhere to the statement which is quoted from the VĀHAN, that every wrong which we suffer is entirely the

effect and consequence of our own action at some period or other of the long life-story which lies behind us. At the same time it does seem to me that there must be a commencement to each chain of kârmic causation. It is easy enough to see how at our present stage of development that may be; because, although someone whom I have never met before may do me an injury which I have not merited by any action in connection with *him*, yet it is perfectly certain that somewhere in my past karma there will be actions for which this will be a fitting result.

A fresh complication is, however, introduced when we go back to the very beginning of human life. If we picture to ourselves two primitive men, each just born out of the animal kingdom into humanity, we seem hardly justified in saying that they can have anything like what we mean now by individual karma behind them, excepting, perhaps, whatever they may have made during the latter part of their last animal life, after the moment of individualisation; yet, if one of those strikes the other down in battle there is an apparent injustice done to the one who is injured. It is, however, probable that the will to injure his enemy was present in the mind of the man who is slain, and it may be possible to regard what befalls him as the karma of that murderous desire.

We know so very little on this great subject as yet, that it is impossible to say, from the evidence at our command, whether we are justified in ascribing anything that we should call karma to the group-soul which stands behind a certain number of animals. If upon further examination we find that we are justified in supposing the existence of this animal karma, then that would clear up many difficulties for us, or at any rate it would shift them further back.

If the questioner will examine the context of the second passage quoted from the VĀHAN, he will see that it was in relation to the subject of the suffering of animals that the example which he gives was adduced. The attempt there was to explain that when a man was guilty of cruelty towards an animal, he undoubtedly set up for himself evil karma of a most pronounced character. If we are unable to conceive of the animal as sufficiently responsible to have done anything which could merit this suffering, then there appears, from our point of view, to be a temporary injustice done to the group-soul which animates that creature; and if such be the case, then most assuredly the law of justice demands that the group-soul shall somehow be compensated in the future. It was as an illustration of this supposed case that the sentence under consideration was written, and it is only with regard to life at that very undeveloped level that such an argument could ever be used. The fact is, that we do not yet know enough of the obscure conditions of these lower states of life to be able to give a complete and satisfactorily rendered answer to some of the questions connected with them. In the case in question the endeavour was to state, as clearly as possible, what little we do know, in order to remove some

difficulties which had been raised by a correspondent, but we should certainly never pretend that the question was as yet thoroughly disposed of. More advanced knowledge will certainly shed light upon this, among many other subjects; but, meantime, our inability to see the whole of its action must not be allowed to blind us to the absolute certainty which we gain in other ways that this law of eternal justice cannot be contravened, and that it is invariably in operation, however difficult it may be for us to discern its work in certain conditions. Even were it not an intellectual necessity, an integral part of our teaching, we have had in our own investigations a sufficient number of cases to make us absolutely certain of the existence of this great law of karma, and it is only because we are as yet ignorant of some of the factors which enter into these cases of animal evolution that we are unable to see how the law applies in some few instances.

Assuredly as we progress the divine Light will illumine for us many corners that as yet remain in shadow, and we shall gradually but surely grow towards a perfect knowledge of the divine truth which even now is enfolding us, guarding and guiding us. All those who have had the privilege of studying these subjects under the guidance and with the help of the great Masters of Wisdom are so fully persuaded of this, that even where at present they do not see fully they are more than willing and ready to trust to that great Power of which as yet only dim glimpses can be vouchsafed to human eye. In the meantime it is hoped that these few points which have been offered to the questioner's consideration, may help somewhat to guide his feet in the right direction, even though at this early stage enough may not be said to constitute an entirely satisfactory reply.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 165.

(Continued from p. 72.)

A. S. F.—*It is written in The Devachanic Plane: "There are some things an evolved man cannot do . . . he cannot lie or betray or do a dishonourable action." May not an evolved man be placed in such a position as to make a lie advisable and almost necessary? He may be obliged to tell or act an untruth for wholly unselfish purposes, for instance when by so doing he can save a friend from dishonour. Is the principle of doing evil that good may come, to be in every case condemned?*

A. A. W.—There is an old saying of the Christ, "Ye cannot gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles." If good actually comes from an action, it was *not* evil. Isn't that simple logic? A perfectly endless amount of discussion has taken place on the particular case raised in the query, and cannot be summarised here. The plain common-sense of the matter was as well put by Dr. Johnson as by anyone. Here one can only

lay down a general principle. There *are* circumstances in which it is necessary, and therefore right, to kill a man, or to lie to him. It is in the judgment of what these circumstances are that nobility of mind is shown. An "evolved man" cannot lie in a prospectus of a company; nor can he shake hands with the man who has done so, however many thousands of pounds his lie may have gained him; he cannot lie to escape the consequences of his own actions, however terrible. The Hebrew sage rightly judged that "he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not" was righteous before God. Nor is this any great heroism, for the evolved man knows how trifling are the utmost sufferings life can inflict, compared with the purity of soul such a lie would tarnish: it would be a cowardice of which he is incapable. But that suffering which he himself can well endure he has no right to bring upon others, and if silence will not save them, he must boldly and honestly lie, and take the consequences of *that*, as all honourable people have always felt. I should not have ventured to suggest that there may be circumstances where a lie may be used to carry out a good purpose, did I not remember Who it was Who put lying a lying spirit into the mouth of His prophets, to betray a Jewish king to his destined ruin. But I myself think that *this*, too, would be amongst the "things that an evolved man (of the twentieth century) cannot do."

QUESTION 166.

W.—What is meant by "sinking into unconsciousness," when the man's consciousness is passing inwards from one sheath to another; either when leaving the physical body, or when passing from the astral world into the devachanic? The Ego must ever be conscious on some plane or other, must it not?

*B. K.—*This question raises several points of considerable importance about which our knowledge is far from being either as accurate or as detailed as could be wished. Moreover, it must be borne in mind throughout the whole of what follows, that *all* our information is and must be conveyed in terms of the consciousness as functioning through the physical brain in waking experience, and not only must it be conveyed to us in such terms by those who can observe and investigate the facts upon other planes of being, but these observers themselves must in each case "translate" or "bring through" into *their own* waking consciousness in the brain the results of their observations and investigations upon other planes, and thus obviously import into them whatever limitations they themselves may be subject to when functioning in the physical body, in addition to the difficulties inherent in language itself when used to convey such results to other brains not acquainted at first hand with the experiences attempted to be described.

Having thus set forth a most necessary caution, and one the more needed as we are about to

engage in the rather hazardous task of drawing inferences and reasoning from the statements made by such observers, let us try and summarise the information at our disposal.

First, then, what have we been told about the consciousness of the Ego itself *on its own plane*?

As it has been described to us, it is abundantly clear that the Ego, not merely at the outset of its evolution in the human kingdom, but throughout a very large part indeed of that evolution, cannot be regarded as "self-conscious" on its own plane, and still less as having any consciousness of the arūpa thought world as an *objective* world. From what has been said it would seem that the Ego, throughout this long stage, is rather a *source of consciousness*, a centre containing all consciousness *potentially*, but actually responding only to a very limited range of vibrations indeed, and quite without anything like self-consciousness or even consciousness at all *on its own plane*, excepting when the "flash" of consciousness occurs in it, at the termination of the devachanic period following each earth life, when, for a moment, it has been stated, the Ego is *conscious as itself and on its own plane*.

Hence it seems to follow that throughout the whole of this segment of its evolution, the Ego cannot be considered as "self-conscious," nor even as "conscious" (on its own plane) in any intelligible sense.

Next, still confining our consideration to the Ego in this same period of its evolution, let us consider the problem of its consciousness in the mind body, the vehicle of the Ego on the rūpa mental plane.

The variety of stages needing to be distinguished is here greater, and for the sake of brevity we may deal in detail only with the ordinary average type of person—an intelligent specimen of the "man in the street," in whom there is little activity of "abstract thinking" properly so called, but considerable activity, though not much spontaneity, of concrete thought.

From what has been said of this type, it is obvious that on the lower mental plane—apart from the physical body during life—the Ego is *not* "self-conscious," and it may be questioned indeed whether the Ego would be able to hold the self-consciousness which it has undoubtedly acquired in the physical body, when apart from the latter even in the astral world and still less of course in the mental. For it has been stated that even a fairly advanced pupil in occultism requires to be taught by his Master to form the "māyāvi-rūpa" or functional body of the lower mental world and to retain his clear self-consciousness when centred in it. And though from what has been written about the consciousness of an ordinary intelligent man on the astral plane, when out of the physical body during sleep, it would appear that he then possesses a certain degree or kind of self-consciousness, not unlike that of one immersed in a brown study or day dream, yet he has little or no consciousness of the objective astral world around him, and indeed seems not to be "awake" to its phenomena.

And this certainly seems to imply that even on the astral plane (during physical life) his self-consciousness must be very dim and certainly different in many respects from the clear, active, definite self-consciousness which he enjoys when awake and functioning normally in the physical body.

But the conclusions to which the foregoing would seem to point must perhaps to some extent be modified in the light of what has been said regarding the *post-mortem* consciousness of such a man as we are considering. From the descriptions given it appears that when once he "wakes up" in the astral world after death, he is fully and vividly self-conscious and also aware of his objective surroundings, though his actual objective world is limited to the particular sub-plane of the astral upon which his consciousness is focussed for the time being by the condition of the various layers into which the matter of his astral body has then become stratified. This state of things continues till the Ego sheathed in the mind body separates itself from the astral body, and then after an interval of oblivion analogous to that following upon the death of the physical body, his consciousness again becomes active in the devachanic condition.

In Devachan, the consciousness clearly has present to it an "objective world," although it is a world of its own creation, since the "forms," "scenery," etc., which the consciousness perceives in that condition are the creations of its own mental energies and activities, and not the actual objectivity of the mental plane as distinct from the action of the individual's own mind upon it. But how about self-consciousness in this condition? On this point I do not recall any specific information, nor do any of the descriptions which have been given, nor the instances observed, throw clear light upon the question. Personally I incline to think that self-consciousness—at any rate so far as deliberate self-inspection and conscious thought about oneself are concerned—is in abeyance during the devachanic state in the vast majority of cases, the consciousness being wholly absorbed in the direct contemplation and blissful experience of the self-created objectivity with which the man's mind surrounds him. But I am by no means sure that this is the case. In any case, however, the decision on this point does not seem to me of vital significance in relation to the general conclusions to which the foregoing summary appears to point. These would seem to be as follows:—

1. The Ego during incarnation is, at the outset of its evolution, only self-conscious in and through the physical body, and it retains this self-consciousness after death only through its astral existence—since in the early stages of human progress the Ego enjoys no Devachan at all (*cp. C. W. L.'s Devachanic Plane*).

2. When the evolving Ego has attained the level of the intelligent ordinary man, it is still only fully self-conscious in and through the physical body during life, but it has developed a dim and modified self-consciousness in the astral body

during sleep. After death it is fully self-conscious during the astral life and (perhaps) dimly so during its period of rūpa Devachan.

3. In neither case, however, is the Ego self-conscious upon, or even aware of, the objectivity of its own plane—the arūpa mental—except during the momentary "flash" already spoken of.

Passing on now to consider the Ego in a still more advanced stage, say in one who has entered upon the Path, we are told that such a man first becomes fully self-conscious and awake upon the astral plane during the sleep of the physical body; then learns to form the mind body into the māyāvi rūpa, and to function self-consciously and fully awake to his objective surroundings on the lower mental plane, and finally to function in full self-consciousness in the causal body, having united the personality to the individuality, and thus aroused full and complete self-consciousness in the Ego itself.

But before this last stage is reached, we are told that the "flash" of self-consciousness in the Ego, which occurs at the close of each devachanic period, has become prolonged, or drawn out progressively into an increasing span of clear self-conscious activity in the Ego, which is spoken of as its "arūpa" Devachan. It seems, however, to be implied that this extension in time of the "flash" is not permanent, but sooner or later fades out and the Ego sinks back into oblivious unconsciousness before, reversing their polarity, its energies are again poured forth into the denser planes on the way to rebirth. But it seems implied that where once the personality has been merged in the individuality and the waking self-consciousness of the living man (whether or no any memory thereof is impressed on the physical plane) has been united with and established in the causal body, the Ego has then at last attained to permanent, un lapsing, indestructible self-consciousness on its own plane and in relation to the objectivity of its own world—the arūpa levels of the mental plane.

Taking now what has been said in connection with the general teaching regarding the Ego's evolution and its relation to the various sheaths or vehicles, we may perhaps summarise its bearing as follows:—

1. The development of self-consciousness in the Ego is *gradual*.

2. It begins in connection with the physical body, and is at first only maintained so long as that physical body is actively awake.

3. It is gradually established also in the astral body, when separated from the physical; and similarly in relation to the mind body and the causal body.

4. Self-consciousness seems to demand a "lens," a something which shall concentrate and focus (as it were) the potential rays of consciousness into a centre in which the Ego can become aware of itself.

5. This "focus" can exist—at any rate until the Ego becomes fully self-conscious on its own plane—only in one vehicle or body at a time, how-

ever rapidly, in the developed man, the focus may change from one body to another.

6. In the absence of such a "focus"—as appears in the case of an undeveloped and ill-organised vehicle—self-consciousness lapses, either entirely or partially.

7. In the case of the Ego which has attained full self-consciousness on its own plane, we have not as yet any definite information regarding its condition *quâ* self-consciousness while it is actively functioning through the waking physical body. It seems, however, probable that as the "focus" of its attention and activity is then centred in the physical body, it is comparatively inattentive to, and therefore unaware of, the objectivity of its own, or intermediate planes, except in so far as these can be reflected into the physical brain.

And now, after these lengthy preliminary considerations, we may turn to the questions propounded.

The passing of consciousness inwards from one sheath to another (taking the case of the developed man "on the path," as the most illustrative), implies the shifting of the focus of self-consciousness from one body to another. Now, if the connecting links of etheric matter between, say, the dense physical and the astral bodies are well developed and functional, this passage will take place not only *gradually*, but the *focus itself* will be maintained clear and well-defined at each step or stage of the process, and hence there will be no "blank," no "sinking into unconsciousness" as the focus passes from one body to the other either way. The whole process will be continuous and unbroken by any sudden jumps or leaps across imperfect or missing rungs in the ladder of ascent, but if these etheric links are imperfect, impermeable, or functioning badly, such leaps or jumps will certainly occur, and at each the "focus" of self-consciousness will be disturbed, or it may be lost altogether, and a momentary lapse of self-consciousness, either wholly or partially, will result, and further from the standpoint of the backward looking memory there will be a blank, there will be nothing remembered to give a content to such moments when the focus leaps across a gap, or is disturbed in passing through an imperfect link.

So much for the living man who has reached the stage of functioning self-consciously and awake on planes higher than the physical.

And the same explanation will obviously apply even more forcibly to the *post-mortem* passage of the focus of self-consciousness from the physical to the astral, and from the astral to the devachanic.

As regards the last part of the question, the answer to it is contained in what has already been said. The Ego is certainly *not self-conscious* always "on some plane or other," as we have seen. On the contrary, it is only at a comparatively advanced stage of evolution that the Ego becomes permanently "self-conscious" on its own plane; while, as we have seen, according to its stage of growth, the Ego may be self-conscious *only* on the physical plane during life and on the astral after death, or

its self-consciousness may extend to the devachanic later on, and gradually expand from a momentary "flash" to a more or less prolonged period of self-consciousness of the Ego itself after the *rûpa Devachan* is over.

QUESTION 167.

M. K.—If the human monad was all wise and all good, in starting on its long journey through matter, why was it necessary for it to experience sorrow and suffering for millions of ages that it might return to its source?

C. W. L.—We must remember that when what is here called the human monad came forth from the divine it was not a monad at all—still less an all-wise and all-good one. There was no sort of individualisation in it—it was simply a mass of monadic essence. The difference between its condition when issuing forth and when returning is exactly like that between a great mass of shining nebulous matter and the solar system which is eventually formed out of it. The nebula is beautiful, no doubt, but vague and useless; the sun formed from it by slow evolution pours life and heat and light upon many worlds and their evolutions.

Or we may take another analogy. The human body is composed of countless millions of tiny particles, and some of them are constantly being thrown off from it. Suppose that it were possible for each of these particles to go through some kind of evolution by means of which it would in time become a human being, we should not say that because it had been in a certain sense human at the beginning of that evolution, it had, therefore, not gained anything when it reached the end. The essence comes forth as a mere outpouring of force, even though it be divine force; it returns in the form of thousands of millions of mighty adepts, each capable of himself developing into a Logos.

Besides, we should remember that it is not *necessary* for any entity to experience sorrow or suffering; that comes only when he breaks the divine laws, and consequently it is invariably his own doing. If he will always obey the law, his evolution will take place much more rapidly and without any suffering. Reference is made to this subject in the little book on *The Christian Creed*, so that I need not repeat what I have there said, but will refer the questioner to that work.

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, JUNE 1, 1902.

NO. 11.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Members are reminded that the subscriptions to the Section for the year 1902-3 became due in May.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

THE CONVENTION.

The Twelfth Annual Convention of the European Section will be held in London on Saturday and Sunday, July 5th and 6th.

On Friday afternoon, July 4th, there will be a Reception at 28, Albemarle Street, from 3.30 to 6, for members of the Society only. Afternoon tea will be provided.

On Friday evening, July 4th, at 8, Mrs. Besant will deliver a lecture in the Large Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on "Theosophy and Imperialism." Special platform tickets will be provided for Presidents of Lodges and elected Delegates, for which application should be made to me, not later than July 1st. This lecture takes the place of the usual reception of members and delegates at Albemarle Street, on the Friday evening before Convention. See also special notice.

The Convention will meet in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, at 10.45 a.m., on Saturday, July 5th. To lessen the difficulty of providing seats for delegates they are requested to take their places at least ten minutes before the time for beginning the meeting.

On Saturday afternoon the rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be open for the reception of members.

On Saturday evening, at 8.30, there will be a Public Meeting of the Convention in the Small

Queen's Hall, and on Sunday, at 7 p.m., a second Public Meeting.

At both these meetings addresses will be given, particulars of which will appear in the next issue of THE VĀHAN.

All delegates (except Presidents of Branches present in person) and proxies should bring their credentials in writing. Branches are reminded that they may send one delegate (in addition to the President or his representative) for each twenty-five members.

All Branches should send in a correct list of their members at least ten days before the Convention for the revision of the registers, and the Reports of the Branch Secretaries should be sent at the same time.

With this issue of THE VĀHAN the account of receipts and expenditure and the Convention agenda are sent to members.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

"THEOSOPIY AND IMPERIALISM."

Mrs. Annie Besant will give a lecture on the above subject in the large Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on Friday, July 4th, at 8 p.m.

A few reserved and numbered tickets will be sold at 5s. Reserved seats, 2s. 6d.; unreserved seats, 1s. A large number of free tickets will be issued. Those who are willing to help in circulating handbills and free tickets should apply to Miss Ward, Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place. As the Hall is a very large one, members should exert themselves to make the lecture known.

As this lecture will take the place of the usual reception before the Convention, free special platform tickets will be issued to the representatives of Branches attending the Convention.

LETTER FROM THE SCANDINAVIAN SECTION.

Bertram Keightley, Esq.,
Gen. Sec. of the European Section
of the Theosophical Society, London.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,

The Scandinavian Section, assembled in large number for its Annual Convention in the Capital of Denmark, sends you its warm brotherly greeting, wishing you every success in your work.

For the Annual Convention,

A. ZETTERSTEN,
Acting Gen. Sec.

ACTIVITIES.

Notice to Members.

The rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be closed at 7 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, June 26th and 27th.

New Branches.

May 3rd, 1902. Charter issued this day to E. E. Marsden, Mrs. Marsden, C. Midgley, Mrs. Lund, Mrs. Worthington, Miss M. Smith, Mrs. Barker, Mrs. Clarke, Mrs. Peace, Miss Dora Barker, Miss McConnochie, F. H. Clarke, Mrs. Midgley, Mrs. Orchard and Miss Lily Peck, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society at Didsbury, near Manchester, to be known as the Didsbury Branch.

May 9th, 1902. Charter issued this day to Günther Wagner, Carl Franken, Mme. Maria Franken, Mme. Anna Wagner, Frau Dr. Louise Friedlaender, Dr. Alfred Gysi and W. Megerle, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society at Lugano, Switzerland, to be known as the Lugano Branch.

May 14th, 1902. Charter issued this day to Friedrich Pfundt, Theodor Ehrle, Adolf Oppel, Fr. Julie Kieffer, Fr. Bertha Kuttler, Hans Breyer, and Ferdinand Zix, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society at Stuttgart, Germany, to be known as the Stuttgart Branch.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to May 20th: A. M. de P., £2 2s.; F. J. B., 15s.; W. C., 10s.; J. L., 10s.; F. T., 5s.; E. A. B., £6; A. G. B., £2; I. H., £2; H. S. G., £3; E. M., £1 1s.; M. R., £1; Mr. and Mrs. G. A. W. C., £1 10s.; New Zealand Section, £1 17s. 6d.; A. B., £10; Part Profits on H.P.B.'s Books, per A. B., £26; W. T., £1 1s.; L. T., £1 1s.; A. G. T., 5s. 6d.; M. T., £1 1s.; Ss., 10s.; C. R. H., £4; M. W., £1; D. S., 10s.; A. K., £1 1s.; E. H. K., £1 1s. Total: £70 1s.

Section Reference Library.

We have much pleasure in acknowledging the presentation to the Library of the following books: *De Vraag Zijn (n) ooit dooden opgewekt?* Dr. J. A. Binneweg; *Vrije Wil en Karma*, A. P. Sinnett, trs.; *Inleiding tot de Theosofie*, J. W. Boissevain; *Reincarnatie*, M. Reepmaker; *Onzichtbare Helpers*, C. W. Leadbeater, trs.; *Droomen*, C. W. Leadbeater, trs.; *Vier Voordrachten over Theosofie*, Annie Besant; *Mythologie du Bouddhisme au Tibet et en Mongolie*, Albert Grünwedel, trs. Two books have been purchased: *Linguistic Essays* (Trübner's Oriental Series), Carl Abel; *Original Sanskrit Texts on the Origin and History of the People of India, their Religion and Institutions*, collected translated and illustrated, J. Muir, 5 vols.

A. J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Mrs. Besant's Lectures.

The subject of Mrs. Besant's four lectures to members of the Society only, in the Elsyée Gallery, Queen's Road, Bayswater, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., is "Consciousness and its Mechanism." The first of these lectures was delivered on May 29th, and the remaining three will be given on June 5th, 12th and 19th. As announced last month, admission to the course, for *members only*, is by ticket, price 2s., to be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W.

The following is the list of Mrs. Besant's six public lectures in the Small Queen's Hall, on Sunday evenings at 7 o'clock. The first lecture has been already delivered.

May 25th, "The Sufferings of Hell"; June 1st, "The Joys of Heaven"; June 8th, "Original Sin"; June 15th, "The Resurrection of the Body"; June 22nd, "The Divine Kings"; June 29th, "The Powers of the Believer."

Admission free. Reserved and numbered seats 2s. each lecture. Reserved seats 1s. and 6d. each lecture. Tickets may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society.

The complete syllabus of the lectures now being delivered at 28, Albemarle Street, is given below. Two of these have already been delivered. The general subject is "Will, Desire and Emotion, and their Bearing on Life." The lectures are on Tuesday afternoons, at 5 o'clock.

May 20th. *The Will in the Trinity of Man.* The Divine Trinity—Its Reflexion in Man—The Descent of the Human Trinity into Matter—The Agent of the Descent—The Motive of the Descent—The Result of the Descent—The Creator of the Vehicles—The Inner Ruler.

May 27th. *The Nature of Desire.* The relation of Desire to Will—The awakening of Desire—Its Division by Experience—Its Relation to Thought—Its Relation to Action—Its binding nature—"The bonds of the Heart"—Freedom.

June 3rd. *The Training of Desire.* The Vehicle of Desire—The Reign of Desire—The Conflict of Desire and Intellect: "What I would, that I do

not ; what I would not, that I do"—The Purification of Desire—The Ceasing of Desire.

June 10th. *The Nature and Evolution of Emotion.* The Birth of Emotion from Desire and Intellect—Love and Hate—The Relation of Emotions to Virtues and Vices—The Uses of Love, the Constructor—The Uses of Hate, the Destroyer—The Essence of "Sin."

June 17th. *The Training of Emotion.* The Victim of Emotion—The Ruler of Emotion—The Methods by which the Victim becomes the Ruler—The Using of Emotion in the Service of Others—The Value of Emotion in Life-Evolution.

June 24th. *The Evolution and Power of the Will.*—The Bondage of the Will in the form of Desire—The Meaning and Nature of "Choice"—The "Freedom" of Will—The Powers of the Will—Their Use and Misuse—The Essence of White and Black Magic—The Peace.

Transferable Course Tickets, price 20s., may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W.

Arrangements are being made for lectures and other meeting at the following places on the dates named, but most of these dates are still subject to alteration at our going to press:

June 30th and July 1st, Derby; July 1st and 2nd, Nottingham; 5th and 6th, Convention; Aug. 10th and 12th, Plymouth; 12th and 13th, Exeter; 14th and 15th, Cardiff; 16th and 17th, Bristol; 18th and 19th, Bath; 23rd and 24th, Harrogate; 25th and 26th, Bradford; 31st, Manchester.

Leeds, Middlesbrough, Liverpool, Sheffield, Bournemouth and Oxford will also be visited, and, if possible, Glasgow and Edinburgh. Mrs. Besant earnestly hopes that the members will co-operate with her in forming Lodges at Plymouth and Cardiff.

North of England Federation.

The Quarterly Conference was held at Harrogate on Saturday, May 10th, under the presidency of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater. There was a record attendance of delegates and members from nearly all the Federated Lodges and Centres, including Manchester, Sheffield, Harrogate, Leeds, Athene, Middlesbrough, Tyneside, Edinburgh, York, Hull, Bradford and Manningham. It was reported that during the past twelve months two new Lodges had been formed, and that the membership in Federated Lodges and Centres had increased from 237 to 291. The new Lodges were the Tyneside and the Didsbury (Manchester); the latter commenced with a membership of eighteen, of whom fifteen were new members of the Society.

Mr. Orage read a paper on "Problems of Karma," which was followed by a good discussion, to which many of the members contributed. Mr. Leadbeater, in summing up, dealt with several of the points raised, and suggested other ways of dealing with the problem. At five o'clock the members adjourned to take tea together in the Winter Gardens.

On reassembling, Mr. Leadbeater delivered a most instructive lecture on "Successive Life Waves," which was listened to with absorbing interest. At the conclusion Mr. Leadbeater answered a few questions, after which the formal proceedings were brought to a close by a hearty expression of thanks to the President for his presence and helpful addresses. The remainder of the evening was spent socially, the members of the Harrogate Lodge providing refreshments.

Public and members' meetings were also held on Sunday, the 11th, all of which were largely attended.

Mrs. Besant will, it is expected, preside at the next meeting, which is to be held at Harrogate.

W. H. THOMAS,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On April 17th, Mr. Mead gave the last of his series of three lectures; his title was "Mohammedanism and the West."

The meeting on April 24th was an open night; the subject was, "Do we learn more from a man's books or from his conversation?" The speakers were Miss Forster, Mr. A. J. Faulding, and Mr. McConechy.

On May 1st, Mr. Keightley lectured on "Root Ideas of Hindu Philosophy."

May 8th fell this year on a Thursday, and there was no Lodge meeting, but instead the usual celebration of White Lotus Day, in commemoration of the debt owed to Madame Blavatsky. The lecture hall was decorated with flowers, and there was a crowded gathering. This year we had the presence of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater; after the usual reading, Mr. Leadbeater gave an address, followed by addresses from Mr. Mead and Mr. Keightley. Mrs. Besant, who was looking worn and weak from her recent severe illness, spoke in conclusion; she referred to the many-sidedness of the great soul whom we had met to honour and reverence. The preceding speakers had referred to some of her most striking qualities, her power, her knowledge, her breadth of judgment; Mrs. Besant referred to her humanity, her fearlessness, her greatness, her supreme devotion to the great work which was entrusted to her. Mrs. Besant also addressed special words of encouragement to the younger members who might hope to be among the followers of her, who was once known as Helena Blavatsky, when she returned to labour again on the physical plane for the cause she held so dear; Mrs. Besant warned all who hoped to work for Theosophy that, to do so, they must give it the first place in their lives.

On May 15th there was an open night; Miss Severs, Mrs. Worsdell and Miss Willson were the speakers. The subject was: "We generalise, as regards people, much too freely."

Mrs. Mallet was the lecturer on Sunday, April 27th, her subject was "The Growth of Mind and

Morality in Animals," which was treated in a very interesting manner.

This was the last Sunday evening lecture at 28, Albemarle Street, for the present.

S. M. S.

Nottingham Centre.

The past month has been one of progress. An excellent lecture, by Mr. I. H. Duffell, on April 28th, on the "Great Breath," gave an attendance of forty. The study of the "Ancient Wisdom" has been the principal occupation of the Centre, which is continually receiving additions to its numbers. Mr. J. H. Duffell lectured for us again on Monday, May 26th. Mrs. Besant has very kindly promised to lecture on June 30th, at Derby, and on July 1st, at Nottingham, a Lodge will be formed. If that is done she will formally open the Lodge on July 2nd.

J. V. P. M.

Meetings at Earl's Court.

Informal Meetings for the study and discussion of Theosophical subjects take place every alternate Tuesday, 8 to 9.30 p.m., at 16, Nevern Road, Earl's Court, S.W., under the direction of Miss Wolff van Sandau.

M. W. v. S.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: June 1st, *The Human Ego*; June 8th, Miss Keeley; June 15th, *Caste*, Brian Hodgson; June 22nd, *Solidarity*, C. E. Smith; June 29th, *The Mirror of the Self, II.*, B. Old. Class for study on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at the "Downs" Café, 186, Whiteladies' Road, Clifton (first floor room). The Lodge Library is available at all times to members on application to the Manageress of the Café. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 170, rue Royale, the first and third Saturdays in the month at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Regular meetings are suspended during the summer. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month, at 8 p.m. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 8, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: June 1st, *The Inner Teaching of Christianity*, C. W. Leadbeater; June 8th, *Lines of Human Evolution*, H. E. Nichol; June 15th, *God's Athletes*, Mrs. Bell; June 22nd, *The Theosophical Society and Theosophy*, W. H. Thomas; June 29th, *Guardian Angels*, Miss Shaw. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Town Hall Restaurant, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIC LODGE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt Street, for the study of *Esoteric Christianity*. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. In place of the usual Thursday evening meetings Mrs. Besant lectures on June 5th, 12th and 19th, at the Elysée Gallery, Queen's Road, W., to members. No meeting on June 26th. The Sunday meetings are discontinued for the summer.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings discontinued for the summer.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.: June 3rd, *A Balanced Soul was born*, Miss Goring; June 10th, *Involution*, A. P. Cattnach; June 17th, *Life—Here and Now*, Mrs. Raphael; June 24th, *Are Ideals Exaggerations?* F. Horne; June 12th and 26th, Students' Class. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m. June 2nd, *The Gift of Prometheus*, Alan Leo; June 9th, *The Principle of Sound in Nature*, G. Dyne; June 16th, *The Pair of Opposites*, Alan Leo; June 23rd, *The Higher Self*, A. H. Ward; June 30th, Members' meeting. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for young people are held on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W. Particulars may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Miss Daisy Whyte, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays and alternate Saturdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.: June 7th, General Meeting; June 9th, *Man's Evolution*; June 21st, *Some Notes on the Sympathetic Nervous System*, Mrs. Betts; June 2nd, 16th, 23rd and 30th, *Study of Thought Power; its Control and Culture*.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. The usual meetings on Friday evenings are suspended in June during Mrs. Besant's lectures in the Elysée Gallery.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on

Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 168.

H. D.—May I trouble you to give me your opinion concerning the use of the word "Logos"? How far down in the scale of being can a spiritual entity be spoken of as a Logos? Is the Logos of a Planetary Chain the lowest or could the "Lord of the world" be so called, as used on p. 197 of *The Gospels and the Gospel*? How is the line of distinction to be drawn between an entity who can be spoken of as a Logos and one who cannot?

G. R. S. M.—The above questions were sent to me personally for answer in THE VĀHAN, and though I should like to see some other opinions on the subject, as one of them concerns a statement made by myself I take up my pen to hazard an answer.

There is, of course, no authority which can compel us to abide by any formal definition or limitation of the use of the word. It must be a matter of convention and general agreement. If we go back to the earliest use of the word in Greek philosophy, we find that it was a general term for a faculty in man: subsequently we find it used in two ways; still in the limited and general sense of the individual faculty of the reason in man, but also in the universal sense of a principle in cosmos. Those uses we find common to the Platonic, Stoic and Hermetic traditions. If we come to the Early Christian use of the term, we find that the first philosophers of the faith speak of the Logos as one, as the Reason of God, combining this sense with its alternative meaning in Greek, the Word, which enabled them to connect it with the Jewish tradition of the Word and Spirit of God and the Wisdom teaching; but at the same time they speak of the angels of God as *logoi*, and they further declare that there is a *logos* in every man, a son of the Logos. This usage gradually fades out in the development of General Christianity, and the term Logos is restricted to the second person of the Trinity, its meaning as the theological Word gradually forcing into the background its conception as the Divine Reason.

In the present revival of Theosophic studies we have recovered the original term Logos, so that it may carry the two meanings of Word and Reason,

as it does in Greek, and so that the idea may not be limited theologically by the use of the term "Word" alone, nor yet divorced from a part of its heredity by the use of Reason alone. It has been brought into this prominence from the necessity felt for a term which should not confound the Divine Source of all universes with the God of a world-system or of a time-period. So used it is the equivalent of the Sanskrit general term *Īshvara*, the Lord—our Lord, not the Lord of Sirius, say, or the Lord of all Lords of systems. But this general use of the word has been gradually expanded. First of all we had the expressions Unmanifested and Manifested Logos; then in connection with the "three outpourings" the three Logoi; and again the seven Logoi to denote the Rulers of what have been called the Planetary Chains of our system. As far as I am aware the use of the word has so far extended no further among our present-day writers. It is very difficult to suggest terms that could be immediately comprehensible for all these conceptions, and the difficulty of naming the hierarchies and their Rulers may be at once seen by referring to the literature of antiquity on the subject. Let any one turn to the elaborate nomenclature of the Gnostic traditions preserved in the Askew and Bruce Codices and he will at once see what I mean.

Now as we have not so far extended the use of the word *logos* to signify the divine mind in man and so made it a general term, it seems almost a pity that we have not restricted the word to the designation of the Source and Ruler of a system only, and so have made it a particular. As it is we seem to be somewhat arbitrary in our halting stage. But all this is a question of taste; the main thing is to get some comprehension of the ideas. Now I am bound to confess that so far I have personally, in the most literal sense of the words, not the *ghost* of an *idea* what the planetary chains really are. I believe they adumbrate some great mystery concerning the ordering of our system within and without, of which could we but once conceive the *idea*, we should find order in the chaos in a manner so marvellous that the intellect would be filled with utter satisfaction.

Of the physical details and the more subjective externals which have been hazarded by some of our colleagues, I can form no consistent conception; the metaphysical side has hardly been touched upon by any but H. P. B., and only by her in a very confused fashion; the Stanzas of Dzyan fascinate us by their stupendous grandeur, but their secret remains hidden. This being so, I prefer to think of our chain from the standpoint of our humanity and its consciousness solely. Our humanity lives and evolves in other spheres of consciousness besides the physical. About other humanities I know nothing.

When, then, I use the phrase "Lord of the world" in connection with the idea of the Great Economy according to which our evolution is guided by the Servants of the Lord, I mean generally the Ruler of our humanity. It may be that the term can be used in some more precise

sense, and is consecrated to a special use by those who know directly of such high matters; but I have simply used it generally, not stopping to think whether I am to make this title synonymous with what some of my colleagues call our planetary Logos, or where exactly to place it between the grade of the present Ruler of our actual globe, the *Manu* (as Indian tradition has it) and the *Manu* of all the *Manus* of our humanity's life-span; much less to speculate on what may be the distinction at such sublime heights between Ruler and Teacher. I spoke generally; there is, I believe, a Ruler of our humanity, a Lord of our "world," who impersonates the great plan of its being, and those who know Him as He is, speak in His name, and act with His power, when immediately expressing His will.

QUESTION 169.

H. T.—*I have been for some years a member of the Theosophical Society, but I have seen no effort on the part of its writers to give proof to the world of the reality of clairvoyant powers or of other planes. For example, when some years ago a child was lost among the Welsh hills, why should not some of our clairvoyant members have demonstrated their power to the whole world, by turning the search for him in the right direction?*

C. W. L.—It is strange to find one who has been for some years a member of the Theosophical Society, as the questioner says he has, and has not yet realised that no Theosophical writer has the slightest desire to "give proof to the world of the reality of clairvoyant powers or of other planes."

This question of phenomenal proof was discussed so fully in some of the very earliest Theosophical books that we need hardly waste time over it now. Those who are seeking for information or advice Theosophists are always willing to help to the utmost of their power, but to those who desire proof they have nothing to say but "Work at the thing for yourself, study, and, if you will, try experiments for yourself; and so in good time the only proof which is worth having will come to you."

The particular case to which the questioner draws attention is one of a very large class, and differs in no way from the rest except that it happens to have attracted a large share of public notice. But we may be sure of this—that those whose work it is to help are always looking out for opportunities to make themselves useful, and if they can do nothing in any particular case it is because of some good and definite reason.

QUESTION 170.

H. H.—*When elemental essence is moulded into a thought-form, it takes to itself a colour corresponding to the nature of the thought or feeling; does it carry with it any part of this colouring when it sinks back into the general mass of essence, when the thought-form disintegrates?*

C. W. L.—It is undoubtedly true that the essence when moulded by thought adopts a certain colour—a colour which is expressive of the nature of the thought or feeling. But we must remember that a colour is after all nothing but a certain rate of vibration, so that all that we mean when we say that a thought-form is of a certain colour, is that the essence composing it is for the time compelled to vibrate at a certain definite rate by the thought which is ensouling it.

Now the evolution of the elemental essence is to learn to respond to all possible rates of vibration; when therefore a thought holds it for a time vibrating at a certain rate, it is helped to this extent, that it has now become habituated to that particular rate of vibration, so that next time it comes within reach of a similar vibration it will respond to it very much more readily than before. Then presently those atoms of essence, having passed back again into the general mass of the elemental essence, will be caught up again by some other thought, and will then have to vibrate at some totally different rate, and so will evolve a little further by acquiring the capacity to respond very readily to this second type of vibration. So by very slow degrees the thoughts not only of man but of nature spirits and devas, and even of animals so far as they do think, are slowly evolving the elemental essence which surrounds them—slowly teaching, as it were, here a few atoms and there a few atoms to respond to this or that different rate of vibration, until at last a stage will be reached when all the particles of the essence shall be ready to answer at any moment to any possible rate of vibration, and that will be the completion of their evolution.

So that perhaps it would be more correct for us to say that what the essence carries with it back into the mass, is not so much the colour itself as the power to assume that colour at any moment when required.

QUESTION 171.

D. N.—*If between two earth lives we have fifteen centuries of the magnificent mental activity of the devachanic plane, where thought moves so very much faster than it does down here, and it is so much easier to learn and to develop, ought we not to be very much better and greater than we are when we return to earth at the end of such a period?*

C. W. L.—That is perfectly true; but we must remember that the ego does make very considerable progress between life and life as soon as he has begun to realise anything of his higher possibilities. Very much of this improvement does not show itself on the physical plane, and cannot in the nature of things do so as yet; but nevertheless it is there, and if we were to examine the causal body of a man at intervals of five or ten thousand years as we followed the line of his evolution, we could not fail to be struck with the very great advancement which was shown. Perhaps, however, we are making a mis-

take when we import into this question the consideration of our ideas of time, since the real development of the ego is taking place very largely on planes to which this idea does not apply.

QUESTION 172.

A. J. R.—*The number of Lucifer for September, 1896, contains an article on "Thought-forms," by Mrs. Besant. We find there that the thought assumes certain characteristic forms and colours, which, however, are not comprehensible for an uninitiate. The question arises how the existence of such forms is compatible with the transference of most definite and explicit thoughts from one person to another. How can any man read out of such forms what the originating person has to say?*

B. K.—It will, I think, make the answer to this question more easily intelligible if we consider it in the first place as applying only to the forms on the mental plane itself, or more accurately to the forms which are perceived on the four lower or rûpa subdivisions of the mental plane, since on the three higher, or arûpa, levels, there is nothing perceptible which our consciousness would recognise as "forms," but only flashes, radiations, streams of light, colour and sound in which the abstract ideation that alone has place in those lofty regions embodies itself.

Confining our attention then to the rûpa levels, we must first recall—what we have been repeatedly told—that the essential nature of the matter of those levels is such that all its vibrations or motions are by their very nature thought (including thought's higher emotional correlations) when considered subjectively, that is as regards the consciousness side of the ever indissoluble union of Life and Form. To elaborate a little this conception, in the hope of making it more easily grasped, the simple fact is that on the mental plane, in the mind-world, any and every motion of its matter, any and every vibration or quiver therein, which looked at objectively would be perceived as colour, sound, etc., is actually thought, and the activity we call thinking, when considered from the side of consciousness, or subjectivity. All these motions, these vibrations, then, seen as colour, heard as sound and so on, are in themselves thoughts, which is a very different thing from their being simply symbols or expressions of thoughts, like words, pictures, music, and so forth, down here, in regard to which we normally have to get at the thought represented by them through a process of inference, analogy or association.

Now let us try to follow out what happens, supposing we ourselves were functioning in fully awakened consciousness on the mental plane. We should see a form radiant with colour, hear a note, a chord, a strain of music proceeding from that form. These vibrations (objectively perceived as form, colour, sound) would reproduce their like in our own mind-bodies. But to the Self, functioning in the mind-body, all the motions, vibrations, etc., of the mind-body appear at once in their own subjec-

tive nature, *as thoughts*. They are immediately and directly perceived as thoughts. Thus that which to the Self looking outwards *through* the mind-body appears as form, colour, etc., when reproduced (through sympathetic vibration) *in* the mind-body presents itself at once in the consciousness of the Self, in its own subjective nature, as a thought. We do not infer from seeing such and such a form and colour, from hearing such and such sounds, that these represent or embody such and such a thought. But the form, colour, etc., reproducing itself in vibrations of the mind-body *is* a thought in the consciousness of the Self functioning in that body.

Hence no "learning" of the meaning of the forms, colours, sounds, is necessary on that plane. In the consciousness of the Self, awakened to full awareness on that plane, they are thoughts at once and immediately, and this meaning and significance are instantly realised. It is only down here, on the physical plane, that form and thought appear separate, and we imagine that we need to learn the meanings of form, colour, sound, etc. On the mental plane, the meaning, the thought, is one and inseparable with the form, colour, sound, and the knowing Self knows both aspects, the outer of form, colour, etc., and the inner of thought and meaning at once, completely and perfectly.

If so far I have succeeded in making this fundamental point understood, it will not be difficult to follow out what happens lower down, on the astral plane. Here, on the astral plane, the forms which are thoughts in the mental world have clothed themselves in an outer garment of denser matter and have accordingly been more or less limited and modified by the inherent peculiarities and limitations belonging to all astral matter. These peculiarities and limitations, it must be remembered, are what distinguishes and differentiates astral matter from mind-stuff, or matter of the mental plane.

Now suppose ourselves to be functioning with full waking consciousness in our astral bodies, in the astral world, but not to be able to function consciously in our mental bodies, and therefore not in the mental world.

As before, we perceive a form, radiating colour and sound, a form built of astral matter and clothing a thought—a thought that in the mental world, could we consciously function in it, would be to us form, colour, sound, also. Again, this vibrating form evokes corresponding, sympathetic vibrations in our astral bodies, and equally does the thought it embodies arouse vibrations in our mental bodies. In so far as these vibrations in our mental bodies are strong, complete and accurate, and in so far as they again can call up corresponding vibrations in our astral bodies, the Self functioning in the astral body is conscious of the thought which is embodied in the astral form we perceive. But so far as any element in this process is imperfect or wanting, in so far shall we fail to be conscious of, to perceive, the thought which is embodied in the astral form.

But since all vibration or motion of astral matter

is feeling, emotion, or desire—let us use the one word feeling to cover all these—on the side of consciousness, the Self functioning in the astral body will perceive, will be conscious of, the vibrations set up by the outer form perceived, *as feeling*, immediately and directly, not by inference or association, but because, for the Self, motion, vibration, in the astral body *is* feeling. Thus supposing the astral body to be fully developed and perfectly responsive to the impinging vibrations coming from the form seen, the Self will be conscious of all the emotional or feeling correlates, accompaniments, or expressions of the thought which is embodied in that form, directly, immediately, and fully. But the Self would not be conscious of the thought embodied in the form except in so far as (1) the Self's mental body adequately responded to the vibrations of the thought within that form, and further (2) its astral body could also respond to, and reproduce, these same vibrations.

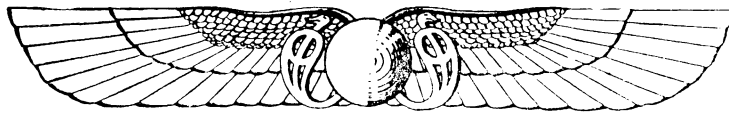
It may help the student in working out these ideas further to be reminded that the clue as to reproduction of (say) vibrations belonging to the mental world, in the astral or physical bodies, is to be found in the "correspondence" between the planes and sub-planes. In other words, the matter of any sub-plane corresponds in its essential keynote, or rate of vibration, to one or other of the great planes. Thus, for instance, it is the "liquid," the second sub-plane of physical matter which in its fundamental note or rate of vibration answers or corresponds to that of the astral plane; and it is, therefore, the matter of this sub-plane which specially can reproduce astral vibrations, and, therefore, present to the consciousness of the Self functioning in the physical body the feelings, etc., which really belong to the astral world, and so enable the Self when so functioning to "feel," which obviously it could not do when limited by the physical body, unless that body could reproduce in a measure the special characteristics of that order of vibration which is the objective aspect or side of what in consciousness is "feeling."

Of course, this "correspondence," or agreement in the rate of vibration, extends to far more than the sub-planes; it reaches even into the ultimate atoms, with their spirals and spirillæ, and here, too, lies the clue to the problem of the "bringing through" into the waking physical consciousness of those experiences on other planes of being, with all their knowledge and illumination, which are of such interest to many.

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

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

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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

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

VOL. XI.

LONDON, JULY 1, 1902.

NO. 12.

Edited by BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

THE CONVENTION.

With this number of THE VĀHAN a programme of the Convention goes to the members.

Particular attention is called to the change in the place of meeting on Saturday morning at 10.45. Owing to the large number expected the Banqueting Hall of the St. James's Restaurant has been engaged, and members will therefore note that they should attend there instead of at Albemarle Street. The entrance is in Regent Street.

The time of the Friday evening lecture by Mrs. Besant has been changed to 8.30. As free platform tickets are issued only to delegates, members who wish reserved seats will do well to apply early to the Theosophical Publishing Society, 3, Langham Place, W., for tickets. Delegates should write to the General Secretary for their tickets.

The meetings at the Small Queen's Hall on Saturday and Sunday evenings, July 5th and 6th, are free to the public. Cards notifying these meetings are printed, and can be obtained by members for distribution by applying to the General Secretary. If members will do what they can to fill the Hall, the success of the meetings will be increased.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

NOTICE.

Unattached members can, if they wish, on joining the Society be put into correspondence with an older member by addressing the Secretary of the Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Members are reminded that subscriptions for the year 1902-3 became due in May.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branch.

May 28th, 1902. Charter issued this day to J. H. Duffell, F. A. Johnson, J. T. Perry, B. Old, W. E. Dawson, J. V. P. Mitchell, E. C. Smith, A. Scott, E. Johnson, S. Bartram, A. Wilkinson, S. De Welles, H. B. Dowson and E. P. Davis, to form a Branch of the Theosophical Society at Nottingham, to be known as the Nottingham Branch.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to June 20th: A. M. S., £1; S. B., 15s.; M. S. J., 5s.; H. L., 5s.; K. K., £2 2s.; M. G., 15s.; M. A., 1s.; J. H., £10 10s.; H. L., 5s.; A. A. McM., 5s.; A. L. E. H., £2; O. H., 5s.; C. B. W., 10s.; G. F. L., 10s.; E. M., £1; B. K., £20; C. H. P., £1; E. P. F., £5; P. McM., £1 12s.; E. F., £5; Ss., 10s.; W. A. A., £1. Total £54 10s.

Section Reference Library.

We have much pleasure in announcing the acquisition by the Library of the following books: *Masonry in Russia* (Russian articles collected), 1865-72; *The New Humanism, Studies in Personal and Social Development*, Edward Howard Griggs, 1900, New York; *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson, British Resident at the Court of Nepal*, Sir William Wilson Hunter, 1896, London; *Man's Place in the Universe, A Summary of Theosophic Study*, by the author of *The Story of Atlantis*, 1902, London and Benares, T.P.S.; Vol. 25 of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (new issue).
A. J. WILLSON,
Librarian.

Mrs. Besant's Lectures.

Mrs. Besant during the last month has been giving three courses of weekly lectures in London,

and they have all been largely attended. The series on "Will, Desire, and Emotion," given at the Society's rooms in Albemarle Street on successive Tuesdays, began on May 20th and was concluded on June 24th. The series on "Consciousness and its Mechanism," open to members of the Society only, given on successive Thursdays at the Elysée rooms, was attended by about 300 members; it began on May 29th and ended on June 19th. These lectures are now being written out by Mrs. Besant, and the first paper will appear in the July *Theosophical Review*. The third series, on "Natural Facts and Religious Dogmas," given at Queen's Hall on successive Sundays, began on May 25th and ended on June 29th. On each occasion very many would-be listeners were turned away, the seating capacity of the hall being exhausted.

On June 16th Mrs. Besant lectured in the Pavilion, Brighton, in the evening, and held an afternoon meeting in a drawing-room in the same building. Both were well attended. The Lodge entertained Mrs. Besant to tea. On June 20th she visited Oxford, holding an afternoon meeting, and delivering an evening lecture. She will have lectured at Derby on the 30th, ere this reaches our readers' hands.

The following are Mrs. Besant's engagements:

July 1st and 2nd, Nottingham; 4th, Queen's Hall, London (8.30 p.m.); 5th and 6th, Convention; August 7th and 8th, Bournemouth; 9th, 10th, and 11th, Plymouth; 12th and 13th, Exeter; 14th and 15th, Cardiff; 16th and 17th, Bristol; 18th and 19th, Bath; 25th to 31st, Holland; September 1st and 2nd, probably Brussels; September 5th, 6th and 7th, Harrogate; 8th, Leeds; 9th and 10th, Bradford; 11th and 12th, Middlesbrough; 13th and 14th, Newcastle; 15th and 16th, Glasgow; 17th, York; 18th and 19th, Hull; 20th and 21st, Sheffield; 25th, Blavatsky Lodge; 27th, Sale; 28th, Manchester; 29th, Didsbury; October 2nd, Blavatsky Lodge; 5th and 12th (morning), South Place Chapel; 5th (evening), Brotherhood Church, Southgate; 7th and 8th, Dublin; 14th and 15th, Edinburgh.

Mrs. Besant will visit France, Switzerland and Italy, leaving Brindisi for India on November 23rd.

Blavatsky Lodge.

On May 22nd, Mr. Mead lectured; his title was "Did Jesus live 100 B.C.?" Mr. Mead brought out very clearly the fact that the date of the birth of the great Christian Teacher cannot be decided upon the grounds of historical criticism; since evidence on any other ground does not, necessarily, carry conviction to the vast majority of people, the question is one that must be left temporarily in abeyance.

On May 29th, Mrs. Besant began her course of lectures to the Federated London Lodges and unattached members of the Society; these meetings have been held at the Elysée Gallery, Queen's

Road. The crowded audience, which followed with intense interest Mrs. Besant's marvellously lucid explanation of a most profound and difficult subject, will be glad to know that these lectures will soon be in print. They will appear first in the pages of the *Theosophical Review* and finally in book form.

For the convenience of members attending the Convention, Mr. Mead's lecture on "Theosophic Christianity" will be given on Monday evening, July 7th, at 8.30, instead of the following Thursday as previously arranged.

S. M. S.

Brighton Lodge.

On Monday, June 16th, Mrs. Besant paid a visit which will long be remembered by the Brighton Lodge.

In the afternoon a well attended meeting for members and their friends was held in one of the drawing-rooms of the Royal Pavilion. Many questions were asked and replied to, and the members and Mrs. Besant were afterwards introduced to one another and took tea together. In the evening we had a crowded audience to hear her public lecture, which was listened to with great attention and was well reported.

A. KING.

Theosophical Lending Library.

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

Terms of subscription: three months, 3s. 6d.; six months, 6s.; twelve months, 10s. Postage extra.

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30 to 6 o'clock.

Catalogues on application to the Librarian, Theosophical Lending Library, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W.

LILIAN LLOYD,
Librarian.

Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Meetings on Mondays, at 8 p.m., in the small room, Foresters' Hall, Bath Street (near Pump Room), when books can be obtained from the Lodge Library. Enquiries should be addressed by letter to Mr. F. Bligh Bond, 16, Brock Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Meetings in the Council Room, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: July 6th, *Karma*; July 13th, *Crises and Catastrophes*, Mme. de Steiger; July 20th, . . . J. H. Duffell; July 27th, . . . H. M. Chaplin. Class for study on Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Pitman Hotel, first floor. For information apply to the Secretary, Mr. H. M. Chaplin, Room No. 5, Cobden Hotel.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Meetings at Gesting-

thorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD, ATHENE LODGE. Meetings in the Theosophical Room, North Parade, on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings on alternate Sundays at 3.30 p.m., and on alternate Mondays at 8 p.m., at members' houses, also on each Wednesday following the Sunday meeting, at 15, Old Steine, at 8 p.m. Information can be obtained from Mr. N. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine, or from Dr. King, 30, Buckingham Place.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at Brooklyn Chambers, St. Augustine's Parade. For further particulars enquiry may be addressed to S. H. Old, at the above address.

BRUSSELS, CENTRALE BELGE. General meetings held in the Lodge Rooms, 170, rue Royale, the first and third Saturdays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, open to all members, the second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Reading room open from 3 to 5 p.m. twice a week. For information apply by letter to the Secretary, 21, rue du Vallon.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Regular meetings are suspended during the summer. Enquiries may be addressed to Mr. J. Lorimer Thomson, Roseburn House, Roseburn.

EXETER LODGE. Open meetings are held in the Lodge Room, 48, High Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings for members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.30 p.m.; and on second and fourth Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings at 28, Glassford Street, on the fourth Monday in each month, at 8 p.m. Meetings for members only at 5, West Regent Street, on one Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.

HAMBURG LODGE. Meetings for members only at 31, Martinallée, Hohenfelde, on Saturdays. Public meetings at the Patriotisches Haus once a month. Enquiries may be addressed to B. Hubo, 31, Martinallée, Hohenfelde.

HARROGATE LODGE. Public meetings at the Swedish Gymnasium, Grand Opera House Buildings, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: July 6th, *Our Relation to the Churches*, W. Bell; July 13th, *Conscience*, Hodgson Smith; July 20th, *Seedtime and Harvest*, C. N. Goode; July 27th, *Self Realisation*, Miss Whitehead. Lodge meetings on Fridays at 7.30 p.m., in the Lodge Room, 67, Station Parade, for the study of *The Growth of the Soul*.

HULL CENTRE. Meetings at 97, Westbourne Avenue, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.

LEEDS LODGE. Meetings at the Town Hall Restaurant, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. G. H. Popplestone, 8, Ashville View, Cardigan Road, Leeds.

LEIPSIK LODGE. Meetings at the "Freia" Vegetarian Restaurant, 8, Nürnbergerstrasse, on the first and third Thursdays of each month, at 8.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Meetings on Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 18, Colquitt

Street, for the study of *Esoteric Christianity*. For information apply to the Secretary, 14, Freehold Street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Meetings are held on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 53, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings on Sundays at 7.30 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to be addressed to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 1, Pentland Street, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Meetings, open only to members of the Society, on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W.; July 3rd, C. W. Leadbeater; July 7th (Monday), *Theosophic Christianity*, G. R. S. Mead.

LONDON, CHISWICK LODGE. Meetings discontinued for the summer.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Meetings at "West View," 12, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Hon. Sec., F. Horne, 27, Keen's Road, Croydon.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. Meetings at 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: July 7th; July 14th, Papers by Members; July 21st, *Planetary Influences*, Mrs. Leo; July 28th, *Conversazione*. Class for study on the first and third Saturdays of each month at 8 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for young people are held on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Attention is called to the change of address. Particulars may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Miss Daisy Whyte, 7, Lanhill Road, Elgin Avenue, W.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings on Mondays at 8.30 p.m., at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.: July 7th, *Study of Thought Power: its Control and Culture*; July 14th, *The Prodigal Son*, A. H. Ward; July 21st,, A. J. Faulding. Saturday meetings are suspended till September.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Meetings suspended during July and August.

MANCHESTER LODGE. Meetings on Tuesdays, at 7 p.m., at 57, King Street, City. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 80, Northenden Road, Sale, Cheshire.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Meetings at 68, Linthorpe Road, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., for study of *The Astral Plane*. Public Lectures on Sundays in the Lecture Room, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road.

PLYMOUTH CENTRE. Meetings on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., and on Sundays at 6.30 p.m., at 19, Cornwall Street. Enquiries to be addressed to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings at Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., at the Saville Temperance Hotel, Newcastle, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and on the last Sunday of the month, at Lily House, off Ocean View, Whitley Bay.

CORRESPONDENCE.

D. G.—I think Question 165 (p. 71, April) deserves a fuller reply than I have yet read. It need not be hedged round by the qualification of telling a lie to save a friend from dishonour, or doing evil that good may come. You have first to satisfy the objector by defining a lie, and the opposites, good and evil. I have also to take the preliminary objection that no one has the right to ask me an unfair question. Some inquisitive people will persist in asking you “the price you paid for your horse and trap.” The proper answer is “I can’t tell you.” If you oblige your talkative friend, he will blazon your purchase all over the place, and you will suffer when the selling time comes.

I should judge that modern teaching as to truthful speaking is much more acute than that of the writers of Holy Scriptures. These have from the earliest times been fathered upon the great men of the day celebrated for holiness, or for reputation as kings, *e.g.*, the five books of Moses, the Psalms of David, the Proverbs and Wisdom of Solomon. That was the fashion of those days, the then current system of advertising new manuscripts. Sanskrit Holy Scriptures are in just as bad case. You can only say that “Vyāsa was the *original* author of the *Mahābhārata*.” It has been edited and re-edited and enlarged out of all recognition, but the false names do not affect the spiritual teachings therein contained.

What are you to do when, unarmed, you meet a bear or tiger in the jungle? A good missionary friend of mine on meeting a bear knelt down and “shouted his loudest to the Lord to help him.” The bear bolted, thought he was the advance guard of a ring of beaters, and that a sahib with his rifle was hiding behind the adjoining rock. There is the well-worn story of the sahib who opened his umbrella to the tiger, who also bolted. I knew a young sahib, fresh to India, who hoped to see a tiger in the jungle. His hope was realised—when he had only a shot-gun. He threw down his gun and ran his hardest to his tent, where he arrived green with fear. His beater reported that the tiger went off in the opposite direction! It did not like the smell of powder.

In another instance two English friends of mine met a tiger in the cemetery of their Hill Station. The *pyun* (Indian letter-carrier) with them commenced to run. One took him by the scruff of the neck, and they stood their ground, sticks in hand, facing the tiger, who arched his back, hissed like a cat and walked off.

All these instances of courage and the contrary were lies, which deceived the wild beasts. Or rather they had the accumulated instinct in their respective families, as is mentioned I think by Kipling, that the white face is always associated with the rifle, and that discretion is best.

One more concrete instance. An anonymous letter calling attention to an abuse appears in the newspaper. A candid friend asks you if you are the author. If you say “no” he probably won’t believe you, because he wants you to say “yes.” If you tell him that an unsigned letter is so written

because the author does not wish his name to be known, he will jump to the conclusion that you are the author. If you say “I cannot tell you, you have no right to ask,” he will be still further convinced that you are the culprit.

We are all so slow to grasp the truth that “all truth is *relative* to our special surroundings.” Absolute truth is known and understood and seen only by the Supreme, who sees our inmost hearts.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 166.

(Continued from p. 80.)

W.—What is meant by “sinking into unconsciousness,” when the man’s consciousness is passing inwards from one sheath to another; either when leaving the physical body, or when passing from the astral world into the devachanic? The Ego must ever be conscious on some plane or other, must it not?

A. A. W.—It is hardly possible to imagine a querist who could find a real difficulty in this question. I don’t see what words can explain the matter better than those W. has himself used. When the Self withdraws itself from any sheath in which it has been acting, it ceases, by the nature of the case, to be conscious *in* the deserted sheath. When, for example, the physical body dies, the Self no longer sees with its eyes, hears with its ears, and the like. We, who are left behind on the physical plane, say that the man has “lost consciousness”; and we mean by this that the real man is no longer at the mercy of the impressions made on the body—you may burn or bury it, and the man is not conscious of what is done. True, he is alive on the astral plane still, and from thence may, if sufficiently “conscious,” or as we more usually say, awake on that plane, behold what is done to the dead body, but he will not and cannot *feel* it,—be *conscious* of it.

I fancy, however, that even this may be possible indirectly. We have been told that those who work on the astral and higher planes are able, not only to call up before them the scenes preserved in the Memory of the Logos, but also to a certain extent to put their consciousness into the actors on the stage before them. There are certain stories of apparitions who have shown the marks of burning and have expressed themselves as feeling the pain, which need not be rejected as impossible if we could imagine that a soul not yet enlightened as to its true condition, and clinging to the body as the sole reality it knows, might thus quite unconsciously put itself so completely into the position of the body it sees being burnt as to feel, to some extent, the pain it would have felt had it been actually, to use the querist’s words, conscious in it. But this is only a guess.

A. B. C.—I should be inclined to think that the phrase was used entirely from the point of view of the lower of any two planes referred to, and means

the losing of consciousness with reference to *that* plane. The Ego withdrawing into an inner sheath leaves the one from which it has withdrawn without the power to respond to the impacts of the particular plane to which it (the sheath) belongs. "Sinking" is of course open to objections, but what expression is not when used to describe phenomena not properly belonging to the plane of spoken language?

E. S. G.—I hope that B. K. will not think me presumptuous if I venture to say that his reply to "W.," valuable as it is, seems to me to lack full point through an apparent confusion of consciousness with self-consciousness. "W.'s" question is put in terms of consciousness; B. K. replies in terms chiefly of self-consciousness. Surely they are two distinct phases of evolution, consciousness belonging to the plane of sensation, self-consciousness to the stage of understanding; self-consciousness would include consciousness, but sensation does not necessarily include understanding of the sensations. Were the waking from ordinary sleep a more gradual process the difference between consciousness and self-consciousness would be more impressed upon our minds, as it seems to be when one is recovering from the influence of an anæsthetic. At such a time there comes a strange, slow awakening of sensation, which in a small way seems to be very typical of life experience. The slow awakening of consciousness to sensations of light and darkness, warmth or cold, pain or ease, movement or cramp, with frequent re-loss of that consciousness; and this seems to go on for some time without there being any idea of connection with a self. Then as consciousness becomes stronger it begins to take in the fact of the presence of people and, becoming conscious of other selves, immediately begins to become conscious of self. In like manner when sinking into unconsciousness one loses first what is gained last, *i.e.*, self-consciousness.

If, as it would appear, consciousness is the result of the pouring out of the life-essence, or activity of the Ego, into its various bodies until each in turn becomes first conscious, then self-conscious, "sinking into unconsciousness" would be the withdrawal of that activity from the outermost body, when that body would lose first self-consciousness, then consciousness; and it is perfectly clear that that body, living only by virtue of its cell-life, could not possibly know if its Ego were conscious on any other plane. It seems equally clear that the Ego while it lives as an Ego must be conscious on some plane—but whether it is self-conscious is quite another matter, depending entirely upon its stage of evolution.

If this definition is correct—and I submit it with all deference to higher knowledge—then it seems to open the way to the understanding of many things; for consciousness grows as the body grows—unconsciously, a natural unfolding of the powers of the senses; but self-consciousness is of the head, and so can be aided or retarded by our own efforts. Consciousness does not surely function through the physical brain, but through the senses, and it grows by

exercise of natural functions; self-consciousness functions through the brain, it grows by contact with other selves—and herein lies a grand idea. Consciousness is of the general life-sensations shared by all, the touch of nature that makes all akin. Self-consciousness is separation in the way of individualisation of powers and activities; it is a matter of knowledge, and knowledge can be cultivated and its results used. Now, it is clear that if consciousness is general likeness, self-consciousness must be differentiation, and there is no possibility of knowledge of differentiation except by seeing other differentiations, or selves; so that by comparison we may become self-conscious, that is, knowing and understanding every part of our own individual composition. To this end it must be necessary that we should be in constant near contact with other selves more evolved, equal and less evolved; and equally necessary that we should keep all natural sense-powers active; else we should not be able to advance in our perception of other selves, and consequently be unable to attain to self-consciousness in all our bodies; because if we cannot perceive the various bodies and their various functions in other selves, we have no means of gaining knowledge or understanding of our own selves, such understanding being gained only by comparison.

Seeing others makes us conscious of self, of the wealth or poverty of our own powers, and sets us actively seeking to gain the like wealth of power seen in another. Self-consciousness, then, is knowledge, or realisation, of one's own self, its complexities, limitations, powers and needs; consciousness may be gained a very long time before self-consciousness comes. Who among us can declare that we are really self-conscious in our physical body which we can see, and to a certain extent examine for ourselves; that we thoroughly understand its functions and means of sustenance and recreation? There is scarcely one to be found capable of assuming full responsibility and care of the physical body. And if we are not yet fully self-conscious in the physical, what can we expect of the possibility of consciousness even in our other bodies of which the many have not even heard! It seems clear that, to most Egos, life other than physical can be very little more than general consciousness, of which no memory could remain but a sense of well, or ill, being.

B. K. writes of "blanks" or "broken links" of consciousness. May not these be brought about by failure, through ignorance or wilfulness, in observing the sequential law of cultivation, distribution, assimilation and dispersion. If we fail to cultivate our natural senses we do not gain power of perception, and consequently fail to see the higher beauties which we can cultivate in ourselves; and fail also to hear the less evolved needs crying for our assistance. If, seeing, we enjoy the higher and refrain from sharing with those around or refuse to give the light of our experience to those below we cut ourselves off from the full flow of the consciousness universal. If this can apply to a physical finger cut off by a ligature from the circulating life-blood it must apply still more force-

fully to every part of every body of each self. To be perfectly self-conscious with no broken links it would seem as if each Ego must know every function, power and need of every one of its own bodies, and as that knowledge can be realised only by comparison each Ego must become keenly perceptive of, and responsive to, the functions, powers and needs of all other selves. No body can live without its special sustenance. Before we can know what food we want we must see the effect of that food upon another. If we would have our own special need supplied we must first see and help to supply the special need of those near and less evolved—thereby we make complete our chain of consciousness. But to be really self-conscious the chain must be complete in each separate body and self by contact through consciousness with every other self. It is a grand possibility to strive for.

QUESTION 172.

(Continued from p. 88.)

A. B. C.—The questioner has failed to grasp the conception that the same vibration can give rise to more than one effect, according to the matter in which it plays and the senses which receive it. An illustration will make the idea clearer. In the case of those scientific toys known as Chladni's Sound-plates, a vibration is set up in a plate of glass, or brass, by drawing a violin bow down the edge, and a musical note is produced to which the ear responds. Scatter a little fine sand over the surface of the plate and the vibration then becomes visible to the eye, and throws the sand into definite geometrical forms. Here I think we have an analogy to what takes place in connection with thought-forms. The vibration of thought in the mental body of the thinker throws the elemental essence of the mental plane into forms, which can be seen only by those who are consciously functioning on that plane; but it also awakens a corresponding vibration in the mental body of the person who may be the object of the thought-transference experiment, and this vibration of the mental body, being a repetition of the one which originated it, is translated into the physical brain of the recipient as a *thought*; just as the vibration in the ear roused by the vibration in the plate is translated to the brain as a sound.

The recipient does not therefore "read out of such forms what the originating person has to say," but is conscious of a thought in his own brain. Only the person with vision of a higher plane can see the *form* produced in the essence of that plane to which the original thought (or vibration) has given rise.

E. A. B.—As we ordinary people cannot even see these "thought-forms" at all, they are, for us, simply non-existent as a medium of communication; and if we could gain the power of seeing them, it would no doubt be a matter of training and long practice before we could read out of them the "definite and explicit thoughts" of another.

The instances given by Mrs. Besant in the article referred to are merely a few typical specimens of quite simple thoughts. But if, as we understand, colour and form are the natural expression of thought on its own plane—*i.e.*, before its translation through our coarser mediums of perception and expression—one can imagine that the infinite variety of colouring of all sorts and shades, and the equally endless variety of possible forms, must provide a medium of communication far more subtle, varied and definite than our clumsy "words" can ever do. But supposing we could see them, at our present stage and without this training and practice, we could not reasonably expect to "read out of such forms" the originating thought, any more than to follow an abstruse metaphysical argument in a foreign language of which we had learnt only a few simple words. Perhaps we hardly realise how little we really gather of another's thoughts from his spoken words, which can at the best but partially express them. This is suggested even by the widely different impressions made by the same words on different hearers.

A. A. W.—The puzzle of the querist seems to be, as far as I can understand it: how can forms and colours convey *words*? To this the answer is simple enough; they don't do anything of the kind—they convey the *thought*. A. J. R. must know well enough that the thought is one thing, and the laborious and clumsy dress of words, which we on the physical plane are obliged to put upon it to convey to the eyes or ears of other men the little of it which is all that is possible by such inadequate means, is quite another. No score has ever expressed the music which was in the composer's mind, no canvas has ever given us what the artist himself saw before him, and no words have ever completely given us the thought of the thinker. Has our friend never heard from mother or lover words—often meaningless words—which broke over his soul in oceans of thought and feeling? Did he *then* think of requiring the exact words of what "the originating person" had to say? And has not even the *colour* spoken to him, in a beloved cheek, things beyond all words?

Well, on the planes of music and colour, these moments, fugitive on the earth, from the whole of life. We do not enough remember what kind of communication souls hold with each other there. All that, on earth, needs words to express it is gone—clean gone; soul speaks to soul of the soul's concerns, and of these alone. On the earlier planes colour and sound take the place of words, expressing immeasurably more than words could do; but this is only a transition stage. Our true selves dwell ever where no sign or symbol is needed; where a soul which would communicate with another pours its whole self into the other, and receives the same full confidence in return. But the matter of such communications is, to us, as inconceivable as the manner. However, if the querist will only use his imagination so far as to perceive that disembodied souls do not enquire after each other's health, or make appointments to dine at such a place and time; it will perhaps

be easier for him to believe that music or colour may convey all that is there needed.

QUESTION 173.

E. A. U.—*I find in The Voice of the Silence, p. 47, ed. 1894, the following words:—"Restrain by the Eternal the Divine," and I should like to receive an explanation of the difference between the Eternal and the Divine.*

A. H. W.—The writer thinks "the Divine" means the more or less perfect "Buddhic Consciousness"; "the Eternal" the more or less perfect "Nirvānic Consciousness." The buddhic consciousness he believes to be the result of the synthesis of the experiences of all the lives of an ego, these experiences having been gained through his own series of personalities, and also through the personalities of others. This consciousness, or point of view, is at the centre, where pure love and pure knowledge fuse in the Divine Wisdom, and it gives the power of sharing the consciousness of all the egos. The nirvānic consciousness he believes to be the point of view attained by the complete synthesis of the consciousness of all the egos; this must be a state of transcendental inwardness, which the word omniscience is totally unable even to adumbrate; something as far beyond wisdom, as wisdom is beyond concrete thought. We learn, however, that it enables the evolved centre of consciousness to share the memory of all that has happened during the present scheme of evolution.

E. L.—The difference between the Eternal and the Divine is hardly one which can be explained in human language by people as limited as many of us are at present, but the statement seems to hint at the fact that there are various degrees in these lofty states of consciousness, and the Eternal is taken here as connoting a wider range of being than the Divine, just as the Divine is infinitely above the human.

E. A. B.—Taking the whole passage: "Restrain by thy Divine, thy Lower Self. Restrain by the Eternal, the Divine," "the Divine" appears here to refer to the Higher Ego, the true individuality in man, and "the Eternal" to the Ātman or Highest Spirit, with which the individuality will finally become united.

G. R. S. M.—The passage runs:

Restrain by thy divine thy lower self.
Restrain by the Eternal the divine.

In the first verse the immortal self of man is set over against the mortal self, and in the second the One Eternal Self is in its turn set over against the divine immortal self of man. That is to say, to overcome death, the necessity of rebirth in mortal bodies, man must put on conscious immortality and become a god. To do this, he must restrain his lower self, or impermanent nature, by his

divine self. But even then he is not one with the Self of all; to become *this* Self he must restrain even his permanent self, the immortal nature which nothing in the whole of *this* creation can destroy, by obedience to the Eternal Self, which is the Lord of all creations, "immortal" as well as "mortal." For that which is "immortal" for this creation, or phase of manifestation, may well be "mortal" for a still higher phase. But man himself in his inmost essence is ultimately the Self; he cannot be destroyed though universes come and go unceasingly. He is not only immortal in every space that can be created, but eternal in every time that can be ordained. Thus have I heard.

A. R. O.—It is only by a far-off analogy that we dimly discern there is a difference between the Eternal and the Divine. If one were to say that it is the difference between Ātmā and Buddhi how much nearer would one be to an "explanation"? Or if one suggested that what is born in time must be in some way inferior to that which was never born at all, what would the words convey?

Dimly, and as I say, by remote analogy, one gathers the general idea that Divinity is only one mode of the Eternal, whose modes are infinite: that, so far as our sense of the words goes, the transient and the partial are ever to be subordinated to the permanent and the whole; even to the extent, if our notion of the whole and the eternal be not a mere misunderstanding, of restraining the Divine by them.

QUESTION 174.

M. A. S.—*In the interesting answer to Question 172 in the June VĀHAN, it is said that "the Self would not be conscious of the thought embodied in the form except in so far as the Self's mental body adequately responded to the vibrations of the thought within that form, and further its astral body could also respond to and reproduce these same vibrations." How is this assertion to be reconciled with that of the Christian Scientists, who say that by holding a sick person in your thought as being perfectly well, you absolutely create health in the body of your sick friend, even at a distance. Does the thought rise in the sick friend's mind as if created by himself, or is he aware of its coming in upon him from some outside source? If his physical body pictures forth pain and disease, how could his mental body adequately respond to the vibrations of the thought-form of his healer? Would it not on the contrary oppose those vibrations.*

B. K.—Assuming for the nonce the truth of the claims put forward by the Christian Scientists—a matter about which very divergent opinions may be held—the answer to these questions would I think be somewhat as follows. You "hold the person in your mind as being perfectly well"—in other words you create in your own mind body an image of the person in health and vitalise that image very intensely by your concentrated atten-

tion and thought. That image, *eo ipso*, radiates outwards a stream of vibrations which impinge upon the mind body of the person thought of—since your thought is directed to him or her—and these vibrations tend by their very nature to set up similar vibrations in the mind body on which they are focussed, thereby “creating” in the mind body of the recipient an image of his own physical body in a *healthy* condition—which further may also be additionally vitalised and strengthened by the thought of the person himself. Such an image in the mind body, coupled with the thought of the physical, will of course tend to “induce” or “create” a corresponding image in his astral body and thence to react on the physical—which will thereby be harmonised or healed, *providing* the “obstacles,” or the resistances encountered by the vibrations in passing from the mental to the physical plane are not *too great* to be overcome by the energy available.

The recipient may be aware of the action taking place, or not. In the latter case, if he should notice the thought forming in his own mind, he would take it to be his own spontaneous activity; in the former, he would recognise the action of another mind on his own. Whether he could thus recognise it or not, would depend very largely on the extent to which he was in the habit of observing and controlling his own mind, and upon the degree to which he had learnt to discriminate between thoughts coming to him from outside and thoughts arising within himself.

There would, of course, be a certain amount—which may be great or small—of “resistance” in his own mind, due to its want of accord with the vibrations impinging upon it, and it would depend on the strength and intensity, as well as upon the steadiness and persistence of the impinging vibrations, whether or not they were strong enough to overbear this resistance and shape the matter of his mind body into accord with themselves. In the one case the “healing” might succeed, in the other it would fail.

So far we have been considering purely mental action; but, as a matter of fact, in most cases of successful “healing,” a number of other factors come in, which, in the majority of instances, play an even more important part in the final result than the purely *mental* action under discussion. It would lead us too far to consider these in any detail; but perhaps it may be useful just to mention some of the more important factors just alluded to: first, karma: both the karma of the sick person and the karmic relation to him of the healer; second, the type in nature to which each belongs; third, the extent to which forces other than mental are unconsciously set in motion by the healer. Under this last head fall factors of great importance, both on the astral and on the *physical* planes, among which the life-energy or *prāna* of the healer occupies a specially important place.

In conclusion it might be well for students of the many and varied modes of “healing,” now so much in vogue, if they would remember that both nature and man are highly complex in constitution

and that throughout, in every detail, one is working in a realm of law where knowledge is power and ignorance is dangerous, where motive plays indeed its own proper part *in its own sphere*, but *never* averts or cancels the inevitable suffering which results from ignorance, nor prevents the forces set in motion from producing each its own appropriate result, whether for good or evil, according to the inexorable and unfailing laws which are the expression of the changeless, undeviating, never faltering Will of the Logos, the Great Father of all, in Whom we live and move and have our being.

QUESTION 175.

M. L. M.—*May I ask for an explanation of the terms positive and negative as applied to the attitude of the human being? I have been told to be “negative towards good, and positive towards evil.” and should like to know what that implies. Does not a negative attitude lay you open to evil as well as good?*

B. K.—“Positive” and “negative” in this connection are synonymous with “active” and “receptive”; or to express it in another form, to be “positive” means to be pouring forth energy, to be creative, to be active, while to be “negative” means to take in, or absorb energy from without, to be the passive material shaped by creative energy, to be the acted upon instead of acting. Hence the “negative attitude” is one in which one lays oneself open to receive, to be acted upon, and if this attitude is general, that is if it extends to all forces alike, then one is just as likely to be acted upon by an “evil,” as by a “good” force.

In other words, if the mind is “negative,” “passive,” “receptive,” *all round* as it were, that is not definitely “set” or “determined” in some definite *direction*, then it is open to receive, to be acted upon by *any* force, good or evil alike. But if the mind is definitely “set” or determined to throw back the evil and receive the good, or even if only *definitely* set in the direction of good, then only the good can find entrance and the evil is automatically repelled in proportion to the strength and purity of the determination of the mind towards the good. And as the mind is, so does the rest of the nature ever tend to shape itself, as the *Gītā* says: “Upon whatever a man meditates”—that is upon whatever he sets his mind and thinks thereon—“that he becomes.”

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