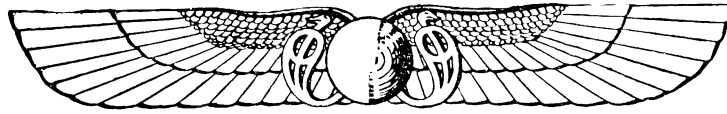


# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *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. XV.

LONDON, AUGUST 1, 1905.

NO. 1.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

In these troublous times, when everywhere there seems to be restlessness, sentiments of hostility, and even open warfare among nations, the Congress of the European Section of the Theosophical Society is to be deeply congratulated. It has given definite proof that the objects for which the Society was founded have become living realities. For here, in London, representatives from nearly every country on the globe met in that spirit of good-fellowship and *camaraderie* which bespeaks the firm establishment of that "nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour." And the papers read gave evidence that the "study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science" has been most fruitful and the "unexplained laws of nature" and the "powers latent in man" have been well investigated.

On Thursday afternoon, July 6th, the Exhibition of Arts and Crafts was formally opened by Mrs. Besant. Specimens of exquisite workmanship in gold, silver, and other metals, in wood-carving, weaving, book-binding, painting, sculpture—nearly all the work of members of the Theosophical Society—formed a most satisfactory collection and showed how the principles of Theosophy are permeating and directing the various activities and necessities of daily life.

As Mrs. Besant said, nothing is outside the realm of Theosophy that tends to serve, uplift and ennoble humanity. And so, as Theosophy spreads, and we more and more understand and bring into harmonic interaction the three worlds in which our evolution is taking place, all ideas will find more beautiful expression, and the world of form will indeed manifest the divinity of man.

In the evening Mrs. Besant lectured to members on "Qualifications for Discipleship," and gave a much needed warning, a timely protest

against the flippant manner in which younger members were wont to criticise those far ahead of them in development, and whose greatness was unappreciated only because of the ignorance of their critics.

The Convention of the British Section was held in the afternoon of July 7th. The first public lecture was in the evening of the same day, the subject being "The Work of Theosophy in the World." Every seat in the Large Queen's Hall was occupied, and as Mrs. Besant's beautifully modulated voice thrilled through the great auditorium, the eager listeners sat as entranced, except when, stirred by some outburst of eloquence, silence gave way to thundering applause.

The Congress was opened on Saturday morning, July 8th. A carefully trained choir sang "Hail to the Day Star," written especially for this occasion, and "God is a Spirit." Then came the address of welcome, by Mr. Bertram Keightley, followed by the presidential address by Mrs. Besant, and the secretary's report by Mr. van Manen.

Kindred Societies had been invited to participate in the Congress, and the papers read on Spiritualism, Christian Mysticism, Rosicrucianism, etc., were offered and received in that spirit of keen appreciation and liberalism which should and does characterise the true student everywhere.

Another innovation in Theosophical gatherings was the dramatic performance, given at the Royal Court Theatre. Two plays were produced: "The Shrine of the Golden Hawk," and "The Shadowy Waters." In a short space it is impossible to give full details of such a delightful mental feast as was prepared for us. Fortunately the proceedings will be printed, and there we can have a leisurely survey of the immense work done, and enjoy over and over again the efforts of our members, who, coming from all the European countries, from Asia and America, and speaking in a dozen or more different languages, discussed questions of religion, philosophy, science, art, brotherhood and occultism.

E. A. HOUSTON.

### CLOSING OF THE SECTIONAL ROOMS.

As usual the rooms of the Section, 28, Albemarle Street, will be closed for cleaning during the month of August. Business will be carried on by correspondence.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

### THE CONVENTION.

With this issue of THE VĀHAN the Report of the Convention of the British Section (1905) goes to the members.

The following have been elected to serve for the year 1905-6:

*Executive Committee*: Mr. Sinnett, Mr. Mead, Mrs. Hooper, Mr. Keightley, Major Lauder, Mrs. Stead, Dr. Nunn, Mr. Thomas, Miss Spink as General Secretary, and Miss Ward as Treasurer. Also, as honorary members, Señor Xifré for Spain, Dr. Mersch for Belgium, and Professor Zipernowsky for Hungary.

*Honorary Auditor*: Mr. G. A. Whalley-Chapman.

Rule 11 was amended by replacing "two auditors" by "one auditor."

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

### NEW BRANCH.

June 26th, 1905. Charter issued to Emil Zschiedrich, C. A. Brotherton, B. W. Dobson, Miss E. Reynolds, Miss A. Reynolds, W. Dickinson and Mrs. Zschiedrich to form a Branch at Wakefield, Yorks., to be known as the Wakefield Branch.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to July 20th: M., 10s.; A. C. P., £12; W. C. W., 5s.; A. B., £10; A. W., 10s. Total, £23 5s.

#### Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *Life of St. John of the Cross*, David Lewis; *Prabhodacandodaya of Krishna Miṣra*, J. W. Boissevain; *Le Temps et L'Espace*, Guébirol.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *A Cry from Afar*, Mabel Collins; *First Steps in Theosophy*, E. M. Mallet; *Extracts from the Writings of Clement of Alexandria*; *The New Knowledge*, R. K. Duncan; *The Myths of Plato*, J. A.

Stewart; *New Conceptions in Science*, Carl Snyder; *Mathematical Recreations and Essays*, W. W. Rouse Ball; *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon*, edited by J. M. Robertson; *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, W. Lutoslawski.

R. A. HOBSON,  
*Assistant Librarian.*

### The Society in Hungary.

A considerable number of members in Hungary having been recently introduced into the Society by Professor Zipernowsky, one of the oldest of its members, permission has been given by the President-Founder for members in Hungary and any Branches which may be formed there to be attached to the British Section until an independent Hungarian Section be formed.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

### Northern Federation.

The forty-fifth Conference will be held at Harrogate, on Saturday, August 12th, presided over by Mrs. Besant. Place of meeting, Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street. General Conference at 3.30 p.m. Address by Mrs. Besant on "The Work of Non-Human Intelligences," at 7 p.m.

On the Sunday (August 13th), Mrs. Besant will deliver two public lectures in the Opera House, at 3 p.m., on "Exertion and Destiny: Which is the stronger?" and at 7 p.m., on "The Meaning and Method of the Spiritual Life."

On Friday, August 11th, at 8 p.m., a lecture will be delivered at the Harrogate Lodge (in the Theosophical Hall), by Mrs. Besant, on "Some Aspects of Karma."

Mr. W. Bell will arrange a picnic on Monday, August 14th, which it is hoped will be attended by members who remain in Harrogate over that day.

EDWD. E. MARSDEN,  
*Hon. Secretary.*

### Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Mondays at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street. Informal meetings. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Aug. 6th, *In the Mount of the Lord*, B. Old; Aug. 20th, *Personality*, T. Hands; Aug. 27th, *The Ethics of Vegetarianism*, F. S. Saville.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings suspended during August. Information from Mrs. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Meetings suspended for the summer.

BRISTOL LODGE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, first and third Saturdays, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Information by letter from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

CLIFTON LODGE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

COVENTRY CENTRE. 149, Foleshill Road, Coventry, on Fridays, at 7 p.m. Drawing-room meetings held periodically. Information from Mrs. Nevill. at the above address.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings suspended during the summer.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Regular meetings suspended during the summer. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Meetings suspended during the summer. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 23, East Parade: Lectures by members.

HULL LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 11, Story Street. Information from H. E. Nichol, 67, Park Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Study of *The Ancient Wisdom* on alternate Mondays. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 8 p.m. for study. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings suspended until October. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanaach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Informal meetings during August, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. No meetings during August.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft

Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stamford House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. At 7.30 p.m., class for the study of *General Elementary Science*.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays. Meetings suspended during August.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Meetings suspended during August.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Meetings suspended during August.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. There will be no meetings till the middle of September. Information from the Hon. Secretary, Spath Lodge Spath Road, Didsbury.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., study of *The Key to Theosophy*; Sundays, at 7 p.m., public meetings at 126, Creame Street (corner of Princess Road), Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Sec., 137, Beresford St., Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. First and third Tuesdays, for enquirers, and second, fourth and fifth Tuesdays, study class for members. Service on Sundays, 6.30 p.m. Doors closed, 6.45 p.m. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 179, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 7.45 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Public Lectures on Sundays, at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row, for study of *Esoteric Christianity*. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Meetings suspended during August.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings. Public meetings suspended till October. Lodge Rooms open on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

YORK LODGE. 34A, Coney Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., class for the study of Plato. Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, York.

mena of that particular locus on the earth should be of so great importance?

HERBERT CHATLEY.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### MANVANTARAS AND YUGAS.

In various theosophical treatises (in particular Vol. III. of *The Secret Doctrine*) it is stated that the manvantaric period of 4,320,000 years is to be discovered in the secular change in the obliquity of the ecliptic. The annotator of the volume referred to mentions that owing to the precession of the equinoxes the sun moves forward at the rate of 54" of arc per annum, and hence round the whole zodiac in 24,000 years, in which period the obliquity will have varied to the extent of 4° of latitude, so that the poles become inverted in 1,080,000 years (the Maha-Yuga) and a complete double cycle in which the pole will return for a second time to the same celestial direction will occur in 4,320,000 years.

Now there are two points in which this is at variance with astronomical observations.

(1) *The periods are not correct.* The actual observed rate of the equinoctial precession is about 50.25" in a year, the whole circuit being thus made in 25,860 years, not 24,000. In this period the change in the obliquity (at the observed rate of 0.48" per annum) amounts to 3.45°, and the whole double-revolution would thus be made in about 5,396,000 years instead of 4,320,000, a by no means unimportant difference.

(2) *The change in the obliquity of the ecliptic is not continuous.* Lagrange has demonstrated from the Laws of Gravitation that "If the mass of every planet be multiplied by the square root of the major axis of its orbit, and the product by the square of the tangents of its inclination to a fixed plane, the sum of all these products will be constantly the same under the influence of their mutual attraction." It follows from this law that the diminution of the obliquity will not go beyond certain very moderate limits, after which it will again increase. This limit is computed to be 1°21' on either side of a mean position.

Hence this support for the manvantaric period would appear to be of little value, and I should be glad to know if any of our astronomer friends can supply any further information on the matter.

There is yet another point that arises in connection with this subject. It is stated that the subdivisions of the manvantara are based on the obliquity-change through the arcs of the meridian which are intercepted (or rather *were* intercepted at the commencement of the Kali Yuga) by the circle of perpetual apparition, the zenith, the equator, and the circle of perpetual occultation in the thirty-sixth degree of north latitude (that of Cassimes). If this is so (and of course granting the rate of change of the obliquity is correct, which it does not appear to be), how is it that the pheno-

### REGISTRATION OF THE SOCIETY.

In THE VĀHAN of July the first item of news is an announcement that the Theosophical Society has been incorporated, and can therefore now hold property in its own name and act as a legal entity. I have not yet seen the current *Theosophical Review*, but I have seen the number of the Indian paper, *The Theosophist*, which contains the details of the scheme. Under that scheme the Theosophical Society is certainly not incorporated. It is merely registered in India under an Indian Act which applies only to India and has no force in England. I some time ago stated my views in writing on this subject, at the request of a member of the Blavatsky Lodge, and I am sorry to see such a misleading statement placed in so prominent a position in THE VĀHAN. I was under the impression that the Editor of THE VĀHAN was aware of the invalidity of the alleged incorporation as regards the Theosophical Society as a whole, but as he believes the incorporation to be a fact, I cannot do otherwise than point out his mistake.

J. E. H.

## ENQUIRER.

### QUESTION 266.

G. H.—*How can the Theosophical doctrine of "pure diet" be harmonised with the text: "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man?"—Matt. xv. 11.*

E. J. C.—Is there a Theosophical doctrine of "pure diet"? I was under the impression that about nothing which touches Theosophy do the opinions and practice of theosophists differ more widely than on this subject, The word "theosophical" being deleted, however, the question admits of answer.

Neither any doctrine of pure diet nor the text quoted can be allowed to be absolute in its range and effect. Meat, wine, tobacco, and stimulants of all kinds at a certain stage in our evolution are undesirable, and if we can do without them, and more especially if we feel that we ought to do without them, then the doctrine of pure diet is for us. Nevertheless, the growth of the soul does not depend on what we eat and drink, and it is entirely unnecessary to enforce a meaningless physical discipline on those who are not prepared to make any mental or spiritual use of it. As Dr. Wells once said, the most elaborate clearing of the course is useless if we have no intention of running the race.

So also the saying of Jesus above quoted must not be applied absolutely. It most probably had immediate reference to the tiresome and hair-splitting formalities prescribed by the Pharisees, and likewise the Essenes, as to clean and unclean foods, etc., elaborate rules out of which all

spiritual meaning had departed, at least so far as the common people were concerned. To such people Jesus, in this pithy saying, affords relief, by sweeping away a mass of unmeaning observance, while, at the same time, he brings them back to the root of the matter, that it is the heart that requires to be kept pure.

There is thus no difficulty in harmonising the teachings if it be admitted that all moral precepts are relative. The doctrine of pure diet, if enforced as the means of obtaining spiritual purity, is apt to become mere hatha yoga, an attempt to attain the spiritual from the physical, and requires the corrective note of Jesus' teaching. On the other hand, if the endeavour after spirituality is pursued from within, the doctrine of a pure diet will inevitably be recognised as an aid not to be despised in the upward climbing of the path.

B. K.—Personally I cannot admit that there exists anything that can truly and rightly be called a "Theosophical" doctrine of pure diet—or indeed a diet at all. Various people have advocated, with more or less of force and ingenuity, the adoption of certain types of diet by those who seek to obtain psychic development, and attach great importance to what they have somewhat arrogantly—it seems to me—chosen to call "pure" diet. But as Mr. Wybergh has recently pointed out in his excellent article in the *Theosophical Review*, not one of them has ever given any proof, or advanced any specific evidence, to show that the form of diet they advocate really deserves such a lofty epithet as "pure." Nay, more, they have so far not even offered any rational explanation of the meaning of "purity" in this connection.

Others again, no less entitled to our respect and confidence, attach little or no importance to questions of diet and smile gently when such a word as "pure" is used in connection with it. And I must say that it is a word of such deep and lofty significance that it does appear to me ill applied in that connection; and I think that to apply it thus tends to lower and debase our whole conception of purity, to make of it an external and legalistic thing, instead of a noble inspiration and a profound truth.

To me at any rate no harmonisation of any true and noble ideal of purity with such outward and passing things seems to appeal with any force; the text quoted in the question seems to me to have settled the point once and for all, so far as "authority" can settle any question.

I quite see—though so far the evidence seems far from satisfactory as to the fact—that diet and other measures of the like external kind may have their place, possibly an important one, in a process directed towards the refining and subtilisation of our various *bodies*. But I do not see what that has to do with "purity," in any real, true sense of the word. For an astral body may indeed be "refined," may be composed of the rarest and most subtle forms and combinations of the matter of each of the sub-planes: but why that condition of matter should be called more "pure" than its denser forms, I cannot imagine.

In our ordinary language the word "pure" is used of any substance when it is unmixed with others, but that is not the case here, for however "refined" it may be, our astral bodies are always, and will always be, a mixture of many and various "substances" and so can never be properly spoken of as "pure" at all.

Therefore the sooner we discard the word "pure" in this connection the better—or so it seems to me—for then we may hope to rid ourselves of false metaphor and also free ourselves from the legalistic and formalistic connotations and associations which hang about the subject and thus perhaps arrive at a real understanding and insight into this problem of nutrition.

G. R. S. M.—One of our contemporaries—I think it was *Theosophy in Australia*—had recently a humorous definition of Theosophists supplied by the son of Theosophical parents who could not quite make out what his progenitors were driving at. Being asked by a friend what Theosophists were anyhow, he replied: "Oh, people who are always talking about ghosts and brown bread!" That was the impression his people made on him, and that is the impression that some folk in the Society make on outsiders.

The Theosophical Society aspires to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour; some people apparently gloss this grand freedom with the mental reserve, "but with distinction of diet," so that an impression is spread abroad in some directions that to be a Theosophist you must first be a vegetarian. Hence presumably the question—which has been formulated often before.

Those who insist most strongly on what is called "pure diet," however, are supported by the authority of many a great saint and sage, and there can be little doubt but that in its place it is an admirable thing for those who can keep in health and strength of body and soul and mind upon it. It is, however, not essential to the spiritual life, and everyone must decide for himself as to what is best for him for the moment.

The danger of bringing this question into the forefront of our interests is that among the unreflecting the mode of diet of a man is made into a measuring-rod or canon of judgment of that man's spiritual development; this grievous misunderstanding of values is corrected by the words of the Christ. Now it is possible to interpret all such sayings in a mystical fashion, and so the extremist can confirm himself in his absolutism of opinion with regard to diet; but this saying stands not alone in the traditional record, and the Christ is represented normally as eating and drinking as the people ate and drank. All of which is summed up in the wise words:

"But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented.

"For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.

"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children."

Let us then be Children of Wisdom in this, and let our Theosophy be justified, whether we eat or forbear. The thing that counts is the purpose, the intention, the motive, with which we do or refrain from doing these things; and that no man can fully know, but only ourselves.

It is, fortunately, at last becoming somewhat more plain in the Society that we cannot lay down hard and fast rules for everyone; that different plants grow in different soils; and that the way of one man is by no means necessarily the way of another; the pity of it is that it should ever have been otherwise, for as H. P. B. long ago remarked: "Elephants and cows are vegetarians, but they are not adepts."

On the other hand, all those who deliberately go in for psychic development should be exceedingly careful of their diet; for the perfection of the organs of perception of such extra-physical phenomenalism depends to a very large extent on what is eaten and drunk. This, however, is not to be confounded with spiritual, intellectual or moral development.

The best course is to try all things and hold fast to that which is good for us for the moment; we can always change at any moment if we find the course we are pursuing no longer helpful.

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QUESTION 267.

*P. T. M.—Is it possible for the Ego to have developed faculties of which during this life we are unconscious?*

M. L. B.—The Ego is the sum total of all faculties, and a faculty is a power to act or control, so that the term faculty implies conscious mastery. In the Self are potentialities of all possible faculties, but the aim of evolution is to bring these within the region of self-consciousness. It may be doubted whether there can be any actual development of faculties, for hypnotic subjects are able to exercise powers normally beyond their reach; evolution is rather a process of enclosing within the circle of self-consciousness the innumerable powers of the subliminal self. But these powers are of no value to us personally, until we have become conscious of them, and, once mastered, they can never elude us unless we deliberately relinquish them. Hypnotic phenomena proves that there are powers, such as control over some physical organs, which we have allowed to fall into disuse, just as we no longer have the savage's quick eye.

E. A. B.—I should think that this is most probably the case. The real Self will of course always retain the faculties developed in each successive earth-life, this being the very object of those lives; but it is only a very small part of the

Self that can find expression in any one life, our ordinary consciousness being limited to the physical brain of that life. Suggestive indications of such limitations appear in experiments made during trance, etc., when the brain-consciousness is dormant, and there are signs of a somewhat wider consciousness which is entirely absent in ordinary life. So might certain faculties, previously developed and active in some past life, be in abeyance during the present life, this particular brain not being fitted for their expression, and having work to do for the time on other lines.

R. B.—The difficulty that has been raised in regard to kârmic equilibration is not exactly insuperable, for one can imagine that a meeting again upon earth of the two individuals might be possible after (say) three earth lives of the one and five of the other, or else through an early death of one of the two, as Mr. Leadbeater has already explained. Nevertheless the conception of karma hitherto current leads to such difficulties, when one reflects upon them even to a limited extent, that one finds oneself compelled to think of kârmic debts as analogous to money—or paper—debts which can be passed on or transferred to others, or even distributed over a number of people. This way of looking at the problem, though by no means new, is still not sufficiently familiar, and has not hitherto received the general recognition which it deserves. How, for instance, could the kârmic debt be equilibrated which is incurred by an unconscientious, malicious editor who had sinned against the many thousand readers of his paper by exaggerations and partisanship and in life after life had added new debts to the old ones? Even if one assumed that the sinner could pay the debt in his very next life or lives in anything like the same measure, say through literature, yet even so, and even if all his creditors were likewise incarnated at the same time, his readers would in general be others, fresh ones, and so his new "good doing" would benefit to a large extent these others who were not his creditors. In any case it becomes apparent that the conditions for equilibration tend to become in such cases infinitely complex, under the old view of Karma, and therefore the equilibration itself impossible.

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QUESTION 268.

*N. F. B.—We are taught that for the reincarnating Ego, once the human stage has been reached, there is no more possibility of descent into the lower kingdoms. But in some of the Ancient Teachings—Hindu, Persian Greek—we find statements to the effect that it is possible for the soul to descend into these lower kingdoms. How are we to reconcile this difference of statement? Is it possible that some lower principle in man, after severing its connection with the Trinity, may pass into the lower kingdoms?*

E. R.—On this subject of the possibility of the human soul returning to the lower kingdoms, and there retaining the consciousness of a human entity

whilst imprisoned in mineral or vegetable body, there are some strange teachings given to-day in India and Ceylon by teachers whose pupils (judging from the one from whom I learned what I have put very briefly in this answer) hold them in high esteem.

These teachings—apparently believed in by them as applying to our own day—appear to be traditions handed down from the old days of Atlantis, and perhaps still farther back, to those early days in the history of our humanity when many experiences may have been possible for the human soul, such as it no longer needs; therefore the door to such experiences is finally closed.

These teachers say that human souls can be imprisoned in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms as kârmic retribution for misuse of their powers when in human form, and they quote the saying of Jesus that “of the stones God could raise children to Abraham” as evidence of this, as well as of His great wisdom and power over the lower kingdoms—for by this wisdom and power He could hear the souls, imprisoned in some of the stones used in the buildings of Jerusalem, praying to be released, and could have released them had He seen fit. And also to that other saying of His, “I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out,” they give a similar interpretation, of human souls imprisoned, yet aware of the presence of One so exalted.

In the vegetable kingdom also they say it is possible for human souls to be held as prisoners—therefore all who gather fruit from off a tree should give a thought of gratitude to the life in that tree, for they never know where a captive soul may be working out a hard sentence it had passed upon itself, in its past lives of mis-spent powers, and the thought of gratitude for benefits received will help on the evolution of the tree, and lead to a quicker escape for its captive.

If, as is usually the case, there is a grain of truth behind the exaggerations of such traditions as these, there need be no contradiction in the two statements, for one would refer to the present condition of things, and the other to that which was true in ages past.

A. R. O.—What distinction does N. F. B. draw between the “Ego” and the “soul”? Surely if any distinction exist, the statement about the one does not and cannot conflict with the statement about the other. On the one hand the doctrine of Reincarnation is asserted as true of the *Ego*: and, on the other hand, the doctrine of metempsychosis is asserted as true of the *soul*. We have the same type of complementary laws in reincarnation and heredity. But what then is the soul, in this sense? Shall we conceive it as the *Ego* in manifestation,—as the manifestation simply? This is an approximation to the Buddhist skandhas, and once at that point the following passage from *A Modern Panarion*, Vol. I., p. 135, becomes suggestive.

“Even the physicists teach us that the particles composing physical man are, by evolution, re-worked by nature into every variety of inferior

physical form. Why, then, are the Buddhists unphilosophical, or even unscientific, in affirming that the semi-material Skandhas of the astral man (his very ego [soul], up to the point of final purification) are appropriated to the evolution of minor astral forms (which, of course, enter into the purely physical bodies of animals) as fast as he throws them off in his progress towards Nirvâna? Therefore, we may correctly say that so long as the disembodied man is throwing off a single particle of these Skandhas, a portion of him is being reincarnated in the bodies of plants and animals. And if he, the disembodied astral man, be so material that Demeter cannot find even one spark of the Pneuma to carry up to the ‘divine power’ [the real Ego], then the individual, so to speak, is dissolved, piece by piece, into the crucible of evolution, or, as the Hindûs allegorically illustrate it, he passes thousands of years in the bodies of impure animals.”

E. L.—Mrs. Besant says in her *Ancient Wisdom* that the man who is full of evil passions looks the whole of them in Kâmaloka, and this seems reasonable when we reflect that a person cannot even on this less plastic level continue an evil course for an indefinite time without showing traces of it physically. In the astral the matter is far more easily impressed. This truth seems to be at the back of the assertions made that the soul can, as it were, reincarnate backwards. That is not possible, as baldly stated. But still we are told elsewhere that a person can so entangle himself by exaggerated affection for an animal that he may be attached to an animal body of that sort at some future period. Similarly the practice of vivisection might produce like results, as a penance for certain cruelties practised. It would be advisable if our authorities gave us some further and more definite information on these interesting and intricate points.

E. J. C.—The first half of this question is a hardy annual, and N. F. B. may please turn up *Extracts from the Vâhan*, pp. 8 and 339-351, where he will find the subject fully dealt with; and if he still pines for further answers he may refer to THE VĀHAN, Vol. II., Q. 120. With regard to his own suggested reconciliation, it will be sufficient to quote a few sentences from an article by H. P. B. in *Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 536.

“The esoteric meaning of the Laws of Manu (Sec. XII. 55) that a Brahman-killer enters the body of a dog, bear, ass, camel, goat, sheep, bird, etc., bears no reference to the human ego, but only to the atoms of his body, his lower triad, and his fluidic emanations. It is all very well for the Brahmans to distort in their own interest the real meaning contained in these laws, but the words as quoted never meant what they were made to yield later on. The Brahmans applied them selfishly to themselves, whereas by Brahman man’s seventh principle, his immortal monad, and the essence of the personal Ego, were allegorically meant. He who kills or extinguishes in himself the light of Parabrahm, *i.e.*, severs his personal ego from the

atman, and thus kills the future devachanee, becomes a 'Brahman-killer.' Instead of facilitating through a virtuous life and spiritual aspirations the union of the buddhi and the manas, he condemns by his own evil acts every atom of his lower principles to become attracted and drawn in virtue of the magnetic affinity thus created by his passions into the bodies of lower animals. This is the real meaning of the doctrine of Metempsychosis."

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QUESTION 269.

M. L. M.—*Can any explanation be given of the following statement of Subba Row?*

"Ancient philosophers held that as a substratum for this visible universe there is another universe—perhaps we may call it the universe of Astral Light, the real Universe of Noumena, the Soul as it were of this Visible Universe. It is hinted that this hidden universe is to be represented by an Icosahedron. . . . The connection between an Icosahedron and a Dodecahedron is something very peculiar and interesting . . . and may be understood by the undermentioned geometrical construction.

"Describe a sphere about an Icosahedron, let perpendiculars be drawn from the centre of the sphere on its faces and produced to meet the surface of the sphere—now if the points of intersection be joined a Dodecahedron is formed within the sphere. By a similar process an Icosahedron may be constructed from a Dodecahedron. The figure constructed as above will represent the Universe of Matter and the Universe of Astral Light as they actually exist. . . . The figure of the Universe is bounded by Pentagons—if taken as regular Pentagons (on the supposition that the Universe is symmetrically constructed), the figure of the Material Universe will be a Dodecahedron."—From Esoteric Writings of Subba Row.

W. J. L.—The following remarks are a development of M. L. M.'s question rather than an answer to it, but they may be of interest; they are ideas which have occurred to me at various times about this subject.

(1) As mentioned by S. C. in the June VĀHAN, Plato, in the *Timæus*, puts forward a similar view to Subba Row's.

(2) The statement that "the figure of the universe is bounded by pentagons" can hardly be meant literally.

(3) The fact (if any) on which Subba Row's statement is founded may perhaps have something to do with the subject Mr. C. H. Hinton speaks of in Chapter IX. of his book, *The Fourth Dimension*, about self-conjugate groups, and Kant's theory of experience. Mr. Hinton, however, does not deal at all exhaustively with the subject. The group of sixty turnings of the icosahedron, which bring it into congruence with its original position, is, as pointed out by Klein (*Vorlesungen über das Ikosaeder*), an interesting one. If an icosahedron and its reciprocal dodecahedron be inscribed in the same sphere, the surface of the sphere is divided into 120 symmetrical triangles by the fifteen great

circles, each of which great circles contains a pair of diagonals of the icosahedron and a pair of diagonals of the dodecahedron. Of these fifteen great circles only five sets of three great circles are such that the three circles lie in three mutually perpendicular planes. There are five quadratic groups.

The fact that there are 120 spherical triangles (formed by the fifteen great circles) is in some way associated with the fact that the number of permutations of five things is 120. Moreover, if we consider turnings in four dimensional space as well as three dimensional, the turnings would be 120, not sixty.

I feel some diffidence in expressing a view on this subject, but it seems to me there may be a fact underlying Subba Row's statement, and this fact may have been perceived on the higher planes of consciousness of oriental mystics, who tried to express it symbolically by saying that "the hidden universe is represented by an icosahedron," etc., yet all this would be quite compatible with the supposition that to fully express this fact on the physical plane might require a deeper knowledge of mathematics and more perfect mathematical systems than are to be found in the world, even in our twentieth century. In other words the oriental philosophers may have left their meaning obscure, not so much because they wished it to be a secret, as because they were themselves unable to express it more fully on the physical plane. The modern development of physical intellect is introducing a new state of things. I do not suppose that anyone could make the meaning of the symbol intelligible on the physical plane to an untrained enquirer in a few sentences; or indeed that the problem is of much practical concern for anyone not dealing seriously with occult science.

I hope that some correspondent of THE VĀHAN may throw more light on this subject. What I have said is very tentative and I am not quite sure that I have thoroughly grasped Klein's and Hinton's meaning in the passage referred to. Hinton says, p. 119, that: "according to Kant the primary element of experience is the group, and the theory of groups would be the most fundamental branch of science." But I am not sure that this statement is admissible; perhaps M. L. M. himself can give an opinion on this subject.

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The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

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*All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary.*

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

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LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1905.

NO. 2.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### PRESS NOTICES OF THE EUROPEAN CONGRESS.

Thought-power not having yet been developed by our members into a reliable means of propaganda, we are glad to avail ourselves of the good offices of the newspaper Press in getting anything about our tenets, and something about our doings, made known to the outside public. The holding of the European Congress in London was an appropriate occasion for modest self-advertisement on these lines, and it is satisfactory to be able to report that the opportunity was utilised. The *Times* deemed our Congress worthy of a paragraph notice in advance, and this doubtless "gave the cue" to other papers to accord the business some degree of attention. From such information as we have been enabled to collect, forty-one newspapers gave notices of the Congress proper, and some half-dozen of these repeated in different form their first notice. Of Mrs. Besant's lecture in the Queen's Hall we find records in fifteen papers, and of these a number printed the accounts of interviews accorded by Mrs. Besant to their reporters. It is satisfactory to observe that in very few cases were the interviews or notices made the occasion of imagined mystery-mongering; indeed, Theosophy is beginning to be regarded as a very serious—albeit perhaps mistaken—presentation of a philosophy of life. The facetious scribe, however, has not yet achieved complete self-repression, and he found his opportunity in Mrs. Besant's remark to a fellow-reporter that the development of astral faculties was aided by the student keeping strictly to a vegetarian diet. Accordingly he added to the gaiety of the Congress by informing us through the *Sun* that, notwithstanding the highest all-round aspirations he could not bring himself to enter upon a life in which he would be debarred from "making both

ends *meat.*" But he was ready to instruct others in the right way, thus :

If you'd spread the higher knowledge,  
Found a Theosophic college,  
In Benares or some place in Hindostan,  
Eat a vegetarian diet;  
While you live a life of quiet,  
And project your astral spirit when you can.

Choose your dinner from the garden,  
Say, ten courses for a farden,  
And at even gaze up at some twinkling star;  
Then your spirit, purest hearted,  
It will roam with the departed,  
'Mid the gleaming fields of silver stretched afar.

Then, after your excursion,  
Pray think out some subtle version,  
As you sit beneath the palm or mango trees.  
Make the yarn a really fit 'un,  
And you'll find in happy Britain  
A crowd who'll swallow anything you please.

So much for witticism by intention! Perhaps even more hilarity was aroused among those attending the Congress and those who stayed at home, when they learnt from the (London) *Evening News* that "nearly all the members are drawn from the wealthy and leisured classes"! Wealth and leisure, we had thought, were ours only in pious hope!

From the advertising point of view, however, "the play's the thing!" as Shakespeare wrote long ago. The *Times* led off with a half-column notice of the dramatic performances at the Court Theatre. The critique was a trifle bantering, but complimentary,—and withal modest, as who should say: "We write with all reserve, for it is not given to the likes of us to know the interpretation of these mysteries." The *Daily News* was struck by the discovery that "a certain Mr. Shakespeare was part author of one of the plays"—and forthwith speculated on the possible return to earthly activities of a certain Mr. Shakespeare who was once intimately associated with the London

theatre. Nearly all the leading London newspapers described the plays, and all seemed to have been impressed by what the *Daily Express* called the "soulful audience." The critic of the last-named paper must have been in the habit of attending Theosophic lectures, for he wound up a column of writing about the plays with the terse remark: "There were no diagrams." The print seems to echo a sigh of thankfulness! His near neighbour, *Lloyd's Weekly*, prints a prosy account of the Congress and the play under the heading, "Theosophical Nonsense"!

In conclusion, after reading through the large pile of newspaper cuttings which have come to hand from all parts of the country—from the north of Scotland to the South of England—we cannot but feel that they have served as a timely reminder to hundreds of thousands of people, that Theosophy is at their doors, bearing priceless gifts of knowledge to such as will receive its teachings. And when next the European Congress shall be held in London, there will doubtless be not a few members in attendance who will attribute to the reading of these newspaper reports and comments their first impulse towards Theosophic study. Finally, it should be added that the Press cuttings on which these remarks are based are almost certainly very incomplete; and if our readers can supply extracts from local provincial papers (which should be sent to 28, Albemarle Street, W.), we should be glad of such help towards making the collection quite complete.

E. E. M.

#### THE GUILD OF ST. MICHAEL.

It will interest Theosophists to hear that amongst the results of the recent Congress in London has been an amalgamation of the Artificers' Guild, a Society that showed work of great beauty at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition, with certain members of The Guild of Saint Mâhel, whose symbolical pictures, shown on the same occasion, excited very considerable interest.

This amalgamation has taken a twofold form, the productive Guild as already organised, with a well-managed business and a widespread reputation, and the new Guild of Saint Michael. This latter Society is now issuing very interesting particulars of the schemes, explaining that their general object is to aid a revival of the various crafts and arts and restore them to their place in the general life as purifiers, refiners, and revealers of the divine. Members will be required to take at least one share in the company owning the business organisation, so as to secure by their votes that it should be carried on on the best lines, but the Guild will also be glad to receive subscriptions and donations from those who are willing to help in any way.

In the course of an explanatory note the founders point out that during the last twenty years the best craftsmen and organisations have either been submerged or their ideals have been sacrificed to commercialism, and workshops, started

with great enthusiasm, have degenerated into enterprises conducted on ordinary business lines.

These failures, though doubtless due to some extent to want of idealism, arise in the main, in their judgment, from the almost insuperable difficulty of the artist who finds his inspiration crushed when he comes into communication with that section of the public who, whilst superficially interested in craftsmanship have no knowledge or understanding of the conditions under which work of real beauty can be produced.

It is, in fact, essential, and this is to be the first work of the Guild, to organise the consumer as well as the producer. The ideals of the Founders of this Society are dealt with in a further memorandum in which emphasis is laid on the present widespread unfolding of spiritual life which gives a special opportunity for their frankly non-materialistic movement.

Whilst working generally for the uplifting of great ideals and the restoring of beauty and symmetry of life, their special study will be the revival of the various crafts and arts on traditional lines, on a system that will provide for the simultaneous development of the spiritual, mental and physical side of man's nature.

They also attach the greatest importance to bringing man once more into direct relationship with the soil and they consider that it would be an invaluable experiment to form groups as self-supporting as possible, so that wealth may be withdrawn from circulation in its present unhealthy channels to nourish a healthy organisation.

Their endeavours will be directed to mould the forces of life so that work looked at as a ritual for the creative forces within us, and as a vehicle for the emotions and aspirations that demand expression in every healthy life, may become dignified as an end in itself: and creative art will again grow amongst us exalted by mysticism, the eye that pierces through the veil of matter and sees the creative spirit within the form it takes.

It is hoped that all members of the Theosophical Society who are interested in this side of life will join the Guild of St. Michael, which has, we believe, a great future before it. It is only necessary to add that for the present the address of the Secretary is 9, Maddox Street, London, W.

M. F.

#### ACTIVITIES.

##### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to August 20th: J. C., £1 1s.; J. L. M., 2s. 6d.; C. A. E., £20. Total, £21 3s. 6d.

##### Northern Federation.

The members of the Branches included within the Northern Federation assembled at Harrogate in considerable numbers for their forty-sixth quarterly Conference, official representatives being

present from Edinburgh, Middlesbrough, Hull, York, Ripon, Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Nottingham, Birmingham, Manchester and Didsbury, with, of course, the "home" team, as a cricket reporter might call the Harrogate contingent. Visitors there were also from farther afield—several from France, and as many from the United States of America, whose greetings from their *confrères* were warmly appreciated.

According to the programme, the Conference was to have been presided over by Mrs. Besant; but two days beforehand the news arrived that she was quite unable to fulfil the engagement, being incapacitated by ill-health. In these untoward circumstances Mrs. Besant had requested Miss Edith Ward to take her place. Miss Ward, consenting, arrived in Harrogate on Friday the 11th ult., and the same evening addressed the Harrogate Lodge and the visitors to the Conference, her lecture being designed as an introduction to the consideration of "Collective Karma"—the subject set down for discussion on the morrow.

The Conference was opened on the Saturday afternoon, Miss Ward presiding. Papers on "Collective Karma" were read by Mr. Bernard Old (who also read another paper contributed by a science student of Birmingham University), Miss Hilda Smith, Miss M. Browne, Miss Ramsden, and Mr. A. W. Waddington. A discussion followed, which was summed up by Miss Ward. The Conference then adjourned to the Winter Gardens for tea; and while there a large group photograph was taken, the posing for which was happily described by one of the members as "a study in self-consciousness."

Returning to the Theosophical Hall, Miss Ward addressed the members on "The Work of Non-Human Intelligences," this being the subject that was to have been taken by Mrs. Besant. Under this designation Miss Ward grouped a vast army of intelligent beings in all stages of development, from the Devas of the Hindoos and the various gods of the ancient Greeks to the tribal deities of various races, and the sylphs and salamanders, the brownies, pixies, gnomes, and elves, and undines of fairy lore. The time had come, she said, when people should return to a belief in these beings, but a belief guided by a fuller knowledge than was the case in the past. Each of these beings, she said, had its own work to do, the work varying from the carrying out of great cosmic laws to the tending of a flower and the building of a crystal. An interesting discussion followed the address.

On the Sunday Miss Ward addressed two large audiences in the Opera House, her subject in the afternoon being "The Meaning and Method of the Spiritual Life,"—this again being an "understudy" of Mrs. Besant's intended lecture. In the evening the subject was "Thought-Forms," which was illustrated by lantern views.

The Council of the Federation and all the visitors could not but feel profoundly grateful to Miss Ward for undertaking so onerous a series of duties at only a day's notice. In the circumstances it might have been expected that the Conference

would prove somewhat of a failure: but as a matter of fact it was one of the most enthusiastic of all that have been held. On the Saturday afternoon a telegram of greeting and sympathy was despatched to Mrs. Besant with the assurance that the members intended to make the Conference a success—and each and all strove to fulfil that undertaking. That the result had been achieved down even to the lowest plane became evident at the close, when the accounts revealed a surplus of revenue over outgoings. On the Monday afternoon some thirty of the members who still remained in Harrogate drove to Knaresboro' and Plumpton Rocks, this being the second picnic organised for a Federation Conference by Mr. W. Bell.

EDWD. E. MARSDEN,  
*Hon. Secretary.*

### Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Mondays at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street. Informal meetings. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Sept. 3rd, *Erasmus—a Son of God*, Mrs. Ridley Smith; Sept. 10th, *The Group Soul*, A. J. Faulding; Sept. 17th, *Dreams and Dream Life*, Miss H. Hodgson Smith; Sept. 24th . . . Miss Keeley.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Information from Mrs. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, first and third Saturdays, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Information by letter from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

CLIFTON LODGE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

COVENTRY CENTRE. 149, Foleshill Road, Coventry, on Fridays, at 7 p.m. Drawing-room meetings held periodically. Information from Mrs. Nevill, at the above address.

DUBLIN LODGE. Informal meetings on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmouth Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fri-

days, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 23, East Parade: Lectures by members.

HULL LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 11, Story Street. Information from H. E. Nichol, 67, Park Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Study of *The Ancient Wisdom* on alternate Mondays. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 8 p.m. for study. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings suspended until October. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Informal meetings during September at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.: Sep. 6th, *Francis d'Assisi*, J. Hallawell; Sept. 13th, . . . P. Tovey; Sept. 20th, *Physical Health*, Miss Crickmay; Sept. 27th, *The Theosophical Teachings of George Macdonald*, Miss E. L. Foyster. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

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

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stamfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. At 7.30 p.m., class for the study of *General Elementary Science*.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for young people and children at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings resumed on Sept. 17th.

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

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Meetings resumed on Sept. 22nd.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Information from the Hon. Secretary, Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., study of *The Key to Theosophy*; Sundays, at 7 p.m., public meetings at 126, Creame Street (corner of Princess Road), Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Sec., 137, Beresford St., Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. First and third Tuesdays, for enquirers, and second, fourth and fifth Tuesdays, study class for members. Service on Sundays, 6.30 p.m. Doors closed, 6.45 p.m. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 179, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row, for study of *Esoteric Christianity*. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings. Public meetings suspended till October. Lodge Rooms open on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

YORK LODGE. 34A, Coney Street, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., class for the study of Plato. Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, Yorks.

## STRAY NOTES.

*Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.*

*Regression of Memory.*—In the *Annals of Psychological Science* for July, there is a most interesting account of some mesmeric experiments on a young girl conducted by Colonel A. de Rochas, during which his subject projected her memory first into her early years, then gradually further and further back to what purport to be former incarnations. The young girl's name is Marie Mayo, daughter of a French engineer, and the *séances*, thirty in all,

were conducted in the presence of the family doctor and another gentleman. She is eighteen years of age and in perfect health; the utmost care was exercised that there should be no injury done by undue haste. Her memory always took the same path: (1) through her earlier years; (2) an existence as "Lina," the wife of a Breton fisherman, who drowned herself after the loss of her husband; (3) a certain "Charles Mauville," clerk in Paris at the time of the Revolution, who died of consumption at the age of fifty; (4) "Madeleine de Saint-Marc," a court lady; (5) a child who died young. In returning to normal consciousness, every step of the way had to be retraversed, and, as said before, it had to be done with all deliberation. This memory-path was retraced more than once, each time more details being added; but the main outlines remained unaltered.

It is a strange story, and stranger as one reads the details, how Charles Mauville, whose character had been shady, suffered after he had passed "into the dark," how Lina had no suffering "in the grey," though she sought vainly for her husband, and her little boy who had died. What is noteworthy is the apparent shortness of the incarnate periods. Madeleine de Saint-Marc lived in the time of Louis XIV. and knew La Vallière. Lina lived in the time of Louis XVIII.; so there are four incarnations in about 300 years. There is an entire absence of what we would call a heaven-world. Charles Mauville went "into the dark," where he suffered; Lina "into the grey," where she felt nothing. The life of the astral body is traced from the time before birth, in which it is described as round the mother till it enters the newly-born child, and is only a shadowy appearance for some years. Marie Mayo saw her astral beside her after she was mesmerised, and it was connected with her body by a cord of astral matter which could be seen rising from her head.

Yes! interesting it undoubtedly is, but what of Marie Mayo? Admittedly she is entirely ignorant of magnetism and spiritism; and, although she must have been a willing agent, she does not appear to have been made aware of what was done when she was in trance; and one questions the wisdom of a girl of eighteen to decide in the matter. True, the family physician was present to see that no ill effects should follow; but the girl was repeatedly subjected to tests and cross-examined in matters of sex in a manner that indicates a most regrettable want of delicacy on the part of the investigators.

M. C.

*Methods of Study.*—In *The Theosophic Messenger* for July, J. C. has an article on "Topical Study," which contains most useful suggestions for the carrying on of theosophical studies. It is assumed that all members of the Society are desirous of studying for the purpose of revealing the value of the theosophic conceptions of life, of proving the correctness of the scientific conceptions of Theosophy, of verifying the logic of its philosophical conception, of revealing the rationality of its religious conceptions, and of its supreme importance as a working hypothesis of daily life. Such

students, after they have gained a general idea of theosophy from such books as *Esoteric Buddhism* and *The Ancient Wisdom*, are advised to specialise, and to select some congenial subject, topic or theme for consideration. The subject being chosen, information concerning the facts should be obtained, as far as possible, from non-theosophical writers who are recognised authorities in their several branches. If the authorities quoted are such as are recognised in the world of science and literature, and the facts are carefully tested, then the theosophical view concerning the facts gains an added strength to appeal to the minds of thinking people. The following rules are suggested as likely to be useful:—

1. Choose a definite subject, limiting the field of it, whether it be an abstract theme, a line of argument or a clear question.

2. Search in a proper index for the most recent and authoritative publications bearing on the subject.

3. Read and gather the facts, think, and make careful notes.

4. Arrange these as the details appear, under headings and sub-headings.

5. Combine them into a whole, the relation of whose parts logically fit one into another.

6. Deduce the line of argument leading to the final conclusions and the individual judgment.

7. If possible, draw some application of the subject to daily life, giving an aspiration and an appeal for action.

8. In reading works by scientists and scholars, be careful to distinguish between *facts* observed and *theories* formulated upon these facts. In many cases the theosophical theory will be a far more reasonable hypothesis than the one already accepted.

9. Be careful not to confuse fact with hypothesis, analogy with actual relation, the student's own personal theory with a theory accepted by consensus of opinion.

10. If it is intended to write a paper on the subject or to deliver a lecture, let there be first an introduction explaining its scope and limits and letting it be known what it is that one is setting out to prove or explain. Then mention the facts in an orderly fashion under headings, treating them historically or comparatively as the case may be. Then should follow the arguments deduced from the facts, and the synthesis of the whole, and finally the bearing on life and conduct.

E. J. C.

## ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 266.

(Continued from page 6.)

G. H.—How can the Theosophical doctrine of "pure diet" be harmonised with the text: "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man"?—Matt. xv. 11.

A. B. C.—Does G. H. really mean Theosophical or theosophical? It has been assumed by the

three members who have already replied to his query that he refers to some body of opinion put forth by that small organisation the Theosophical Society. If so, then there is no such doctrine, and those who promulgate a doctrine of "pure diet" as a Theosophical doctrine do grievous wrong to their fellow members—especially to those who are vegetarians and total abstainers.

But if G. H. means theosophical in the wider sense that we indicate (or should indicate) with the small initial—the sense which connotes that which has to do with the study of the wisdom of the Gods—then it may be said that the doctrine of pure diet is theosophical in so far as it is *one* of the methods of life which, as G. R. S. M. truly says, has been laid down on the authority of many a great saint and sage, as a means of approaching the divine knowledge—for, as the Master whose "saying" we are asked to reconcile also is reported to have taught, the life must be lived if we would *know* of the doctrine.

But what *is* "pure" diet? The use of the adjective, as a synonym for non-flesh and non-alcoholic, is objurgated by B. K. in his answer in which he claims that for such use no rational explanation has been offered. If one were inclined to pursue this quibble it might, perhaps, be shown that food derived from fruits and farinacea is in its nature less apt for contamination, in the "external and legalistic" sense, than food derived from the more easily broken down protoplasmic structure of the animal kingdom, and that on this account the term purer might not be unjustifiably applied, but let us assume that all persons of civilised habit are equally entitled to regard their diet as "pure" (consumers of high game always honourably excepted), and, without "arrogating" anything, take it that G. H. means non-flesh and non-alcoholic diet, and need not have used a word of such "deep and lofty significance" as "pure." What then? Well, then we are asked to reconcile the aforesaid diet with Matt. xv. 11.

One wonders why it should be necessary for our peace of mind to "reconcile" every statement in literature or opinion in life to a dead and dull level of uniformity. Personally I am no more concerned to reconcile Matt. xv. 11 with pure diet than to reconcile Matt. v. 22, with Matt. x. 35, or Gal. vi. 2, with Gal. vi. 5. Sacred books and Theosophical literature teem with apparently unreconcilable propositions, and life is too short to spend in purely academic discussions, as little profitable as those of the Schoolmen. But since to other types of mind these questions often appear of the supremest importance, and since G. H.'s enquiry has been dealt with chiefly from one point of view, it may be permitted to suggest, having first made our respectful bow to the Higher Critics by prefacing "if correctly reported," that the whole context of chapter xv. tends to show that Jesus was dealing with the vampire of formalism, which had absorbed the life of Jewish religion, and not with a question of humane diet *versus* flesh diet, or total abstinence *versus* moderate drinking. Verse 20 specially indicates this when one knows anything of the cast-iron ceremonial law with its myriad

intricacies and unrealities. The difference between a hen with its neck broken and a hen with its throat cut may not seem great to the vegetarian, and the respective merits of pork and mutton may be trivial to a Gentile, but such things, and the ritual with which every act of life was surrounded, had become an influence sufficiently baneful to draw down the strongest condemnation from the lips of the Master, and it is to such things, I take it, that the passage in question refers. It does not, therefore, appear in need of reconciliation with the doctrine of "pure diet," theosophical or non-theosophical.

But even suppose the text stood isolated from the context and could thus be interpreted to refer to a non-flesh diet question, it would then amount to no more than the very true and even trite statement that the food question is not the alpha and omega of spiritual development. I should have supposed this to be so much a matter of common knowledge that one is surprised to see writers in THE VĀHAN assuming that vegetarians think otherwise. But little as I could imagine the Master taking any other view still less does imagination allow me to conceive Him falling into the error of supposing psychic development to be the sole object of non-flesh eating. Such a view practically ignores the existence of all food reformers outside the narrow limits of the Theosophical Society. Our kreophagist friends must get rid of this idea and possess themselves of the fact that the main object of abstaining from flesh food is the knowledge that the cruelties inseparable from slaughter are incompatible with the ideal of unity of life, and irreconcilable with the harmonious perfection towards which we sometimes like to imagine ourselves progressing. If we believe in evolution and place any faith at all in the vision of a future perfect race we cannot suppose the conditions of our present stage, with all its horrors of cruelty, filth and disease, are destined to continue, and if that is an article of our faith, whether as members of the Theosophical Society or citizens of the world, it is not the least a question of superior virtue but the most elementary common-sense to endeavour to adapt ourselves to the conditions of the coming day. To stand kicking against the pricks and refusing to move along the path of evolution, once we have realised whither it is tending, would seem to me not wicked so much as merely stupid. Of course, if we do not believe in an evolution which makes for unity there is no more to be said, but in that case G. H. would probably demand to know how we reconciled our want of belief with the Theosophical Movement!

A. B.—Is it not time that Theosophists should cease trying to "reconcile" stray texts with their teachings? Acts x. 12 is a much stronger text than Matt. xv. 11, yet Christians do not, because of the command to S. Peter, eat vultures, lizards, and blackbeetles. Further, no one is sure that Jesus made this remark; it may have been put in by some lover of the flesh-pots of Egypt. If He used the expression, it is clear that He was not discussing the merits of vegetarianism and flesh-

eating, but the relative importance of the observance of ceremonial precepts and of the moral law, and herein vegetarians quite agree with Him. No vegetarian—except the imaginary ones created by controversial flesh-eaters—pretends that the eating of cabbages creates a spiritual man; if such a vegetarian fool can be found, he might, perhaps, answer the quotation as to elephants and cows: "Quite so, but elephants and cows are at least higher in the animal scale than wolves and hyænas." If Matt. xv. 11 is to be used as meaning that a man may put anything into his mouth without defilement, it is a valid argument for cannibalism and for getting drunk. Cannot the controversy be kept on somewhat more rational levels? Personally I, as a vegetarian of more than sixteen years' standing, can look calmly at a man devouring a half-raw beef-steak, and regard him as a very good man, though I do not admire his taste in diet; why should he look on me with such anger and contempt while I devour the humble pea?

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QUESTION 271.

R. E.—*We are told that an advanced occultist may incarnate in a grown-up body left by its original owner. But is not this an act as morally culpable as it would be for me to take the name and possessions and step into the family of a man who happened to be my "double"? The new owner of the old body must constantly deceive those around him as to his identity! This point is important in its application to Christ and Jesus, the occult contention being that Christ took possession of the body of Jesus. This altogether destroys the identity of a World-Teacher, who more than other historical personages wants his identity to become a clear ideal to his followers.*

A. A. W.—Let us take the last part of the question first, and meet it with a direct negative. No World-Teacher "wants his identity to become an ideal," and (if we may rely on the testimony of the Gospels) no one of the World-Teachers has taken more pains than Jesus to prevent this, and to direct his followers solely to His Father and their Father, Whose Love He came on earth only to manifest. The whole mass of sentimentality which so many centuries have expended on the human personality of the Man Jesus, mainly founded as it is upon a wholly mistaken idea of what kind of Salvation it is He has gained for us, has taken shape against His reiterated warnings and with unmixedly evil results. If the Christ, in taking the use of the body of Jesus did "destroy his identity," it is precisely what He desired to do. The office of World-Teacher is, and must be, a purely impersonal one.

As to the general question, it must be remembered that a physical body, even the spirit's "own" body, as we call it, is *never* anything more than a vestment—a tool for its use, never anything by which to "identify" the spirit who uses it. In the case supposed, nothing is changed which its dearest friends can take cognisance of; the altera-

tion is as purely intangible as Transubstantiation itself. The brain, consciousness and memory,—the whole personality—remains as before; the change of higher spirit but few and rare seers could take note of. The Piper case will give an analogy. Here Dr. Hodgson deals with a personality which has all the memory and habits of his dead friend Geo. Pelham and, knowing no better, takes it as being the man himself. He would be indignant at any Theosophist who should tell him that he was dealing only with his friend's astral shade, and that the true man was in process of leaving it, or perhaps had already entirely left it; simply because he knows no other man than this very brain memory he perceives. And yet the obvious fact that in his communications he gets at nothing but the memory of the past;—that the supposed man knows nothing more than he did on earth—should warn him that he has not yet the full facts. If this be made clear it will be seen that there is really no question of moral culpability or deception; we are not in that world at all. The new user of the instrument could not, if he would, make the man in the street understand that any change had taken place; and for those who were near and dear to the man of the past time, all they could know would be that, somehow or other, the friend, the husband or the lover of old had grown to something higher and nobler than they had ever given him credit for; they had only loved him,—now they are ready to worship him. Would "Mary the mother of Jesus" have felt this as deception? Surely not, nor need she. Personal identity is a fiction of the physical plane only; who shall say the new spirit is not also the old, in the realm where "all are one, even as I and the Father are one"?

E. L.—The questioner has altogether missed the point here, I think. In Mrs. Besant's well-known volume, *Esoteric Christianity*, where the example of Jesus and the Christ is dealt with, the phrase used is "That Mighty One . . . gave into the strong hands of the holy disciple who had *surrendered* to Him His body . . ." etc. (p. 142). Has it "destroyed the identity" of that World-Teacher? I do not think so; if we look at His followers and His Church to-day. It is a very rare occurrence presumably, but since in such cases the original owner is not forcibly dispossessed of his tenement he leaves it at the right time, and the economy of nature and the Divine Energy is served by the using of already existing and suitable material for a certain necessary purpose. But in another fashion it is as if the tenant of a house retired from it when his lease was ended, and the successor in due time took up his abode there. It may cause a certain amount of bewilderment among those who do not know the true facts of the case, but that after all is a trifling matter compared with the end to be accomplished. Such an act performed by a person who might possess the power without the *moral* development accompanying it would be for *personal* aims and could be safely classed as Black Magic.

## QUESTION 272.

N. F.—*Can anyone tell me if the origin of a King's gold crown is to be found in the rays of yellow light that shine from the head of a highly developed intellectual person, such as are seen by clairvoyants and illustrated in Mr. Leadbeater's Man Visible and Invisible? Is it not a fact that the aura around the head of saints in ancient paintings comes from the same idea, and was and is often seen by the painter?*

E. J. C.—The kingly crown, the priestly mitre and the saintly halo have a common origin in the aura which clairvoyants, whether artists or others, may see encircling the heads of highly developed men. In by-gone ages, when the Lemurians first built their cities, the kingdom, the priesthood, and (we may add) the sainthood, were united in the persons of those mighty ones who instructed young humanity in the elements of science, art and morality, and who, revered by the people, ruled over them with undisputed sway. Those priest-kings were visibly crowned with the golden aura, the imperial diadem of wisdom, now symbolised by the crown, the mitre and the halo.

E. L.—The king's crown is certainly symbolical and dates from remote antiquity. Of old, only initiates were kings and priests, and such would certainly possess an aura of great splendour and magnitude. Yes, the aureole round saints, as depicted, is a memory of the real aura surrounding the whole man, and even that is found in some old paintings.

## QUESTION 273.

A. R. O.—*Is there a definite organ of self-consciousness in the brain? In possession or in cases of multiplex personality is this organ successively used by other entities or other sheaths?*

J. K. M.—In the light of phrenology, and by the observation and consideration of evolving self-consciousness in relation to brain formation, the answer to the first part of this question would seem to be a negative. It may be said that self-consciousness is in direct proportion to the development in any individual of the organs of perception and reflection, and especially, perhaps, of that of "individuality." This last faculty appears to be a power by which a number of facts relating to an object are brought to a focus, with the result of a sense of the objective existence of that object as distinct from any other. Doubtless the result is greatly helped by the action of the faculty of "concentrativeness," which gives capacity for holding one object under the attention, to the exclusion of all else; and also by the action of the reflective powers. It would seem that, while there is no definite organ of self-consciousness in the brain, the sense of self-separateness is obtained by the conjoint activity of several organs acting in co-ordination.

## QUESTION 274.

V.—*How can one account for a person with very deficient sight being able to see quite clearly in dreams?*

G. R. S. M.—This is a question which cannot

be answered off-hand even by a pandit on things "astral." In the first place, has the person referred to had deficient sight from birth, and has the deficiency of that sight been corrected by glasses? In other words, what kind of objective world has been normally presented to the consciousness of the person by means of his "sight"? If it has been a dim and imperfect world, and yet in dreams he sees all things clearly, then the answer would presumably call to its aid organs of sense other than physical; if, on the contrary, it has been a world made normal by means of artificial aids to sight, then the problem is probably only the general one of dreams, in which physical memories are regrouped as they are flowing on to the "screens" of subjective emotions.

The point of departure in categorising such phenomena would be the case of a person totally blind from birth. Are there any authentic instances of such people seeing a dream world; and if so, of what nature was it? I do not remember coming across any complete case of this kind; there has always been some qualification of the "totally blind from birth" state.

B. K.—Deficient sight, including actual blindness, is caused by defect and imperfection in the physical brain or nerve or optical apparatus by means of which the "power of seeing" works on the physical plane. This sense power, which appears in the astral body as a differentiated form of the "one sense" or "perceptive power" of the manas, is the true power of seeing and remains, of course, unaffected by any imperfection of the physical machinery needed for its working on the lower plane.

This inner "power of sight" is the outcome of long evolutionary effort and many, many births, hence this stored up experience of the past is ready to hand, and when we sleep and dream, *i.e.*, when our consciousness is functioning in the astral body, we naturally "see" or "hear" quite well, however defective our physical organs may be. And so when we remember our dream experiences on awakening we have the recollection of seeing perfectly well, even though we may never have enjoyed such an experience in the physical waking consciousness of our present life.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, 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. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

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

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Edited by KATE SPINK.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to September 20th: G. T., £10; J. B., £5; E. B., £2; T.P.S. (profits on Madame Blavatsky's books), £64 2s. 1d.; M. H. L., £5; A. L., £2; E. W., £5. Total, £93 2s. 1d.

#### Section Reference Library.

The following book has been gratefully received for the Library: *Directions and Directing*, H. S. Green. The following books have been purchased for the Library: *Malay Magic*, W. W. Skeat; *Unknown Mexico*, Carl Lumboltz.

R. A. HOBSON,  
*Assistant Librarian.*

#### Afternoon Meetings at Headquarters.

The Monday afternoon meetings will be resumed at Headquarters on October 16th, at 3.30. The syllabus can be seen at 28, Albemarle Street, in due course. These meetings are open to the public.

#### Mr. Mead's Lectures.

During the month of November Mr. G. R. S. Mead will deliver a course of four lectures, on Tuesday afternoons, at 5 o'clock, in the Lecture Room, at 28, Albemarle Street, on "The Gnosis of Egypt in Greek Tradition." The syllabus of the lectures is as follows:—

- Nov. 7th. "The Initiation of Tat."
  - " 14th. "The Initiation of Hermes."
  - " 21st. "The Hymns of Hermes."
  - " 28th. "Thoth the Master of Wisdom."
- Course tickets, 5s.; single tickets, 2s.

#### Practice Debating Class.

A preliminary meeting will be held on Saturday, October 21st, at 6.30 p.m., in the Drawing Room, 28, Albemarle Street, W. It is hoped that members of this class will make a special point of attending.

F. M. M. RUSSELL.

#### London Federation.

The next Quarterly Meeting of the London Federation of T.S. Lodges will be held on Saturday, October 14th, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, W. Mr. A. P. Sinnett will speak on the subject of "The relation of Theosophy to modern thought." Council meeting at 7.15 p.m.

P. T.

#### Lotus Lodge.

The older members of this Lodge have decided to try the experiment of holding a weekly Saturday evening meeting at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., at 7 p.m. The purpose of this meeting is the study and discussion of Theosophical subjects in a free and informal way under the guidance of a chairman, to be chosen by the members. It is hoped that this meeting may be useful to young students of Theosophy, and to any such, whether members of the Society or not, a very cordial invitation is extended. The class for children is held as usual on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m.

HERBERT WHYTE,  
*Hon. Secretary.*

#### Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Mondays at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street: Oct. 2nd, *Colours*, R. King; Oct. 9th, *The Origin of the Aryans*, Miss Ward; Oct. 15th, *Abbas Effendi*, Miss E. Severs; Oct. 23rd,

*Concerning the Pleroma*, J. Redwood Anderson; Oct. 30th, *Meditation*, J. Allen. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Oct. 8th, *The Search after Reality*, J. Allen; Oct. 22nd, *Faith*, Miss G. Murray Curtis; Oct. 28th, *Upon "The Theosophy of the Upanishads,"* Mrs. H. H. Nevill.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkwood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street: Oct. 3rd, *Power of Sound*, R. King; Oct. 10th, *Modern Science and Ancient Wisdom*, Miss Ward; Oct. 17th, *Swedenborg*, Rev. G. Baynham; Oct. 24th, *Influence of Plant Life*, Miss Whittaker; Oct. 31st, *Theosophy in Egypt*, J. R. Anderson. Discussions, Oct. 5th and 19th, at 8.15 p.m. Study of *Thought Power*, Oct. 12th and 26th, at 8.15 p.m. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, first and third Saturdays, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Information by letter from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

CLIFTON LODGE. "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Wednesdays, at 3.30 p.m.: Oct. 4th, *Some Occult Aspects of Breathing*, R. King; Oct. 11th, *Workers in the Unseen* (at 20, Henleaze Gardens), Miss Ward; Oct. 18th, *Swedenborg*, Rev. G. Baynham; Oct. 25th, Study of *Thought Power* at Hereford House, Clifton Downs. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

COVENTRY CENTRE. 149, Foleshill Road, Coventry, on Fridays, at 7 p.m. Drawing-room meetings held periodically. Information from Mrs. Nevill, at the above address.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 13th, *Theosophy and its Credentials*, E. E. Marsden. Lodge meetings, Oct. 19th and 26th. Library open on Monday and Friday, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Meetings on Sundays, at 4 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmouth Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Oct. 1st, *The Mystery of Pain and the Problem of Evil*, Mrs. Bell; Oct. 8th, *Have we ever lived before?* Hodgson Smith; Oct. 15th, *Thought Pictures* (with illustrations), E. E. Marsden; Oct. 22nd and 29th, *Vedānta Philosophy*, C. J. Barker. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 23, East Parade, for the study of Theosophy and Modern Physical Science.

HULL LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 11, Story Street. Information from H. E. Nichol, 67, Park Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 2nd, *Concerning the Right Way*, A. R. Orage; Oct. 16th, *Good and Evil*, Hodgson Smith; Oct. 30th, *Meister Eckart*, Rev. A. H. Lee. Study of *The Ancient Wisdom* on alternate Mondays. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 8 p.m., for study. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Free Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Oct. 1st, *The Theosophical Society and its Objects*, Miss Bird; Oct. 8th, *Dreams and Dream Teaching*, A. P. Cattinach; Oct. 15th, *The Need of Theosophy*, F. R. King; Oct. 22nd, *Temperamental Difficulties in Training*, Mrs. Esther Wood; Oct. 29th, *Compassion*, S. F. Weguelin-Smith. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattinach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 5th, *A Revaluation of Art*, A. W. Waddington; Oct. 12th, *Fragments of the Trismegistic Literature, No. 1.*, G. R. S. Mead; Oct. 19th, . . . Oct. 26th, Meeting for questions. Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Oct. 8th, *Why do we Believe?* Miss E. M. Mallet; Oct. 15th, *Mediumship*, Mrs. Hooper; Oct. 22nd, *The Great Announcement*, G. R. S. Mead; Oct. 29th, *The Prison House*, Miss Lloyd.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Oct. 2nd, *Spiritual Unfoldment*, Mrs. Alan Leo; Oct. 9th, *British Religion*, Capt. A. St. John; Oct. 16th, *Transmutation*, Alan Leo; Oct. 23rd,

*A Buddhist Philosopher*, H. Whyte; Oct. 30th, *Colours*, R. King.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stamford House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. At 7.30 p.m., class for the study of *General Elementary Science*. Public lectures on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Oct. 1st, *What is Theosophy?* Mrs. Leo; Oct. 8th, *Reincarnation*, Miss C. E. Woods; Oct. 15th, *The First Object of the T.S.*, H. Whyte; Oct. 22nd, *Karma*, A. J. Faulding; Oct. 29th, *The Empirical Value of Religion*, A. Haddock.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m. Meetings for young people on Saturdays, at 7 p.m.

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

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: Oct. 6th, *Abbas Effendi*, Miss E. Severs; Oct. 20th, *The Evolution of Matter*, A. M. Glass; Oct. 13th and 27th, Study of *The Evolution of Consciousness*.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Meetings at Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Mondays, at 7.45 p.m.: Oct. 2nd, *The Value of History*, O. Firth; Oct. 16th, *The Mystery of Pain and the Problem of Evil*, Mrs. Bell; Oct. 30th, *The Training of Children*, Miss K. Whitehead. Study of *The Christian Creed* and *Plato's Republic*, Oct. 10th and 24th. Drawing-room meetings at 3.30 p.m., Oct. 3rd, 17th and 31st. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., study of *The Key to Theosophy*; Sundays, at 7 p.m., public meetings at 126, Creame Street (corner of Princess Road), Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Sec., 137, Beresford St., Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. First and third Tuesdays, for enquirers, and second, fourth and fifth Tuesdays, study class for members. Service on Sundays, 6.30 p.m. Doors closed, 6.45 p.m. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 179, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Oct. 3rd, *The Group Soul*, A. J. Faulding; Oct. 10th, *The Pedigree of Man*, H. Targett; Oct. 17th, *Questions and Discussion*; Oct. 24th, *Brotherhood*, Miss E. M. Green; Oct. 31st, *Some Problems of Karma*, Miss E. M. Green; Oct. 6th, at the Small Philharmonic Hall, *Modern Science and Ancient Wisdom*, Miss Edith Ward. Tickets 2s. and 1s. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate: Oct. 6th, *Buddhism*, E. J. Dunn; Oct. 20th, *Hinduism*, C. J. Barker; Oct. 27th, *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*, J. J. Wedgwood; Oct. 6th, Musical evening. Classes for study of *Plato's Republic*. Lodge Study, "Human Nature." Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, York.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### MANVANTARAS AND YUGAS.

Referring to the question raised by Mr. Herbert Chatley under the above heading, the rate of the precession of the equinoxes has only been observed by modern astronomers for 2,000 years, and this rate would change were the obliquity of the ecliptic much different to what it is at present. With a different rate of precession the length of the precession cycle would change also. Some evidence indicating that the length of the precession cycle may be 24,000 years will be found in two articles on the Hindoo Zodiac, which appeared in *The Theosophist* for 1904. Mrs. Besant refers to this subject in the concluding Convention lecture for 1904.

With regard to the change in the obliquity of the ecliptic not being continuous but limited to a range of less than three degrees; the proof of this is given by La Place in his *Mécanique Céleste*, and it has since been generally accepted by scientific men. It is a point on which *The Secret Doctrine* and modern science are diametrically opposed, and were it possible to prove the modern theory wrong and establish the truth of the occult teachings confidence in these teachings would be greatly strengthened, particularly in the case of men of science. It will interest Theosophists to learn that I have recently discovered a serious error in

La Place's proofs of the limits of the obliquity. This error entirely invalidates his conclusions, and leads to those taught in *The Secret Doctrine*. I have addressed a letter to *Nature* pointing out the error, which, of course, may or may not be inserted. I enclose you therefore a copy of this letter with a few explanatory sentences added in brackets. Perhaps in view of the intrinsic importance of the subject, particularly to Theosophists, you will be able to find space for it. The matter will be treated in still further detail in some articles I am preparing for the *Theosophical Gleaner*, Bombay, the first of which will appear in the September issue.

G. E. SUTCLIFFE.

Serene Lodge, Sion, Bombay.

THE VARIATION OF THE OBLIQUITY. AN  
IMPORTANT ERROR IN LA PLACE'S  
EQUATIONS.

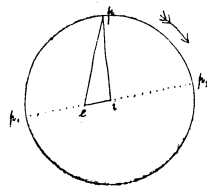
To the Editor of "Nature."

SIR,

Some time ago on examining La Place's equations for the variation of the obliquity I was astonished to find that in obtaining his results he has throughout given a positive value to the motion of precession, that is, he has given to precession the same direction as the planets. This mistake is involved in all his equations for the changes of the obliquity, and vitiates his proof that the limits of its variation amounts to not more than three degrees of arc. The error in question will be found in the *Mécanique Céleste*, Livre VI., No. 31. My attention was first drawn to it by discovering that when the theory of La Place was tested by spherical trigonometry it proved that the obliquity of the ecliptic ought to be *increasing*, and not diminishing as observation shows.

This theory implies that the mean angular distance of the terrestrial pole and the pole of the invariable or mean plane of our Solar System does not change (*Ency. Britt.*, Vol. II, p. 794). The invariable plane makes an angle with the plane of the ecliptic of about one and a half degrees, and its ascending node is about longitude  $106^\circ$ . On the celestial sphere the pole of the invariable plane is in longitude  $273^\circ 53' 35''$ , and its declination is  $N.66^\circ 56' 26''$ . The pole of the ecliptic for A.D. 1900 is longitude  $270^\circ$ , and declination  $N.66^\circ 32' 52''$ .

The relative position of the three poles is shown in the annexed figure, where  $i$  is the pole of the invariable plane,  $e$  the pole of the ecliptic and  $p$  the



terrestrial pole. The pole  $e$  moves very slowly and without material error may be considered stationary for short periods of a few thousand years. Modern theory requires that the side  $ip$  should be constant, whilst for short periods  $ei$  is also constant.

By the motion of precession  $p$  is carried towards  $p_2$  by a clockwise motion indicated by the arrow. Now it is evident by mere inspection that as  $p$  moves towards  $p_2$  the side  $ep$  must increase, since in the position  $p_2$  its length is  $ip + ei$ . But the lengthening of  $ep$  implies that the obliquity is increasing, which is contrary to observation. The only way to make the accepted theory agree with observation is to make  $p$  move in the positive direction or *contrary to its actual motion* and this is what La Place has done.

It will be noticed, however, that for the purpose of merely determining the theoretical limits of the obliquity [which is twice the side  $ei$ , that is  $2 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$  or 3 degrees] as has been done by Stockwell and others, it is immaterial whether  $p$  be moved clockwise or anticlockwise, so that such investigations could be made *without discovery of the original error*; and since in practice the variation of the obliquity is determined by observation and not by the use of La Place's equations the non-discovery of the error is still further explained.

From the known motion of  $p$  and the observed shortening of the side  $ep$  [which is a measure of the observed variation of the obliquity] I have calculated that there must be a shortening of the side  $ip$  of 1.844 seconds per annum or about three minutes of arc per century. This is a *real motion of the pole* on the celestial sphere quite independent of the ecliptic, which if continued indefinitely would cause a complete inversion of the poles in about 360,000 years.

The projection of this polar motion on a fixed equator would be represented by a proper motion in Right Ascension of  $-0^s.1229$  [so that a star that was really stationary near to the pole would be given a fictitious proper motion of  $+0^s.1229$ ] and on referring to the *Nautical Almanack* for A.D. 1900 (p. 294) I find that Polaris [the pole star] is given a proper motion of  $+0^s.1221$  or the same as the projection of the polar motion above deduced, but of opposite sign. This proper motion of Polaris, therefore appears to have been deduced from the false basis that the distance between  $p$  and  $i$  is invariable.

It will thus be seen that the proper motions of the stars are affected by this mistake on the part of La Place, so that stars like Polaris which may be nearly stationary are given large proper motions, whilst on the other hand the real proper motions of other stars may be largely masked.

The discovery of this error may throw light on many problems at present not satisfactorily solved, such as the causes of glacial and tropical epochs, and since it fundamentally affects the accuracy of astronomical measurements it is important that the attention of scientific men should be drawn to its significance.

G. E. SUTCLIFFE.

## STRAY NOTES.

*Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.*

*The Evolution of Worlds.*—Prof. G. H. Darwin, in his presidential address to the British Association meeting in South Africa, dealt in the second part with the evolution of planetary systems and made some interesting suggestions with regard to the many still unsolved problems. Some light is thrown upon Bode's law, which is no law at all, but simply a statement that there is a simple arithmetical relationship between the distances of successive planets. It is suggested by Prof. Darwin that the cause of this relationship lies in the fact that some orbits are stable and others unstable and therefore small planets or meteoric stones are sifted out accordingly, those occupying stable orbits surviving, while the others succumb and are absorbed by the sun or a large planet. The problem of stability is too complicated for solution in a real system, but its nature has been determined by considering a simple ideal system of a sun and one large planet and the effect of these on small planets and satellites. A sort of "survival of the fittest" is thus a great factor in planetary evolution.

The nebular hypothesis is considered at some length and a new argument introduced which increases the difficulty of the ordinary theory. This theory assumes that the rotation of a nebula and its cooling causes matter to be thrown off in the form of rings, which afterwards condense to form planets at about the same distance as the original ring. Prof. Darwin, however, points out that if such a ring concentrates it would do so towards its centre of gravity, so that if nearly uniform it would simply concentrate into the sun. To form a planet it would have to be very lopsided to begin with.

A mathematical consideration of the forms taken by rotating masses of fluid give rise to some interesting results bearing on the birth of planets. A sphere by rotation flattens, but its equator remains circular up to a certain speed. Its stability lessens, however, and above this speed the equator becomes oval; then with increased velocity one end swells and forms a filamentous protrusion. This becomes bulbous, and is joined to the main mass by a narrow neck which finally breaks. The figures drawn by Prof. Darwin as the result of calculations reminded him of the protrusion of a filament of protoplasm from a mass of living matter. It is interesting also to note that the lecturer considers it practically certain that the heat supply of the sun is due largely to radium. The old view, he states, gave a limit of about twenty million years for the whole history of the solar system, while geology points to a far greater period for the earth and he thinks that 500 to 1,000 million years may have elapsed since the birth of the moon according to the theory of separation from the earth due to him. G.

*Science versus superstition.*—What has seemed a mere superstition amongst our Hindu brethren has recently been discovered to have a scientific foundation. I refer to the constant use of copper drinking vessels, copper vessels for bathing purposes, and copper vessels in religious ceremonies. Doubtless the practice is only observed as an immemorial custom, but it becomes of vital interest when we read in the *Review of Reviews* for December 1904, that "Copper is death on poisonous microbes. Copper is the great preventive of cholera and all manner of disease." And in *Science Siftings*, for April 1st, we find noted recent experiments for the purification of water with copper foil. In every instance, colon and typhoid bacilli were destroyed in less than four hours. For domestic use it is advised to place a piece of copper foil three and a half inches square in a quart of water and allow it to stand for six or eight hours before using.

So the English in India who will have none of the native copper vessels, presumably because they are dull in colour, are not well advised; and the Hindu who grew so irritated at his mother's persistent use of a copper drinking cup that, on a journey to Benares, he longed to throw it out of the train window, knows better now, as witnessed by his article in the *Central Hindu College Magazine* for March.

M. C.

## ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 266.

(Continued from page 15.)

G. H.—*How can the Theosophical doctrine of "pure diet" be harmonised with the text: "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man," Matt. xv. 11?*

R.—G. H. has committed the same error that a judge would, if he were to select the evidence of one of many witnesses in court to decide a case and not listen to that of any of the others. In coming to a conclusion upon any doubtful matter experts take the whole of the evidence.

In the previous verse to Matt. xv. 11, Jesus Christ prefaces "hear and understand." This seems to imply that not everyone would understand it. Peter had a difficulty in doing so, but his words show that the Jewish Law inculcated great care as to diet.

Bloomfield, in his Greek Testament, comments on Matt. xv. 11: "Our Lord did not hereby intend to abrogate the distinction between clean and unclean things for food. His meaning was only this—that nothing was naturally and *per se* impure (and therefore such as could defile the mind of man); but was only so *ex instituto*. Or his words may be understood *comparate*: q.d. forbidden meats do not pollute so much as impure thoughts and intentions."

Again, at verse 18, Bloomfield comments: "Compare James iii. 6, Genesis vi. 5 and viii. 21. The meaning is, that evil principles, being seated

in the *heart*, and therefore governing the conversation and conduct, especially defile a man. So a great poet well says :

‘ Our outward act is prompted from within,  
And from the sinner’s *mind* proceeds the sin.’ ”

Another piece of evidence is that the Levitical code ordained by Moses was designed especially to preserve the health of the people. See *The reasons for the Laws of Moses from the “More Nevochin” of Maimonides*, by James Townley, D.D., and he will find that health was one great object.

It is a self-evident proposition that if you put decomposed food into the human body it destroys the health and renders the individual incapable of developing the higher faculties, and therefore, what is put into the stomach, does, under these circumstances, defile the man.

From this it may be inferred analogically that different kinds of food do, more or less, according to their quality, help or hinder the developing of the higher faculties, as is well known to and practised by the Indian Yogis. The teaching of the Theosophical Society is that pure food is, in conjunction with the will, conducive to elevating the human faculties, which is the design and purpose of the teaching of the Theosophical Society. Let G. H., by way of experiment, try, upon a diet of beef and beer, for a certain time, to commune with his higher self and let us know the result. We opine that he will find “He that drinks beer, thinks beer.”

G. H. by searching and inquiring diligently may collect much more evidence that the human body is defiled more or less by the quality of food put into it and that Matt. xv. 11 cannot properly be used as an argument against the most valuable teaching of the Theosophical Society. It should be borne in mind that there was no reporter present to take down the words of Jesus Christ, that they were published long after being uttered, and therefore some part of what He said, making the sense more easily understood, may well have been omitted.

E. L.—If by “man” the real man or Ego is meant it is true that he cannot be affected. His vehicles are more or less influenced (according to the point of evolution reached) by that which he builds them of. At this stage (transitional though it be) I hardly think the *physical* vehicles of most “vegetarians” are to be envied, or of a type to be striven after, but rather carefully avoided, and one might truthfully add a large proportion of the astral and mental come within the same category. But the ideal “pure diet” (how about the manure vegetables are grown in?) is certainly not responsible for the ignorance of those who do not take the trouble (any more than many meat-eaters) to discover what special form of it is suitable to them. The fact is that a good many more than commonly supposed have risen above the necessity of a restricted diet even though it might be taken as an example. We may safely affirm that not a lifetime of beefsteak and venison will do as much harm as the bigotry and want of balance displayed by some who regard the non-meat diet as the *only*

road to purity of physical bodies or others. As a matter of fact there are other roads equally rapid (or long !) known to the occultist.

R. E. F.—In quoting the text “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man,” I should like to point out to G. H. that these words point to something more than the mere food which we eat. For the whole atmosphere is full of vibrations. The air which we breathe is full of these, and many of them are the results of impure thought. Even the breathing in of these, according to the text, does not hurt us. The more highly evolved man becomes the less does he respond to these coarse vibrations. His mind is developed in such a way as to ward these off. Now the physical brain can be made to respond to the vibrations in the physical body. The mind is affected by the physical brain. Therefore, considering these two facts, one can safely say that the mind is affected by the state of the physical body. We cannot work with our mind when our health is bad. Therefore, it is important that our body should be kept in good working order. Pure diet is necessary to effect this. Although some people cannot do without meat entirely, it is advisable that they should eat as little of it as possible on moral grounds. I should like to point out to G. H. that there is, so far as I am aware, no reference in the original Greek Text to Jesus Christ ever eating meat. The word translated as “sat at meat,” in Luke xi. 37, really means literally “sat down,” or “sat at table.” So, surely, this doctrine of “pure diet” can be harmonised with the text Mat. xv. 11, by taking the text in its *moral* meaning rather than in its literal words, and this is how all other texts in the Scriptures should be taken. The moral meaning is by far the more important.

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QUESTION 274.

(Continued from p. 16.)

V.—How can one account for a person with very deficient sight being able to see quite clearly in dreams?

A. B. C.—This does not seem difficult when one remembers that in sleep the ego is not using the defective apparatus of the physical eye, but an organ (or sense) of the astral vehicle which is conveying normal impressions to consciousness. Of course these impressions are translated into terms of physical consciousness, when the individual wakes, and the fact that he appears to have been clearly would go to show that his “very deficient sight” has not been congenital, but that normal sight-sense impressions have at one time been familiar to him. It also seems not unlikely that even in cases of congenital defects the individual might wake to physical consciousness with a feeling of having seen more clearly, due to his recollection of astral vision, but in that case he would not, of course, be in a position to compare the accuracy of his recollected vision with normal

mental pictures due to normal physical sense impressions.

E. L.—The questioner is either not aware, or has forgotten, that to have a deficient physical organ in no way implies the diseased malformation of its astral counterpart. In point of fact a person being unable to see or to see only imperfectly in ordinary life is likely to have the astral sight-organ more developed, as the force flowing from the seat of life would concentrate itself in the place that afforded it scope. Thus you hear of the blind, deaf and dumb girl, Helen Keller, being able to sense as clearly as or more so than others impressions of surrounding objects, although the usual avenues of perception are closed.

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that this may be accounted for in two ways:—(a) The person in question may be reproducing by dreams things seen before the sight became deficient. The images so called up would be as clear as when first observed. (b) If the sight has always been bad, then the clear dream vision is probably due to the individual being more or less “awake” on the astral plane. The clear images received through the astral eyes could be brought through into waking consciousness in spite of the defects of the physical organs of sight.

#### QUESTION 275.

J. L. P.—*How does Theosophy explain the purpose of creation, i.e., the reason why creation has been started in the beginning? I quite understand that while matters are as they are, it is necessary for men to develop the Divine Spark in them, so as in the end to bring it back to the Central Flame from which it once emanated. But as it cannot be possible to add to the experience, or to the knowledge, or to any other quality or capacity of It, why then did It deem it necessary to send out Sparks of Itself by creating the Universe and all beings therein? Without an explanation it seems to me that by living and developing our Higher Selves we are only “carrying water to the ocean.”*

A. L. B. H.—Mrs. Besant deals with this question in a paragraph headed “Why are we here?” in *The Theosophical Review* for July, 1903, p. 434. It is too long to quote verbatim, but some of the drift is contained in these lines of Byron:

’Tis to create and in creating live  
A being more intense that we endow  
With form, our fancy gaining as we give  
The life we image . . . .

Without any further explanation of this stupendous mystery, probably “carrying water to the ocean” is all that we may be doing—only that! Only bringing our little lives to the Great Life—only reflecting in the tiny mirror of our vehicles the great Light around us and so adding lustre to Light itself.

There is not the same stigma attached to carrying water to the ocean as there is in carrying coals to Newcastle. The questioner seems almost to imply that there is.

But does J. L. P. really think that any one of the wire-pullers of the Society *knows* the answer to that great Eternal Why or still more that anyone could communicate it to him in a few lines of print if it were known? Still, I think it is a sign of grace to formulate this question at all. Now-a-days the majority of people are so much more interested in the “How” that they leave little time and less inclination for the “Why.”

I should like to tell J. L. P. that he must seek along a very long road for the answer, he must seek in silence and he must go alone. And when he wants the answer so much that he can’t live without it, when he wants it as a drowning man wants air, it will, so all the mystics have told us, be given to him in a way suited to him and to his needs. I could give a list of the works of European mystics from the Areopagite to Yeats, but they are only as so many sign-posts. Every man must do the walking himself.

W. J. L.—I offer to J. L. P. my view about the problem he puts forward, and which has, I suppose, presented itself to all thinkers.

I shall try to show that the question is unmeaning. Cause and effect, reason and consequent, purpose or motive can only have to do with conditioned existence, and to speak of them in connection with the unconditioned reality, before the universe existed, contains a contradiction and is unmeaning. There is no purpose in creation; Sankara says in the *Atmabodha*, “as the water bubbles rise, exist, and burst in an ocean, so the worlds appear, exist and disappear in the Upādāne Paramesvara.” Whatever is not entirely spontaneous and uncaused is to that extent imperfect, and wherever there is a motive, the will actuated by that motive is conditioned. To ask what the purpose of creation was, is like asking how the infinite is included in our little finite world. No finite being can explain the infinite (*vide Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I., p. 352, lines 1 to 4). The problem is really one of pure metaphysic, and Theosophy does not claim to have added anything new to metaphysics—at any rate not to oriental metaphysics; I cannot help thinking that J. L. P. would find a course of some clear headed metaphysical writer outside the Theosophical Society very stimulating: say Schopenhauer’s *Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* and *World as Will and Idea*; in the latter work J. L. P. would find the uncaused nature of will very clearly discussed.

So far I have been speaking of the plane of entirely unconditioned reality. There is, however, another way in which the question may be looked at. If we start with the existence of a noumenal, not entirely unconditioned plane, then the divine beings (world builders) on that plane can I suppose only be regarded by us as having a purpose, namely, that of awakening, through the means of the universe they are about to create, a number of new beings on their own plane, *vide* what is said at the end of Mr. Sinnett’s *System to which We Belong*, and in some of Mrs. Besant’s writings. Similarly I suppose we may regard the consciousness of

having attained this great object as the ultimate idea on that plane at the time of pralaya—if our ideas on such a subject are worth anything at all. But this, I take it, is not what J. L. P. means.

QUESTION 276.

O. H.—*Madame Blavatsky, in the Key to Theosophy, puts the duration of the soul's absence from the earth after death, before reincarnation, at about one thousand or more years. I would like to know, if possible, on what authority she made that statement?*

E. D.—Some of the teaching to be found in the *Key to Theosophy* was obtained by Madame Blavatsky from her spiritual Masters, while much is the result of her own study in many quarters, and it is therefore impossible to point to the exact authority for many of her statements. She herself says that reincarnation at intervals varying between 1,000 and 1,500 years is the fundamental belief of both Buddhists and Hindus (*Key to Theosophy*, third English edition, p. 129); and Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* (fifth English edition, p. 149) repeats the statement, evidently on the authority of his teachers (see p. 57). The fact has before now been called in question, and C. W. L. (*Extracts from the Vāhan*, Question 20) has corroborated from his own knowledge H. P. B.'s remark that the Buddhists and Hindus, generally speaking, believe in reincarnation at intervals of from 1,000 to 1,500 years, and he adds that his own investigations have led him to accept that view as correct. Whether the number of cases investigated are sufficient to allow of an average being struck may, however, be open to question, even assuming the accuracy of the enquiry; and it must always be kept in view that individual cases must vary enormously.

E. L.—Madame Blavatsky, as an occultist, would make such a statement either from her own personal investigation of the matter or on the authority of Those Who taught her and sent her to teach others. Nor is it impossible that the assertion would be based on both foundations.

It may be added that in the later and more detailed investigation permitted since she left us the period is found to be of varying lengths. The above was a rough average, and in the course of evolution has come to vary considerably.

QUESTION 277.

B. G. T.—*Assuming absence of organic and functional disease, what is the real cause of senile decay in the physical body?*

E. J. C.—The question is not one that admits of dogmatic answer, for the physiology, to say nothing of the psychology, of normal old age has yet to be written. Looking first, however, at the form side, we may take the following to be a fairly accurate and comprehensive medical analysis of physiological senility. In senility there occur:—

- (1) A want of reproductive power.
- (2) Diminished power of attention and memory.
- (3) Diminished desire and power to energise bodily and mentally.
- (4) Greater slowness of mental action.
- (5) Slower and less vigorous speech and ideation.
- (6) Fewer blood corpuscles, red and white.
- (7) Lessened power of nutrition of all tissues.
- (8) A tendency to disease of the arteries.
- (9) A lessened bulk of body, and notably of the brain.
- (10) A chemical alteration in the most essential elements of the brain.
- (11) A slower action of the cells and nerve currents, there being more resistance along the conducting fibres.

In very many cases of senility the immediate cause of death is probably due to the accumulation in the system of carbonic acid gas. Carbonic acid gas is an effete product resulting from the using up or burning of organic matter in the body; it is, in short, a physiological product of combustion of the tissues. Now, as we have indicated, in senility the cellular elements in the blood are diminished and minute changes take place in the smaller vessels, especially of the kidneys. The result is that the accumulation of the gas cannot be coped with; the effete products, in particular carbonic acid gas, which continue to be produced, cease effectually to be expelled. The nerve centres are weakened, and even when there is no organic disease, these nerve centres are slowly poisoned, and the life flickers out, in the end usually painlessly, for it is death by gas poisoning.

Turning now for a moment to the life side, we see there is apparently in every man a putting forth and then a withdrawing of life energy, an evolution and a subsequent involution, a flow of the tide of life and a subsequent ebb. The closest analogy is perhaps to be found in the vegetable world in the normal cycle of a bulbous plant. It puts forth its life from the bulb or nucleus, and after a period of leaf and flower and seed, the sap is indrawn again to the bulb. As the leaves wither when the sap returns to the bulb, so does a man die when his vital force spends itself and is withdrawn for the time from the physical plane.

To sum up, the answer to the question may be stated thus:—The cause of senile decay in the physical body is due to the ebb of the life force on the physical plane, which, in the normal case and on the assumption that there is no organic or functional disease, slowly and insensibly produces physical changes in the body that result in its being poisoned through the accumulation of effete products which it is unable to get rid of owing to decreased vitality.

*All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *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. XV.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1, 1905.

NO. 4.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### AN ENLARGED "THEOSOPHIST."

*The Theosophist* is making an effort to increase its scope of work and the number of its readers, and with the October issue, which begins its twenty-seventh year, starts a new and greatly improved form. In the announcement issued by the *Theosophist* Office, it is stated that in future the paper will be heavier, the pages and the type larger and the contents increased by sixteen pages. At the same time the price for this country will be 12s. instead of £1 as hitherto.

By far the oldest of Theosophical magazines, *The Theosophist* has been a valuable means of spreading interest in the Society, and its earlier pages more especially contain papers that will be of value as long as the Society lasts. It is to be sincerely hoped, therefore, that its renewed effort will find a ready response, and that its usefulness will be an increasing quantity.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to October 20th: S. C., £1; N.Z. Section (for VĀHAN), £2; K. K., £1 1s.; H. M., £1 1s.; E. A. B., £8; G. R. S. M., £2 2s. Total, £15 4s.

#### Afternoon Meetings at Headquarters.

Afternoon Meetings will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, W., from 3.30 to 4.30, at which a short lecture will be given, followed by questions and discussions.

These meetings are open to the public and members of the Society.

Nov. 6th, "The Nature of Religious Mysticism," P. Tovey; Nov. 13th, "Watchman: What of the Night?" Mrs. Despard; Nov. 20th, "Animal Apparitions," Miss Lloyd; Nov. 27th, "The Reality of the Spiritual Life," Mrs. Corbett.

#### Men's Evenings.

At a meeting held at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on October 17th, it was decided to institute evening meetings once a fortnight at which all subjects of Theosophical interest may be thoroughly enquired into and freely discussed, in order to bring the men of the Society into closer touch with one another.

The day decided upon is Wednesday, the time 8.30 p.m., and the place of meeting the Lecture Room at Headquarters.

The dates of the first series of evenings are Nov. 1st, 15th, 29th, and Dec. 13th.

The subjects for discussion in November are:

Nov. 1st. What is a "plane"?

„ 15th. What do we mean by "astral"?

„ 29th. The Value of Spiritism.

All men members who desire to help in making these meetings of permanent utility for the interchange of thought and increase of fellowship are cordially invited to attend.

G. R. S. M.

#### Mr. Mead's Lectures.

As announced in last VĀHAN, Mr. Mead will deliver four lectures on "The Gnosis of Egypt in Greek Tradition," on Tuesday afternoons, from 5 to 6, in the Lecture Room of the Theosophical Society, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

*Syllabus of Lectures:* Nov. 7th, "The Initiation of Tat"; Nov. 14th, "The Initiation of Hermes"; Nov. 21st, "The Hymns of Hermes"; Nov. 28th, "Thoth the Master of Wisdom."

Course tickets, 5s. each, may be obtained from

the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W. Admission to each lecture, 2s.

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#### Four-dimensional Geometry.

A course of ten lessons on the Platonic Solids and some of the Regular Four-dimensional Figures will be given by Mrs. Corbett in the drawing-room at 3 o'clock on Wednesday afternoons, beginning November 15th. Fee one guinea the course. Mrs. Corbett will be obliged if students who wish to join the class will kindly send in their names before November 9th. Address: Oxford Villa, Bushey Heath, Herts. N.B.—No books required.

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#### Practice Debating Class.

Meetings will be held on alternate Tuesday evenings in the Lecture Room at 6.30, commencing November 7th. It is hoped that members of this class will make a point of attending and introduce as many new members as possible.

F. M. M. RUSSELL,  
Hon. Secretary.

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#### Northern Federation.

The Forty-seventh Quarterly Conference will be held at Harrogate on Saturday, November 11th. The visitor will be Miss Edith Ward, who will preside over the afternoon discussion on "Theosophy and Modern Physical Science." In the evening Miss Ward will address the members on the same subject. On Sunday, the 12th, at 7 p.m., Miss Ward will lecture in the Theosophical Hall on "Modern Science and the Ancient Wisdom."

Members who may be in Harrogate on Friday, the 10th, are invited by the Harrogate Lodge to its ordinary meeting (at 8 p.m. in the Theosophical Hall), when Miss Ward will deliver an address on "Some Ideals of Citizenship."

EDWARD E. MARSDEN.

Spath Lodge,  
Didsbury, Manchester.

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#### Lecture in Leamington.

Miss Russell gave her Theosophical paper on "The Rationale of Spiritualism" as an address in Archdeacon Colley's Hall Parlour, Leamington, on Tuesday, October 10th, to a sympathetic and attentive audience.

R.

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#### Lecture List.

BATH LODGE. Mondays at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyll Street: Nov. 6th, *Swedenborg, what he did, said and taught*, Rev. Professor Baynham; Nov.

13th, *Control*, Mr. von Kramer; Nov. 20th, *Is there Room for Chance in a Universe Governed by Law?* Rev. J. Tyssul Davis; Nov. 27th, *Faith*, Miss Curtis. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street: Nov. 7th, *Theosophy in Islâm*, J. M. Watkins; Nov. 14th, *King Solomon in Oriental Legend*, Rev. Abelson; Nov. 21st, *Towards Unity*, Rev. Tyssul Davis; Nov. 28th, *Understanding*, Miss Pullar. Discussions, Nov. 2nd, 16th and 30th, at 8.15 p.m. Study of *Thought Power*, Nov. 9th and 23rd, at 8.15 p.m. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, first and third Saturdays, at 8.15 p.m. Students' Class, second and fourth Saturdays, at 8 p.m. Information by letter from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

CLIFTON LODGE. "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Wednesdays, at 3.30 p.m.: Nov. 1st, *On the Evidential Value of Trance and allied Conditions*, Prof. Chattock; Nov. 15th, *The Creative Power of Thought*, Rev. Tyssul Davis; Nov. 29th, *The Immanent Christ*, Rev. W. Hanks. Study of *Thought Power*, at Hereford House, Clifton Downs, Nov. 8th and 22nd, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

COVENTRY CENTRE. 149, Foleshill Road, Coventry, on Fridays, at 7 p.m. Drawing-room meetings held periodically. Information from Mrs. Nevill, at the above address.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 34, Wicklow Street. Discussion: "Why Theosophy appeals to Me." On Mondays, at 5 p.m., study of *Evolution of Life and Form*. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 2nd, *Some Planks of the Theosophic Platform*, Miss Pagan; Nov. 23rd, *N Rays and*

other Human Emanations, E. J. Cuthbertson. Lodge meetings, Nov. 2nd, 16th and 30th. Library open on Monday and Friday, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Meetings on Sundays, at 4 p.m., and on Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmouth Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. 5, West Regent Street, at 7.45 p.m.: Nov. 8th, *Evolution of the Soul*, R. H. Andrews. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Nov. 5th, *Reincarnation; its Scientific, Philosophical and Ethical Aspects*, Mrs. Midgley; Nov. 12th, *Modern Science and Ancient Wisdom*, Miss Ward; Nov. 19th, *Animal Consciousness*, Miss H. Hodgson Smith; Nov. 26th, *Some Aspects of Theosophy*. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 23, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 11, Story Street. Information from H. E. Nichol, 67, Park Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 13th, *Character Building*, Mrs. Bell; Nov. 27th, *Unity in Religions*, C. N. Goode. Study of *The Ancient Wisdom* on alternate Mondays. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 1st, *Dreams and Dream Life*, Miss H. Hodgson Smith; Nov. 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th, study alternately of *The Elements of Theosophy* and *The Pedigree of Man*. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Nov. 5th, *Service*, Mrs. Leo; Nov. 12th, *The Hidden Side of Things: with Stereopticon Views*, Mrs. Dunlop; Nov. 19th, *Spiritualism and Theosophy*, H. J. Adams; Nov. 26th, *Reincarnation and Karma*, D. N. Dunlop. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common, S.W.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 2nd, *Arts and Crafts in their Relation to Modern Life*, Montague Fordham; Nov. 9th, *Fragments of the Trismegistic Literature, No. II.*, G. R. S. Mead; Nov. 16th, *The Formation of a National English Style in Art*, Edward Spencer; Nov. 23rd, *Some Symbolist Plays*, Miss Lloyd; Nov. 30th, Meeting for questions. Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Nov. 5th, *Principles of Faith*, Miss C. E. Woods; Nov. 12th, *The Doctrine of Salvation*, A. J. Faulding; Nov. 19th, *From the Gnosis of Valentinus*,

G. R. S. Mead; Nov. 26th, *What is Illusion?* Mrs. Sharpe.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 1st, *Thoughts are Things*, R. King; Nov. 8th, *Prayer*, F. Horne; Nov. 15th, . . . P. Tovey; Nov. 22nd, *Why do we Believe?* Miss E. M. Mallet; Nov. 29th, *Reincarnation and Religions*, Miss F. M. M. Russell. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 6th, *Good and Evil*, A. Haddock; Nov. 13th, *The Celestial Ladder*, Miss C. E. Woods; Nov. 20th, *Salvation*, A. J. Faulding; Nov. 27th, *Planetary Influences*, Mrs. Leo.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. At 7 p.m., class for the study of *General Elementary Science*. Public lectures on Sundays, at 7 p.m. Meetings for enquirers on Fridays, at 3.30 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m. Meetings for young members and friends on Saturdays, at 7 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Nov. 1st, *Right Discrimination*, L. S. Jast; Nov. 8th, *Dreams*, Miss Lloyd; Nov. 15th, *The Training of the Higher Bodies*, Mrs. Sharpe; Nov. 22nd, *A Study of Pythagoras*, W. M. Green; Nov. 29th, *Ritual*, P. C. Darlison.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: Nov. 3rd, *Robert Browning*, Miss Lloyd; Nov. 17th, *The Origin and Purpose of the Theosophical Society*, A. P. Sinnett; Nov. 10th and 24th, "Study in Consciousness."

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Lodge meetings, Nov. 13th and 27th. Study classes, Nov. 6th and 20th. Drawing-room meetings, Nov. 14th and 28th. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., study of *The Key to Theosophy*; Sundays, at 7 p.m., public meetings at 126, Creame Street (corner of Princess Road), Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Sec., 137, Beresford St., Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. First and third Tuesdays, for enquirers, and second, fourth and fifth Tuesdays, study class for members. Service on Sundays, 6.30 p.m. Doors closed, 6.45 p.m. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 179, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m. a ladies'

reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Nov. 5th, *Is Health Harmony?* Miss M. Smith; Nov. 12th, *The Antiquity of Man*, J. Chappell; Nov. 19th, *Hinduism*, C. J. Barker; Nov. 26th, *The Art of Listening*, Miss Whitehead. Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*. Alternate Saturdays and Fridays, debating class at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Nov. 7th, *Theosophy in the Writings of Emerson*, Miss Severs; Nov. 14th, *East and West*, Miss Green; Nov. 21st, *The One Faith in Christianity and Theosophy*, S. J. Witt; Nov. 28th, Question meeting. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate: Nov. 3rd, *Religions of China and Japan*, C. N. Goode; Nov. 10th, Musical Lecture, Miss K. Whitehead; Nov. 17th, *Mysticism*, Miss M. L. Browne; Nov. 24th, *Christianity*, J. I. Wedgwood. Thursdays, at 7.30 p.m., classes for study of Plato's *Republic*. Lodge Study, "Human Nature," on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Saturdays, 3 to 5 p.m., social meetings and study of elementary Theosophy. Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, York.

### STRAY NOTES.

*Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.*

*Science and Life.*—There has been some controversy in *The Hibbert Journal* recently with regard to Hæckel's *Riddle of the Universe*; Sir Oliver Lodge criticising it somewhat severely in the April issue, while Mr. McCabe, its English translator, replies to the critic and defends Hæckel's position (or his own interpretation of it) with great energy but less discrimination. Sir Oliver Lodge, in the October number, has a short letter dealing with one or two points of Mr. McCabe's reply. It

is noticeable for a very clear and careful definition of his idea of "life" or vital power, or whatever one may choose to call that very elusive entity. Mr. McCabe, in his defence, attributed to Hæckel a very primitive form of the "vital force" theory discarded many a long year ago, but apparently regarded by him as the most advanced of modern opinions. Hæckel, according to this disciple, "says that the vital energy no longer exists as *such* [after death and decay], but is resolved into the inorganic energies associated with the gases and relics of the decaying body." Sir Oliver Lodge, in dealing with this declaration, says: "If it were true that vital energy turned into or was anyhow convertible into inorganic energy, if it were true that a dead body had more inorganic energy than a live one, if it were true that these inorganic energies always or ever reappear on the dissolution of life, then undoubtedly *cadit quæstio*; life would immediately be proved to be a form of energy, and would enter into the domain of physics. But inasmuch as all this is untrue—the direct contrary of the truth—I maintain that life is not a form of energy, that it is not included in our present physical categories, that its explanation is still to seek; and I have further stated—though there I do not dogmatise—that it appears to me to belong to a separate order of existence, which interacts with this material frame of things, and while there exerts guidance and control on the energy which already there exists; for, although they alter the quantity of energy no whit, live things are able to direct ordinary terrestrial energy along new and special paths, so as to achieve results which without such living agency could not have occurred, *e.g.*, forests, ant-hills, birds' nests, Forth bridge, sonatas, cathedrals. . . . I perceive, not as a theory but as a fact, that life is *itself* a guiding principle, a controlling agency, *i.e.*, that a live animal or plant can and does guide or influence the elements of inorganic nature. The fact of an organism possessing life enables it to build up material particles into many notable forms—oak, eagle, man; which material aggregates last until they are abandoned by the guiding principle, when they more or less speedily fall into decay, or become resolved into their elements, until utilised by a fresh incarnation."

The last phrase emphasises in the clearest manner the difference between the non-material view of life now predominant in that section of the scientific and philosophical world which interests itself in such matters and the rapidly disappearing material view which looked on life as some property or operation of matter, as mechanical in its government as the phenomena of heat or light. Life as a reincarnating principle or power, detachable from matter, opens up an endless possibility of speculation for the ingenious scientist who has the courage of his imagination.

G.

*Repeated Misfortunes.*—It is a common proverb "Misfortunes never come singly"; but there is one phase of this too frequent truth which I have not seen commented on: the repetition of similar misfortunes to the same people. To take two instances,

the late Professor Fawcett had failing sight, when it was permanently destroyed by a gun accident; and an old friend of mine, who has recently passed away, was lamed by an accident at five years old; and when already past sixty had a fall, and broke his leg. The Allan Kardec school teaches that the outlines of a man's life are fixed by necessity or karma before he comes into the world (Plato, in the famous *Vision of Er*, teaches the same), and that although he may change his outward surroundings, he cannot change his ordained trials, which will follow him in one form or other, either for his whole life, or for the appointed period. I should like the opinion of some of our leading Theosophists on this subject.

W. F. K.

*The Third Eye in Persia.*—In Mr. Elsworth Huntington's *Explorations in Turkestan*, issued by the Carnegie Institution of Washington, in dealing with the legendary history of Sistan, an eastern province of Persia, the following interesting passage occurs:

"Sistan has its own crop of legends. The village of Deh Abbas Khan lies on the shore of the lake two or three miles east of Kuh-i-Khoja, and is inhabited by Sayids, who are supposed to be one of the oldest and purest Persian stocks in existence. According to their own traditions, they have inhabited the country from time immemorial, and are the descendants of the ancient Zoroastrian population. The chief of the village possesses an ancient book which has been handed down to him from many generations of ancestors and is now his dearest treasure. From this book he partly read, but mostly related, to me the following traditions:

"Long, long ago all Sistan was occupied by water, a great lake, which covered not only the swamp and the site of the modern villages, but the site of Zahidan and the other ruins as well. King Suliman (Solomon) saw the lake and perceived that if it were free from water the bottom would be very good for grain and melons and all sorts of fruit. At that time there was no more rain than now, but the rivers, which came from springs in the mountains, were very much larger. Desiring to benefit mankind, King Suliman sent for his 'dhus,'—huge giants, each with a single eye looking upward from the top of his head, and ordered them to reclaim the lake. Swifter than man can imagine, they went to work, and, digging up earth from this side and from that, carried it on their shoulders in bags, and filled the lake. By noon the work was completed, and hence the country is sometimes called 'Nim-ruz,' or 'Half-day.' When the work was finished the 'dhus' went to the springs in the mountains and covered them, so that the water no longer came out. Since that time there has been some water in the lake, but far less than formerly."

E. J. C.

*Spiritual Counterparts in the New Testament.*—In the *Acts of the Apostles* (chap. xii.), an interesting story is told of Peter's miraculous escape by night

from prison. He made his way to the house where his friends were gathered, and when the maid who answered his knock told those within that it was Peter they were incredulous, and exclaimed, "It is his angel!" What exactly did they mean?

Some commentators have suggested "guardian angel," being akin to the *genius* of the Romans, Horace's

Genius, natale comes qui temperat astrum,  
Naturae deus humanae, mortalis in unum  
Quodque caput, voltu mutabilis, albus et ater.  
*Epistles* II., 2, 188.

Or Pindar's

δαιμων γενέθλιος.

Ol. XIII., 148.

But the trouble is that we do not know that there was any popular belief in guardian angels among the Jews in apostolic times, and even if there had been, Peter's friends would not have conceived of his angel roaming about Jerusalem while they believed him to be in prison and desperately in need of that same angel. Dr. J. H. Moulton, however, has recently suggested (*Journal of Theological Studies*, July, 1902) that "angel" in the passage quoted means simply spiritual counterpart, and he finds evidence of a belief in spiritual counterparts in the saying of Jesus in which he speaks of the angels of the little ones who always behold the face of his Father which is in heaven. Such angels are not sent forth to minister as guardian angels are conceived to be, but they stand in God's presence, and Dr. Moulton believes that the Jews borrowed the idea from the Persians, for he draws attention to the close resemblance between these angels and the Zoroastrian *fravashis*. In later Parsism man is divided into body, life, soul, form, and *fravashi*. The soul at death unites with the *fravashi* and becomes immortal. The *fravashi* is that part of man which is always in the presence of Ahura. It is not a man's guardian spirit, but an integral part of him, his spiritual counterpart, the man himself, the part that is hidden with God.

Dr. Moulton's theory is exceedingly interesting to Theosophists, because he has stumbled on New Testament corroboration of the existence of two higher principles in man, which, however, he regards as a single principle only. Yet a little reflection would have shown him that the "angel" to which Peter's friends referred could not be identical with an angel who is supposed to be always before the face of the Almighty. Mary's household would sooner have accepted Rhoda's statement that it was Peter himself at the door, than have suggested that it might be such an angel. Evidently, in New Testament times a man was conceived to have more "spiritual counterparts" than one, and Peter's friends must have referred to what Theosophists would term his "astral" (popularly his "double," or his "ghost"), while Jesus in his description of the angels of the little ones was speaking of the higher trinity of man's nature, possibly of the Âtman itself.

E. J. C.

## ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 269.

*(Continued from p. 8.)*

M. L. M.—*Can any explanation be given of the following statement of Subba Row?*

“*Ancient philosophers held that as a substratum for this visible universe there is another universe—perhaps we may call it the universe of Astral Light, the real Universe of Noumena, the Soul as it were of this Visible Universe. It is hinted that this hidden universe is to be represented by an Icosahedron. . . . The connection between an Icosahedron and a Dodecahedron is something very peculiar and interesting . . . and may be understood by the undermentioned geometrical construction.*

“*Describe a sphere about an Icosahedron, let perpendiculars be drawn from the centre of the sphere on its faces and produced to meet the surface of the sphere—now if the points of intersection be joined a Dodecahedron is formed within the sphere. By a similar process an Icosahedron may be constructed from a Dodecahedron. The figure constructed as above will represent the Universe of Matter and the Universe of Astral Light as they actually exist. . . . The figure of the Universe is bounded by Pentagons—if taken as regular Pentagons (on the supposition that the Universe is symmetrically constructed), the figure of the Material Universe will be a Dodecahedron.*”—From Esoteric Writings of Subba Row.

S. C.—The icosahedron and the dodecahedron are the two most complicated of the five platonic solids, and have, as their names imply, twenty faces (triangles) and twelve faces (pentagons) respectively. The relationship between them, to which Subba Row alludes, is sometimes described by saying that they are reciprocals of each other. If M. L. M. does not follow Subba Row's description of this relationship he might make an icosahedron by putting together twenty equilateral triangles, five at each corner, and also a dodecahedron by putting together twelve regular pentagons, three at each corner. He will then see that faces in the one figure represent corners in the other. Join the middle points of the faces of an icosahedron, and the result is a dodecahedron. Join the middle points of the faces of a dodecahedron, and the result is an icosahedron. Also the two figures each have thirty edges. This same relationship is found between a cube and an octahedron, but in this case the basic numbers are twelve (edges), eight and six (corners and faces), instead of thirty (edges), twenty and twelve (corners and faces). The tetrahedron again has for its basic numbers four and six, and is reciprocal to itself.

As to the esoteric meaning of these geometrical facts, there seems to be some uncertainty, and one can only make suggestions. It is possible that the basic numbers, thirty, twenty and twelve, which are common to the icosahedron and dodecahedron, represent in some way the basic properties of both the seen and the unseen universe. H. P. B. speaks of the “dodecahedron of the universe” (*Secret Doctrine*, II. 39), and the same idea is

to be found in Plato, but there seems to be some doubt whether it is not the rhombic dodecahedron which is meant in both cases, to the exclusion of the regular dodecahedron bounded by pentagons. The five platonic solids are supposed by some writers to represent the characteristics of the matter of the five lower planes. There are passages in the *Timæus* of Plato relating to this question.

G. R. S. M.—If the solid geometry is a puzzle to M. L. M., I shall be pleased to show him or her the models, so that the relations between an icosahedron and dodecahedron may be traced physically in the mutual interpenetration of five tetrahedra. If, however, the question is what did Subba Row really mean by the statement that as the hidden noumenal universe is to the visible phenomenal universe so is an icosahedron to a dodecahedron,—we shall have to sort out our factors with great care and define our terms with great precision.

It will be observed, in the first place, that our learned colleague, who has left us so much food for thought in his esoteric writings, is using terms that have since been defined somewhat differently by other writers. He tells us that the solid geometrical figure, the construction of which he describes, “will represent the universe of matter and the universe of astral light as they actually exist.” But the figure represents the relations of two of the regular solids to one another on the same “plane”—that is in the state called “solid.” Now, if I am not mistaken, platonically speaking, we should rather say that the dodecahedron and icosahedron in such mutual relationship represent a certain phase of solid matter to a certain other phase of solid matter,—using the word “solid,” however, in its philosophical sense, and not in its ordinary meaning. For the “astral light” can hardly be said to be physically solid, although the “astral plane” for all practical purposes seems to be three-dimensional in *form*, though its matter is more fluid than our own. Perhaps, then, the idea that Subba Row had in his mind was the relationship between the “etheric” and “sub-etheric” state of the physical or “solid” nature of matter. At any rate, it would seem to be wiser to start from this point of view. The icosahedron will be hidden in the dodecahedron,—if we first of all regard the objective form of the dodecahedron only and do not seek to go beneath its surfaces; but once with our mental eye we penetrate its surfaces we find the icosahedron within the dodecahedron, if, of course, we again arrest our mental sight at *its* surfaces, and do not go further.

If, then, we try to think out the relationship between these two figures, we shall gain some insight into the configuration of the “sub-etheric” and “etheric” states of matter and their mutual relationship. And if we succeed in this most healthy exercise and discipline of the mind, we shall then be enabled to go further, and by the contemplation of the surfaces, angles and sides, and their mutual relationships, become farther initiated into the mysteries of geometry or Earth-

measurement. But all this has to do with one "Element" only in the scale of things, and doubtless Water-measurement, and Air-measurement and Fire-measurement will be of a different character. But before we can enter with profit into this further world-measuring, we shall have to get the sense of Water and Air and Fire more strongly developed in us. For by all these I do not mean our objective elements, since our earth and water, air and fire, are all earthy—four aspects of the cosmic Element, Earth.

I do not, of course, in jotting down these notes, presume to explain Subba Row; but what I would say is this, that all these thoughts must have been at the back of his mind, synthesised in some great concept of the relationship between the noumenal and phenomenal world, the intelligible and the sensible, the soul and the body, the astral light and the terrestrial darkness, heaven and earth.

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QUESTION 277.

(Continued from p. 24).

B. G. T.—Assuming absence of organic and functional disease, what is the real cause of senile decay in the physical body?

H. J. A.—The assumption stated in this question is unwarrantable; there is *no* senile decay which is not preceded by organic or functional disease of some description. Such an expression as "died of old age perfectly healthy to the last" is absurd. We know what it means; but the fact that death occurs to man (unless by accident) proves that he has lost the power to keep healthy. If, however, the question be altered to "What is the cause of senile decay?" it may be answered, and various are the replies.

(1) Dr. De Lacy Evans in *How to Prolong Life*, with much show of reason assigns the cause to be the accumulation in the system of what are known as the "earthy salts"—*i.e.*, phosphate of lime, sulphate of lime and magnesia, carbonate of lime, etc. These taken as part of our food and drink, eventually "silt up" the system, choking the capillaries, thus producing mal-nutrition, which is really a functional disease of the entire body. This theory is of some value; it teaches us, *inter alia*, to avoid hard water. But we require a more ultimate explanation: we want to know why the system loses its power to throw off these earthy salts. The deficiencies of this theory (which may be called the "earthy salt" theory) are supplied by—

(2) The Uric Acid theory (*vide* Dr. Haig's monumental work, *Uric Acid*, also *Diet and Food*). Both theories agree in regarding food and drink as the prime factors in disease; both agree that old age is produced by silting up of the system, thus leading to mal-nutrition of every part. But the Uric Acid theory lays the blame for this, not on the earthy salts, but on the proteine (albumen, fibrin, casein, gluten) in our foods. It lays down that certain foods more than others produce in the

body Uric Acid. This Uric Acid acts as a clog in the blood, impeding the circulation, stopping up the capillaries, thereby preventing the proper elimination of waste products. Hence mal-nutrition, *i.e.*, a disease of the entire body, ensues.

When the above is the case physical vigour is impaired: the body cannot throw off objectionable gases, such as, principally, sulphuretted hydrogen, which is a very powerful depressant to the nerve centres. The absorption of carbonic acid would also add to the physical *malaise*, but to an infinitely less extent than the other causes referred to. This theory is the product of years of research, and is supported by the results of thousand of experiments made in this country and in America; and it includes a large number of physicians amongst its adherents.

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QUESTION 278.

D.—Can the student accept the records of the past (as seen in the astral light) as absolutely trustworthy? Are not the so-called akâshic records sometimes distorted by the investigator's own thought-forms, unconsciously projected, and have not quite irreconcilable statements sometimes been deduced from these records?

E. J. C.—The student cannot accept as absolutely trustworthy an investigator's reading of the akâshic records any more than he can accept as an absolutely trustworthy account Mr. Andrew Lang's *John Knox and the Reformation* or Froude's *Cæsar*. It is a commonplace of criticism that the investigations of these historians have been distorted by their own thought-forms,—beyond doubt unconsciously projected, for their honesty is not in question,—and everyone knows that their views are quite irreconcilable with those of other historians. Yet, nevertheless, both profit and pleasure may result from a study of their works. And not only are historians at fault; it is notorious that even the first-hand evidence of educated people has been proved to be of little value in certain circumstances; and in the official accounts of the late Russian-Japanese war, officers are at variance as to the date when a particular battle began, as to the period of its endurance, and as to the extent of the area involved in the operations. It by no means follows, therefore, that statements of facts said to be culled from the akâshic records are to be thrown aside as worthless simply because they cannot be accepted as absolutely trustworthy. The question of real importance (although it is not asked) is whether any investigator is able to read the akâshic records so accurately as to render the results reasonably reliable. The investigators themselves unhesitatingly answer yes; and that notwithstanding their experience of the difficulties of the task,—difficulties that are not confined to the mingling with the records of their own thought-forms, but include the disturbing element of the thought-forms of other people, and the impossibility of bringing down into their physical consciousness and imparting to others exactly what they see.

We are accustomed to accept as trustworthy the results of the scientific experiments of specialists, if we have no reason to doubt the general probity of their character, and if we are assured that other specialists have checked their experiments; and that although the number of scientists who are equipped for the work is comparatively small. It appears to me that we must accept the records of the past if similar conditions are satisfied.

I note that J. D. refers to the akâshic records "as seen in the astral light." Mr. Leadbeater (to whose articles on the subject in the twentieth volume of *Lucifer* I refer J. D.) has stated that all that can be seen on the astral plane is a reflection of the record, sometimes fairly perfect, but also sometimes quite fragmentary and misleading; while the record on the devachanic plane is clear, perfect and impossible to be mistaken.

A. B. C.—I do not think that students have ever been asked to accept records "as seen in the astral light as absolutely trustworthy." On the contrary, most emphatic warnings are constantly being uttered as to the necessity for receiving all such revelations with caution, because of the liability to error, partly due to the very cause which J. D. suggests. And I have generally found that the people whose akâshic readings have been most valuable are precisely the persons who most carefully warn the student against pinning his faith upon them. It has always seemed to me that the dharma of the student as distinct from the business of the seer is to receive with gratitude the various statements vouchsafed by the seers, and endeavour to see how they fit into the scheme of the cosmos which his studies have revealed to him. Many things may be accepted as partial explanations and working hypotheses which have later to be dropped in favour of fuller information, or a theory covering a wider range of facts, but we may be duly glad of the stepping-stone which assists us to a better view-point. On the other hand to accept everything seen by clairvoyance just because it happens to be vision of another plane of matter, and so regarded as infallible revelation, would be a course calculated to lead to complete mental paralysis and decay.

E. A. B.—No doubt there is a possibility of mistake in reading the "akâshic records," even by the few highly developed and trained clairvoyants who alone are able to read them at all, and they are the first to warn students of the fact. Moreover, it appears that they do not as a rule publish any such observations when made by any single seer, but only when checked and verified by one or more engaged in the same investigations. And even then, people must use their own judgment in deciding how far they may or may not rely on what they are told.

Also it may be suggested that they do not in all cases rightly apprehend what they are told.

B. K.—The "records of the past" in themselves

are indeed absolutely correct and reliable, since they are the consciousness of the Logos in which is included every detail of all that happens in his universe. But it is quite another matter as regards what the "seers" and investigators bring through to this plane of consciousness of what they contact or touch on higher planes—not the astral or even lower mânasic—in the consciousness of the Logos.

In the first place, then, even with the best of "seers," short of the Masters, there is always more or less of distortion and imperfection in the bringing through due to the imperfections of the vehicles, as well as to the inherent and *insuperable* limitations of the capacity of response due to the tattvic limitations imposed upon the atoms of each plane by the Logos. Next there is, as suggested in the question, the very considerable, most often indeed the very large, amount of error introduced by the observer's "personal equation," his prejudices and preconceptions, his own auric atmosphere and thought-forms, as well as his habits of mind coupled with the age-long grooving therein derived from innumerable past lives.

Hence every sane and careful person must be prepared, as time goes on, for the discovery of endless errors and mistakes in what our investigators have told us. Personally, I am inclined to allow a margin of error of not less than 75 per cent. in all our existing information so obtained, or sometimes question whether even that is enough. For look at any branch of ordinary science. Everywhere we see change, often total transformation; and yet each of these sciences embodies in its actual present state the labours and researches of thousands of the most able and carefully trained observers working throughout at least two centuries, and observing, checking, deducing, under conditions infinitely less difficult and less liable to error than those under which our investigators have to do their work. Let us, therefore, not be amazed or dismayed when we find mistakes and contradictions, but realise with true humanity the stupendous difficulty of the task and cherish the deeper gratitude towards those who are doing their best to gather materials and prepare foundations for the diviner science of the future.

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The subscription to THE VAHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

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*All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

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

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LONDON, DECEMBER 1, 1905.

NO. 5.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### THE PARIS CONGRESS.

The following letter has been received from the President of the French Congress Committee, and is published for the information of members.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary*.

To the *General Secretary of the British Section*,  
28, Albemarle Street.

The Sectional Committee of the French Section for the organisation of the 1906 Congress has much pleasure in inviting you officially to be present at the meeting of the third Theosophical Congress of the European Federation, which will be held in Paris on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th of June, 1906.

We will extend to all the members of the British Section who will attend our Congress a warm fraternal welcome, and we will do our best to make their stay amongst us profitable and agreeable.

You will receive shortly some notices and circulars relating to the Congress, the contents of which we will kindly ask you to make known to the members of your Section.

Yours very fraternally,  
CH. BLECH.

### CLOSING OF ROOMS AT ALBEMARLE STREET.

The rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be closed for the Christmas Holidays from and including Saturday, December 23rd, to December 27th, opening again at the usual time on Thursday, December 28th.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary*.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### New Centres.

A new Centre was formed on Sunday evening, November 12th, at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton, where meetings will be held every Sunday, at 6.30 p.m.

All enquiries should be made of Mrs. Alan Leo at the above address.

A Centre has also been formed in Edinburgh, to be known as the South Edinburgh Centre. It is in connection with the Edinburgh Lodge. Information can be obtained from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary*.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to November 20th: E. A. B., £6; H. S. S., £2 2s.; F. M., 10s. 6d.; D. S., 5s.; A. H., £5; M. M., 10s.; A. McD., £5; E. M. M., £1 1s.; J. E. H., £5; E. D., £2; J. T. P., 10s.; T. C. S., £1; H. R., £1; G. S. H., £2 2s.; W. A. A., £1; J. B. P., £7 5s. 9d.; F. T., 5s.; E. G., £1; J. M., 12s.; H. B., £2; I. F. B., 5s.; F. G., £10; M. M. C., £1 1s.; V. T., £15; F. Z., £2; N. G., £5 5s.; E. S., £1 1s.; S. E. G., 2s. 6d.  
Total, £78 17s. 9d.

#### Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *Egyptian Exploration Fund Archaeological Report*, 1902-1903; *Das untergegangene Lemuria*, W. Scott-Elliot; *Roman Society*, from *Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, S. Dill, M.A.; *Judah Hallevi's Kitab Al Khazari*, translated from the Arabic by H. Hirschfeld, Ph.D.; *The Dark Night of the Soul*, San Juan de la Cruz, translated by G. C. Graham; *A Golden Afternoon, and Other Stories*.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *The Individual; A Study of Life and Death*, N. S. Shaler; *The Eternal Life*, H. Münsterberg; *The Directorium Asceticum, or Guide to the Spiritual Life*, J. S. Scaramelli, S.J.; *The Works of William Blake*, edited by E. J. Ellis and W. B. Yeats; *Plotinus, His Life, Times, and Philosophy*; *Greek Folk Poesy*, L. M. J. Garnet and J. S. Stuart-Glennie, M.A.; *The Women of Turkey and their Folklore*, L. M. J. Garnet and J. S. Stuart-Glennie, M.A.; *Spirals in Nature and Art*, T. A. Cook; *A Concise History of Freemasonry*, R. F. Gould; *Spiritual Life and Prayer*, Mme. C. J. Bruyere; *Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, T. Inman; *The Evolution of Religion: an Anthropological Study*, L. R. Farnell; *Pythagore et la Philosophie Pythagoricienne*, A. Ed. Chaignet; *Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman; *The Six Books of Proclus on the Theology of Plato*, translated by T. Taylor; *The Science of Symbols*, G. Blount; *Lectures on the Early History of the Kingship*, J. G. Frazer; *The Secret of the Totem*, Andrew Lang; *Theosophy and Human Life*, Annie Besant; *Essays in Logos and Gnosis*, T. S. Lea, B.D.

R. A. HOBSON,  
Assistant Librarian.

#### Men's Evenings.

At the meeting on Wednesday, December 13th, the subject for discussion will be "What is the Fourth Dimension?"

These meetings are held fortnightly, on Wednesday evenings, at 8.30. All men members are cordially invited to attend. There will be no meeting in Christmas week.

G. R. S. M.

#### Afternoon Meetings at Headquarters.

Meetings are held on Mondays, at 28, Albemarle Street, W., from 3.30 to 4.30, at which a short lecture is given, followed by questions and discussions.

These meetings are open to the public and members of the Society.

December 4th, "More Mystic Sayings of the Lord," G. R. S. Mead; December 11th, "Psychism," Mrs. Hooper.

#### Practice Debating Class.

The Meetings for December will take place on Tuesdays, 5th and 19th, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, W., from 6.30 to 8 p.m., exactly.

F. M. M. RUSSELL.

#### Blavatsky Lodge.

Mr. Herbert Burrows, being obliged to go out of town on December 10th, will give his lecture on "The Relation of Theosophy to ordinary Human Life," on Sunday, December 17th; and Mr. Mead will take December 10th.

The autumn lecture list of the Lodge has been a very attractive one. Among those who had not spoken to the Lodge before were Mr. Montague Fordham and Mr. Spencer, both of whom lectured on Art in a very suggestive manner. Mr. Waddington also read an interesting paper on a kindred subject, while Mrs. Esther Wood spoke to us on "The Supernatural in Tragic Poetry."

F. E.-W.

#### The West London Lodge.

The West London Branch has sought to brighten its meetings by a musical introduction. To this end certain musical friends have banded themselves together to sing either as a choir, or in trio or quartette. Some suitable songs have been borrowed from the collection of the Lotus Lodge. The innovation seems to be appreciated.

H. W.

#### North London Lodge.

Mr. G. R. S. Mead will lecture at 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, Islington, N., on Wednesday, December 6th, at 8.30 p.m., on "The Gnosis of Valentinus." Tyndale Place is five minutes' walk from Highbury Station (N.L.R.), and ten minutes from the "Angel," Islington.

VINCENT LEWIS,  
Hon. Secretary.

#### Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Halle, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. Mondays at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street: Dec. 4th, *The True Meaning of Christmas*, A. J. Faulding; Dec. 11th, *King Solomon in Oriental Legend*, Rabbi Abelson; Dec. 18th, *Birth and Death, a Change in the Form of Perception*, F. Bligh Bond. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Dec. 3rd, *Other World Thoughts*, T. Hands; Dec. 10th, *The Emotions*, Miss A. M. Smith; Dec. 17th, *Aids to the Soul*, J. S. Akehurst; Dec. 30th, . . . . . A. P. Wilkins.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Church Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

CLIFTON LODGE. "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Wednesdays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Anderson, at above address.

COVENTRY CENTRE. 149, Foleshill Road, Coventry, on Fridays, at 7 p.m. Drawing-room meetings held periodically. Information from Mrs. Nevill, at the above address.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 34, Wicklow Street. On Mondays, at 4 p.m., study class, and advanced study class at 5 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 14th, *The Philosophy of Edward Carpenter*, J. D. Crawford; Dec. 17th, Inter-debate with Edinburgh Independent Labour Party. Lodge meetings on Dec. 2nd; *The Great Announcement, a Pre-Christian Gnostic Document*, G. R. S. Mead; and Dec. 7th. Library open on Monday and Friday, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Meetings on Sundays, at 4 p.m., and on Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmouth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, SOUTH EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 13th, *Malthusianism and Socialism in the Light of Theosophy*, W. M. Kilday. Study of *Man and his Bodies* on alternate Wednesdays. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Sundays at 3 p.m., at Shepherd's Hall: Dec. 10th, *The Primitive Religion of the British Isles*, Ian Ross. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 4, Nelson Street.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 23, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 11, Story Street. Information from H. E. Nichol, 67, Park Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club

Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 11th, *Greek Philosophy*, A. W. Waddington. Study of *The Ancient Wisdom* on alternate Mondays. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m.: Dec. 6th, *Van Helmont's Vision of the Soul*, Mme. de Steiger; Dec. 13th, *The Elements of Theosophy*; Dec. 20th, *The Pedigree of Man*. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Dec. 3rd, *Intellectual Piety*, Miss Forster; Dec. 10th, *Environment*, Miss Gutteridge; Dec. 17th, *The Path of Creation*, W. C. Worsdell; Dec. 21st, No Meeting; Dec. 31st, *The Thinker and his Vehicles*, Miss Russell. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 7th, *The Gospel according to St. Paul*, Miss C. E. Woods; Dec. 14th, *Fragments of the Trismegistic Literature*, G. R. S. Mead. Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Dec. 3rd, *Workers in the Invisible*, Miss E. Ward; Dec. 10th, *From the Gnosis of Marcus*, G. R. S. Mead; Dec. 17th, *The Relation of Theosophy to ordinary Human Life*, Herbert Burrows.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 6th, *Rutherford and the Scottish Mystics*, Mrs. Esther Wood; Dec. 13th, *The Gospel according to St. Paul*, Miss C. E. Woods. No meetings on Dec. 20th and 27th. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 4th, *The Creative Vortex*, W. C. Worsdell; Dec. 11th, *National and Individual Karma*, Alan Leo; Dec. 18th, Questions.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. At 7 p.m., class for the study of *General Elementary Science*. Public lectures on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Dec. 3rd, *The Three Truths of Theosophy*, J. M. Watkins; Dec. 10th, *Symbology*, A. H. Barley; Dec. 17th, *The At-one-ment*, P. Tovey. Meetings for enquirers on Fridays, at 3.30 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3 p.m. Meetings for young members and friends on Saturdays, at 7 p.m. Information from the Hon. Sec. at above address.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Dec. 6th, *The Gnosis of Valentinus*, G. R. S. Mead; Dec. 13th, *Occult Gleanings from Japan*, V. Lewis; Dec. 20th, *Gospel Growth*, Rev. A. Baker.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. : Dec. 1st, *The Art of Richard Wagner*, W. C. Ward ; Dec. 8th, "*A Study in Consciousness*"; Dec. 15th, *Conversazione*.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., study of *The Key to Theosophy*; Sundays, at 7 p.m., public meetings at 126, Creame Street (corner of Princess Road), Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Sec., 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. First and third Tuesdays, for enquirers, and second, fourth and fifth Tuesdays, study class for members. Service on Sundays, 6.30 p.m. Doors closed, 6.45 p.m. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 179, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Dec. 3rd, *Heaven—Here and Hereafter*, R. Pexton; Dec. 10th, *The Sense Garment*, F. D. Harrison; Dec. 17th, *Greek Thought*, A. W. Waddington. Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*. Alternate Saturdays and Fridays, debating class at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Dec. 5th, *We have seen His Star in the East*, Miss E. M. Green; Dec. 12th, *Practical Theosophy*, Mrs. Sharpe; Dec. 19th, Questions and Discussion. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate: Dec. 1st, *Greek Thought*, A. W. Waddington; Dec. 8th, Musical Evening; Dec. 15th, *Theosophy and Religion*. . . . Lodge Study, on Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, York.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### A PROPOSED ENQUIRY CONCERNING REINCARNATION IN THE CHURCH FATHERS.

Some months ago a correspondent—a member of the Society—wrote to me from the other side of the Atlantic; he suggested that I was wasting my time publishing studies in the *Theosophical Review* on abstruse subjects which were of no interest to the vast majority of its readers, and that I could far better employ my energies in making a collection of passages from the Church Fathers to prove that the doctrine of reincarnation was a fundamental dogma of the Christian faith.

I answered him as best I could in apology for what he considered a waste of my energies. It has, however, occurred to me that it would be of great service for the better understanding of the matter in all its bearings if a sort of symposium were established in the *Review* for the consideration of the question.

I, therefore, propose as follows:

(i.) That those of my colleagues who are sufficiently interested will be so good as to send me in all the references they may have come across, either in the writings of the Church Fathers themselves or in other books referring to the subject, which are considered or claimed to teach the doctrine of reincarnation.

(ii.) That I will then verify them in the original texts, translate them, and if necessary supply a summary of the context.

(iii.) This enquiry may be extended to include passages in the Old and New Testaments, to be treated in the same fashion, and in the case of the Old Testament, owing to my paucity of knowledge of the Hebrew language, I will try to obtain the co-operation of a competent Hebraist.

(iv.) The enquiry should also include all passages in extra-canonical and apocryphal Christian literature, and also in the writings of the Christianised Gnosis, where the doctrine is taught in the greatest fullness.

The departments falling under headings iii. and iv., however, may be reserved for later treatment, and attention be first of all concentrated on Patristic references.

These should include references of every kind to reincarnation, palingenesis, metempsychosis, metempsychosis or metempsychosis, and also to the doctrine of pre-existence of the soul.

But care should be taken to collect *all* passages, irrespective of whether they make for a belief in the doctrine or repudiate it in any or all of its forms; for it would be building a house on the sand to

select an obscure passage in a Father which seemed at first sight to support the doctrine, when the same Father is found elsewhere categorically condemning it *vi et armis*.

In sending in passages, moreover, I would ask those who propose to help me to be so good as to copy, with absolute fidelity, stops and capitals, and to give the references with complete exactitude, adding the title and author of the work, place and date of publication; also, if it is so stated, the edition of the text of the Church Father to which reference is made, or of the translation; and also to write on one side of the paper only.

If this suggestion is taken up I will at once begin the publication of the passages, not waiting for the amassing of all the references, but printing them as they come in. When this is done,—if, of course, the suggestion is acted on in any serious fashion,—I shall be able afterwards to systematise the quotations, and after critical treatment to publish the result as a valuable contribution to Theosophical literature.

I therefore appeal most earnestly to all my colleagues all over the world to help in this. Nearly everyone can do a little to help; but if everybody leaves it to everyone else, then I must abandon the matter for the time being, for I have not at present the physical moments in which to attempt the task unaided.

G. R. S. MEAD.

### ENQUIRER.

#### QUESTION 278.

(Continued from p. 32.)

*D.—Can the student accept the records of the past (as seen in the astral light) as absolutely trustworthy? Are not the so-called akâshic records sometimes distorted by the investigator's own thought-forms, unconsciously projected, and have not quite irreconcilable statements sometimes been deduced from these records?*

A. H. W.—The writer understands that the “records” themselves must be absolutely trustworthy, since theoretically they are perfect photographs on a perfect basis. But the organ with which they are investigated must be equally flawless, before the things seen can be trusted; and the observing mind must also be perfectly balanced, and absolutely disinterested. The second part of the question must therefore be answered in the affirmative. The vision of the Master of Wisdom alone can be entirely trusted. Otherwise, it is better to suspend the judgment as to statements which do not apparently fit into the general scheme of things, so far as one comprehends it. Such difficulties are almost always on non-essential matters, and often clear themselves up if one waits. When the observer is known to be a person of strong bias or prejudice in any given direction, his seeings in that direction are certain to be distorted, and should be very carefully discounted and corrected by the statements of others whose emotional leanings are on other lines.

#### QUESTION 279.

*X.—If anyone has determined to overcome ignorance (Avidyâ, Mâyâ) and to throw his whole life into this effort, how and where can he awaken and train the necessary internal faculties?*

*In the midst of common social surroundings such an achievement seems almost impossible.*

*Are not unselfishness, compassion, etc., results rather than preliminaries to insight?*

E. J. C.—This is a most difficult question to answer aright, because the personal element is perhaps the most important factor in the equation; and one feels that wholly different answers might be given to different questioners.

The determination expressed, the intention to devote a whole life to the effort to overcome ignorance, and the hint that this is surely impossible in the midst of common social surroundings,—all suggest an enthusiasm that is young, and as yet unbroken and unharnessed. There is a sense of haste in the wording of the question, an eagerness to arrive at the goal, to get there in the cool of the morning and before the burden and heat of the day, and a (perhaps unconscious) shutting of the eyes to the facts that the path is long, that it winds uphill all the way, and that on the mountain-side there are neither trains nor motor-cars, but only lots of time. It is to such a questioner that I reply, conscious, however, that it may be quite otherwise, and that I may have altogether missed the mark.

First of all, the necessary internal faculties for the overcoming of ignorance can be awakened and trained just in X.'s present life and in the midst of common social surroundings. “Blessed be drudgery” is a beatitude which somehow has slipped out of the catena in Matthew, and yet is as pregnant a saying as any of them. For what can be got out of drudgery and our common social duties? Power of attention, of concentration, of industry; promptitude in beginning work; method; accuracy; dispatch; perseverance; patience; courage; cheeriness; self-control; self-denial. One of the qualifications that X. must have ere he overcomes Avidyâ is “right discrimination”; let him take the dross of drudgery, and by discrimination sift out the golden opportunities afforded him for the development of these moral qualities. We so often grumble that, situated as we are, we cannot realise our ideal, but the retort has been aptly made that that is because we never attempt to *idealise our real*. Unless it be clear to us that we are exceptional souls who require exceptional treatment, let us act on the principle that the caste in which we find ourselves has been selected as best fitted for us, and seek how best to perform its duties. This is the teaching in all the creeds:—

The trivial round, the common task  
Will furnish all we ought to ask—  
Room to deny ourselves, a road  
To bring us daily nearer God.

I have indicated where Mâyâ may be overcome and how as regards the development of ethical qualities—qualities imperatively needed by every-

one who would tread the path. I have space only to hint at the development of other qualities. Can X. not give half-an-hour each morning to meditation, and another half-hour each day to intellectual study? If he can, then let him never permit a day to pass without this discipline, and ere long he will surely enter another portal on the way. I commend to his attention *Man and his Bodies*, pp. 69-75 and 89-103; *The Path of Discipleship*, pp. 67-70; *Light on the Path*, p. 3; and generally these books and *The Outer Court*. Let him put in practice what is there taught.

It is quite true; causes produce results, and results react on causes. Compassion leads to insight, and insight to a yet deeper compassion, and who can tell whether the egg or the hen came first? But does it matter?

E. L.—It is said, and truly, that amid any circumstances a man can evolve and can make use of the material to hand. It is the right kind for him at the time. The outward opposition is meant to strengthen his inner resolve and therefore is an aid in disguise. The fact that it is in disguise serves to quicken his dull perception. Unselfishness and compassion *should* precede insight, that is, insight of real value to the owner. Assuredly it must flow from it and ever increase.

A. B. C.—This querent is recommended to study the following works: *In the Outer Court* and *The Path of Discipleship*, by Mrs. Besant; *Invisible Helpers*, by Mr. Leadbeater; *The Path of Initiation*, by Mr. Sinnett; *First Steps in Occultism*, by H. P. B. and M. C.; and, most of all, the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, in which he will find laid down the method of the spiritual life for the man of the world. A lecture delivered by Mrs. Besant during July, which is to be printed in a future issue of the *Theosophical Review*, under the title "The Meaning and Method of the Spiritual Life," will probably give the querent a few ideas to start his study of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*.

A. H. W.—The writer understands that the internal faculties can be awakened and trained in three "ways." The way of knowledge, the way of devotion, and the way of imagination. These correspond to the three great things in life—science, religion and art. Which of these a man will take depends on his essential nature. These three ways in their absolute essentials are *know truth, do good, be perfect*, and each when pursued to the end includes the others. To know truth you must both do good and be perfect; and so with the others. The corresponding virtues are peace, mercy, and grace. Choose, therefore, your way and walk in it—so much for the "how." Where? In the laboratory, temple, or studio of your own soul. There is no secret which someone could tell you if he would. It is a matter of internal growth and realisation. If you are lost in a forest, and want to see where you are, you must climb a mountain and get above it—so now, if you want "insight," you must alter your point of view from the personal to the impersonal.

Of the ways of knowledge and devotion you will find much written in theosophical books. Imagination, the writer thinks, may be used in this way. Imagine that you yourself *are* the eternal ego within you. Realise that you have had many personalities before the present, X., and that you will have many in the future, when X. is laid aside. Realise that you live to learn truth, do good, and be perfect, and for nothing else; and that life is just the school of experience for you to do these things. Train yourself to keep this standpoint and you are on the mountain. Things will begin to take on a very different aspect. What you thought important will be seen not to matter in the least. You will see that the One Life is working out its own salvation in everyone, and doing its best at its stage of evolution. You will realise that were you in the place of another you would do exactly what he is doing, however sinful it seems to your advanced evolution; you will, therefore, have the fellow-feeling that makes us wondrous kind—the true compassion. You will also have the will to help all the other egos in their own ways—the true unselfishness. You will have the vision of things as they really are—the true knowledge. So will insight come to you. Lastly, you will see how to steer your own course and to become perfect. You will become a master of the art of life, for you will have "retreated to that inner fortress whence the personal man can be viewed with impartiality."

It is evident that common social surroundings are no bar to the way of imagination. They form the level from which imagination soars; they are the school of Experience where the material of knowledge is found; they are the Hall of Learning when you have "entered the state in which learning becomes possible." That is to say, when by imagination you have entered your ego-vehicle and learned to live there always. It is not easy, the personality will perpetually drag you down, but you can always get up again and get rid of the illusion which has blinded you. There is a certain grim satisfaction in casting dead illusions overboard, they lighten the ship wonderfully; and you must be prepared to let everything go, one thing after another. Of course this may not be your way, it may seem hopelessly visionary and unreal; if so, try one of the others. The way of the imagination is only possible for those who have cultivated that power through many lives of artistic effort.

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QUESTION 280.

H. L. B.—Does Plato anywhere teach evolution other-where than very indefinitely in Book IV. of The Republic?

E. J. C.—The evolution of life is clearly enough taught by Plato in many passages, but I take it that the question refers to the evolution of *form*. If this be so, then the first remark that occurs to one is that it is only in a very indefinite form in Greek philosophy that the teaching of such evolu-

tion may be expected to be found. If it were otherwise, we should not have had to wait until the nineteenth century for *The Origin of Species* and *First Principles*. It is quite true that the elder thinkers of our race knew much more than we are apt at times to acknowledge. The seeds of almost all scientific ideas seem to have been dimly enfolded in the mind of antiquity, and fecundated one by one in after ages. At the same time, even the ancients had their limits, and it is mere folly to prate of "blinds," of the secrecy of the Mysteries, and of solemn oaths, when behind such blinds and secrecy nothing is concealed. Such an explanation is permissible only when allusions to some truth are frequent enough to make it evident that a much larger knowledge is deliberately reserved; it can never be validly adopted in cases where there is total silence.

Now evidences of the recognition by Plato of the evolution of form seem entirely wanting in his works. I dare not assert a negative too confidently, but a careful search has failed to discover any more explicit passage than that referred to in the question. And, in truth, I should not have expected to find in Plato any sympathetic allusion to the idea of evolution in form, and that for a reason which it may be worth while to explain in a sentence or two. The seed of the idea of evolution is to be found in the philosophy of Heraclitus of Ephesus, who taught that there is no being without becoming; that nothing exists but it exists not, seeing that it is ever engaged in passing onwards to something else. The entire modern theory of development in all its phases, what is it but the old Heracliteanism awake once more in a new world, and grown to full proportions by means of a larger knowledge of nature and a clearer observation of the phenomena of mind than were possible to the ancient theorist of Ephesus? But Plato, although in his early days a Heraclitian, has broken entirely away from his teacher's system of thought for ethical and political reasons. This philosophy seemed to him the glorification of flux and change, and the weak spot in the character of the Greek and of the Athenian especially was just instability, love of change, the continuous seeking after some new thing. Hence Plato, in his *Republic*, emphasised the value of the centripetal forces in man and depreciated the value of the centrifugal. Hence also he missed the conception of the evolution of form.

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QUESTION 281.

H. S.—*Are the ultimate physical atoms of Mrs. Besant's Occult Chemistry identical with the ions or electrons of Sir Oliver Lodge's Romanes Lecture? If not, to what subplane of the Physical do they belong—Ether 4, 3, 2, or 1?*

J. L. T.—This is a question which it appears to the writer is impossible to answer at the present stage of scientific knowledge. Certain hypotheses exist with regard to the ultimate structure of matter, but it is impossible for anyone to see how far these may be modified by further research. It

should be pointed out at the outset that ions and electrons as defined in the *Romanes Lecture* have no similarity in size. An ion is there defined to be "an atom of matter possessed of an electron in excess," or "an atom of matter with one electron in defect," the former in its action being negative and the latter positive; while the electron is referred to as the smallest known or "hypothetical concentrated unit of electricity" which is discharged or radiated from the disintegrating atoms of certain rare elements—Radium, Thorium, etc. It is well to keep in mind that by no means all of our most advanced physicists are in agreement with Sir Oliver Lodge or Prof. Thomson on the electronic theory of matter.

Dr. W. Hampson combats the theory in certain of his writings with considerable ability. It is sufficient, however, for present purposes to admit what is generally accepted amongst scientists, that there are such things as ions and again much smaller particles of matter called electrons or corpuscles. What then are ions and what corpuscles? It seems to be generally accepted that the ion is an atom which has been electrified in some manner by the radiating particles thrown off from the disintegrating atoms of certain rare substances known as the radio-active elements, of which radium is the most notable example; while the radiating particles themselves are the corpuscles (electrons) of which atoms are supposed to be composed. This being the theory, we may dismiss the ions from further consideration, for they are simply ordinary chemical atoms endowed with a charge of positive or negative electricity.

When we proceed further to examine the structure of a chemical atom we are informed by the scientist that Radium throws out three kinds of rays, known as Alpha, Beta, and Gamma, as well as an emanation of particles. Considering now these rays separately we may define them thus:

*Alpha* rays consist of small particles intermediate in size between atoms of radium and corpuscles, of which latter they may contain about 1,800, and are thus about twice the weight—though not necessarily twice the size—of a hydrogen atom, which is believed to embrace from 800 to 1,000 corpuscles. These Alpha rays leave the atom with a velocity of more than 15,000 miles per second, but are easily stopped by a thin layer of solid material, such as a thin sheet of metal or even a piece of paper, or one inch depth of air.

*Beta* rays are said to be also material in their nature, the particles being single corpuscles shot out with a velocity of over 90,000 miles per second. They have great penetrating power, and readily pass through cloth, paper, wood, and even thin sheets of metal, especially aluminium, but are practically all stopped by a dense metal equal in thickness to a penny.

*Gamma* rays are not of material substance like the other two, but vibrations of the ether very similar to the Röntgen Rays.

The *emanation* is a gas exuded from the radioactive substance, and shortly becomes transmuted into Helium.

From these considerations is it possible to deduce any theory as to which sub-plane the Alpha or Beta Rays belong? In Mrs. Besant's article on "Occult Chemistry" very clear-cut examples of three gaseous elements are given, *viz.*, Hydrogen, Oxygen, and Nitrogen, but no illustrations are put forth of the changes taking place in gases passing to liquids, or liquids to solids. There, however, it is shown that the Hydrogen chemical atom has eighteen ultimate particles, whereas the scientist says it contains from 800 to 1,000 corpuscles. If we are to suppose that these are identical with the ultimate atoms either the occult or the scientific computation must be wrong. Meanwhile we lean to the occult investigator's results because, apart from their more advantageous position through clear-seeing, their theory appeals with greater force than that of the scientist, which latter is admitted even by its savants to require further demonstration.

But, again, it is perhaps not necessary to assume that corpuscles are identical with ultimate atoms, in which case each of the investigators may be correct. It would then follow that corpuscles are fifty times smaller than ultimate atoms, which would place them somewhere on the *Astral Plane*—probably on its lowest sub-division. Nor need such a theory be altogether improbable seeing that astral matter in its densest condition is associated with electricity—in its higher aspects at least—while electricity is asserted by Sir Oliver Lodge, J. J. Thomson, and others, to be the outstanding feature or quality of electrons (*i.e.*, corpuscles). And, further, we are taught there is a definite connection between the sub-planes of one great plane and the corresponding sub-plane of the other great planes, in which event it may not be unreasonable to think that disintegrating atoms of *physical solids* reappear as particles on the lowest astral sub-plane—that of *astral solids*. So far the *Beta Rays*. The *Alpha Rays* being composed, as above indicated, of particles containing about 1,800 corpuscles, or twice the mass of a hydrogen atom, might almost with safety be consigned to the fourth sub-plane, that of dense ethers.

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QUESTION 282.

M. L. B.—*Can a mental body become diseased? What is the cause of melancholia as it exists in such "morbid temperaments" as those of which Coleridge and Johnson are types?*

E. J. C.—It is not quite clear what M. L. B. means by disease of the mental body. A mental

body may become diseased by vice and selfishness persistently indulged; that is to say, it may be atrophied; and Mrs. Besant refers to the causal body in such cases showing the dark hues which result from contraction, and losing the dazzling radiance which is its characteristic property.

I gather, however, from the second part of the question, that M. L. B. wishes to know whether insanity or other kindred diseases on this physical plane have their seat in the mental body. This is a question on which, so far as I know, there has been little discussion of any value. C. W. L. in an isolated passage (VĀHAN, Vol. VIII., Q. 446) mentions that insanity is due in some instances to the mind body being in some way out of order, and consequently unable to bring through the instructions or wishes of the ego; and he adds that such a condition is always a kârmic penalty. Such cases must, however, be the exception; insanity usually has its seat in the physical brain.

Morbidity or melancholia are most frequently due (1) to the fitful working of the brain centres, or (2) to the disease of the brain centres or of some other part of the nervous system, or (3) to the inability of the ego to control the brain centres. In the case of persons more than ordinarily sensitive to super-physical influences, *passing* moods of depression may be due to astral impressions transmitted to the physical body. (See Mrs. Besant on "Moods," *Theosophical Review*, Vol. XXXV., p. 212.)

I cannot regard Coleridge and Johnson as happy examples of morbid temperaments. Coleridge was a victim of the opium habit, in which he indulged probably on account of poor physical health caused by reckless treatment of his body when at school. Dr. Johnson I should certainly refuse to class as either morbid or melancholic.

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The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

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*All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

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

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NO. 6.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### SECTIONAL HEADQUARTERS.

With the approval of the Executive Committee a circular goes out with this copy of THE VĀHAN, signed by the Building Committee appointed in accordance with a resolution of the last Convention. It is hoped that members will carefully read this circular and consider the proposal and will as far as possible respond to the appeal made in order that the Committee may see what support can be obtained for their scheme.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

### THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION.

THIRD ANNUAL THEOSOPHICAL CONGRESS.

(*First Notice.*)

The next (third) annual Congress to be held by the Federation of the European Sections of the Theosophical Society will assemble in Paris, the 3rd, 4th and 5th of June, 1906, at the Washington Palace, rue Magellan. As preliminarily arranged its activities will be of a threefold nature.

First, there will be the intellectual side, or the Congress proper, that is, the reading and discussion of papers.

Secondly, there will be the social element, consisting of a number of informal meetings, with musical attractions contributed by members of the Section.

Thirdly, it is hoped that an artistic exhibition can be organised which would bring together works of art of a distinctly theosophical character, but limited to the artists of the Section.

As said above, this is but a preliminary outline

of the programme of the Congress, and much may be yet added to make it more attractive.

Participation in the Congress will be open to all members of the Theosophical Society, on payment of a fee of five francs.

All members of the Society intending to send in papers to be laid before the Congress are cordially invited to do so and to notify the Secretary at once of their intention. Papers should be in the hands of the Secretary before April 1st, 1906.

All general correspondence concerning the Congress should be addressed to

Le Secrétaire du Troisième Congrès  
Théosophique,  
Société Théosophique,  
59, Avenue de la Bourdonnais,  
Paris.

In connection with this Congress the following have been elected by the Executive Committee as members of the British Sub-Committee:—Miss K. Spink (*ex-officio*), Miss E. Ward (Treasurer), Mr. B. Keightley (Secretary), Miss Lilian Lloyd, Mrs. Betts, Mr. P. Tovey, Mr. G. R. S. Mead, Mr. Bertram Theobald, Mrs. Sharpe.

### THE ITALIAN SECTION.

The Headquarters of the Italian Section have been transferred from Rome to Genoa, 1, Corso Dogali, and at the Extraordinary Convention held on October 29th, 1905, the following were appointed as members of the Executive Committee: Professor Otto Penzig (General Secretary), G. R. Macbean (Treasurer), Mrs. M. L. Kirby, Mrs. T. Ferraris, Professor Fr. Porro, Mrs. F. Durando, Capt. O. Boggiani, Don Fabr. Ruspoli, and Adv. G. Sottile.

### THE SECTION LIBRARY.

The attention of members is particularly called to the "Suggestion Book" which has been placed

in the Library, and it is hoped that members will assist in the effort to make the Library of greater general utility, by calling attention to books they think will be of service. Not only should the title of the book and the author and publisher be given, but some indication of the nature of the book in the "Remarks" column provided.

#### BOOKS FOR PROPAGANDA.

Mrs. Wm. Kingsland, the author of *The Esoteric Basis of Christianity*, has kindly offered free of charge copies of the above work to any Lodge or individual member of the Theosophical Society who will have them bound for distribution. The copies are in printers' sheets but can be cheaply bound. All communications with regard to this offer should be made to the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, London, W., and not less than a hundred copies can be supplied.

E. W.

#### ACTIVITIES.

##### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to December 20th: A. G., £2; W. H. T., £2 10s.; C. M., £10; O. C., £3; M. S., 10s.; E. W., £2 2s.; J. G., 5s.; E. J. G., £1 1s.; R. P., 5s. Total, £21 13s.

##### Men's Evenings.

These fortnightly meetings have been changed from Wednesday to Tuesday evenings (at 8.30, at 28, Albemarle Street, W.) and will be resumed with the following syllabus:

- Jan. 30th.—"Symbols."
- Feb. 13th.—"Reincarnation."
- Feb. 27th.—"Magic."
- Mar. 13th.—"Brotherhood."
- Mar. 27th.—"The Gods."
- Apr. 10th.—"Prayer."

The series just concluded has been well attended by a number of the most thoughtful members, and the time on every occasion has passed very rapidly, and with much animation; the meetings not breaking up till 10 and private discussion frequently lasting for long afterwards.

G. R. S. M.

##### Afternoon Meetings at Headquarters.

The Monday afternoon meetings will be resumed on Jan. 22nd, when Mr. Sinnett will speak, at 3.30, on "Theosophy, as affecting the next life."

On Jan. 29th Mrs. Hooper will be the speaker.

At these meetings, which are open to the public as well as to members of the Society, a short lecture is followed by questions and discussion.

Complete syllabus for the Spring Session may be obtained at 28, Albemarle Street. E. M. M.

#### London Federation.

The next meeting of the London Federation will be held on Saturday, January 20th, at 8 o'clock, at 28, Albemarle Street, W., when the Rev. John Page Hopps will speak on "Is immortality proven?" and discussion will follow. Members of all Lodges and Centres are cordially invited.

The annual meeting of the Council, in accordance with the Rules, will be held at 7.15 p.m.

P. T.

#### Correspondence Class.

The third course of study will open early in 1906, the book taken being *A Study in Consciousness*, by Annie Besant. In connection with this may be read *The Evolution of Life and Form*, by Annie Besant. For Regulations, etc., of the class, which is not restricted to members of the Theosophical Society, application may be made to Miss Lilian Lloyd, Theosophical Society, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

L. L.

#### Practice Debating Class.

The meetings for January, 1906, will take place on Tuesdays, 9th and 23rd, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, W., from 6.30 to 8 p.m., exactly.

F. M. M. RUSSELL.

#### Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Halle, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. Mondays at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street: Jan. 15th, *A Gnostic Initiation*, J. R. Anderson; Jan. 22nd, *Mysticism, Psychism, Mediumship*, Mrs. Hooper; Jan. 29th, *A Consideration of the Objects of the Theosophical Society*, Miss E. M. Green. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street: Jan. 2nd, General Meeting; Jan. 9th, *Spiritualism*, Rev. G. Baynham; Jan. 16th and 30th, Science Class; Jan. 23rd, *The Psychic Value of the Physical*, Mrs. Hooper. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

CLIFTON LODGE. "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Wednesdays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Anderson, at above address.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 149, Foleshill Road, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 34, Wicklow Street. On Mondays, at 4 p.m., study class, and advanced study class at 5 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 25th, *Christian Science*, Mrs. Grant; Jan. 19th, at 8 p.m. in Dowell's Hall, 20, George Street, *The Mysticism of Robert Schumann*, Miss Whitehead. Library open on January 8th and following Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Meetings on Sundays, at 4 p.m., and on Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmouth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, SOUTH EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 10th, *Reincarnation*, R. H. Andrews. Study of *Man and his Bodies* and *A Study in Consciousness*, on alternate Wednesdays. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Sundays at 3 p.m., at Shepherd's Hall. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 4, Nelson Street.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street; on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Jan. 7th, *Stepping Stones*, Mrs. Bell; Jan. 14th, *The Art of Listening*, Miss Whitehead; Jan. 21st, *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*, J. Wedgwood; Jan. 28th, *Concerning the Right Way*, A. R. Orage. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 23, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 11, Story Street. Information from H. E. Nichol, 67, Park Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.,

study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Jan. 7th, *The Principles of Rebirth*, Miss C. E. Woods; Jan. 14th, *What We have Heard*, D. N. Dunlop; Jan. 21st, *Occult Gleanings from Japan*, V. Lewis; Jan. 28th, *Theosophy for the Young*, Miss Mallet and G. H. Whyte. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Jan. 18th, *The Sybil and Her Oracles*, G. R. S. Mead; Jan. 25th, *The Mystic Ship*, M. W. Blackden; Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Jan. 21st, *The Doctrine of Election*, A. J. Faulding; Jan. 28th, *The Power of Thought*, P. Tovey.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 15th, *What do we mean by Brotherhood?* Mrs. Leo; Jan. 22nd, *Dreams and Dream Teaching*, A. P. Cattanach; Jan. 29th, *Vibrations*, A. P. Sinnett.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., class for the study of *General Elementary Science*. Public lectures on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Jan. 7th, *What is Theosophy?* Mrs. Leo; Jan. 14th, *The Power of Thought*, P. Tovey; Jan. 21st, *The Hidden Side of Things*, Mrs. Dunlop; Jan. 28th, *Christianity in the Light of Theosophy*, A. J. Faulding. Fridays, at 2.45 p.m., elementary class and meeting for enquirers at 4 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings for young members and friends on Saturdays, at 7 p.m.

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

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Meetings resumed on January 12th.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Enquirers received on Fridays, at 4.30 p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., study of *The Key to Theosophy*; Sundays, at 7 p.m., public meetings at 126, Creame Street (corner of Princess Road), Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Sec., 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. First and third Tuesdays, for enquirers, and second, fourth and fifth Tuesdays, study class for members. Service on Sundays, 6.30 p.m. Doors closed, 6.45 p.m. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 179, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Jan. 14th, *The Psychic Faculty: Casual, Induced, and Natural*; Jan. 21st, *The Mystery of Pain and the Problem of Evil*, Mrs. Bell; Jan. 28th, *The Valuation of Theosophy*, C. J. Barker.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate. Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, York.

within the ranks of the Theosophical Society men and women who will support such an effort.

It is written in the faith, almost passionate, that there are hearts and minds awaiting the call to work.

Such a call is now made.

There are workers, sincere and earnest in our Society, but their name is not legion. They labour much because they love much and because there is upon them the ever-present sense of a great compulsion.

The following details, then, are for those who have found their ideal in, by or through Theosophy, and who have fitted themselves by study or otherwise to help and teach others.

There has been established under the auspices of the London Federation of the Theosophical Society, and with the active co-operation of the Executive Council of the British Section and the Social Committee, an executive body called the "Theosophical Activities Committee."

Its one Object is to further the Theosophic movement within the sphere of the London Federation.

The Committee can use the services of all who are able to assist its work. It needs those willing to—

- (a) Lecture or read papers.
- (b) Conduct classes for elementary or advanced study.
- (c) Act as responsible organisers under the direction of the Committee.
- (d) Assist secretarially—type lectures, etc.
- (e) Associate themselves with newly formed centres and lodges, and vitalise them.
- (f) Supply the Committee with literature for the use of new centres and lodges.
- (g) Give financial assistance to defray the expenses of printing, stationery and postages, hire of meeting rooms and other necessary expenditure.

Further, the Committee earnestly seek suggestions from all as to lines of work which are practical in their nature, dignified in their method, and fruitful in their result.

In conclusion, let it be repeated, and may the emphasis be forgiven: this letter is addressed to those, and to those only, who are prepared for love's sake to offer a personal sacrifice of time, money or effort in spreading Theosophic truth. Will such communicate with

The Hon. Secretary,  
Theosophical Activities Committee,  
28, Albemarle Street, W.

P. T.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE.

To those who appreciate Matt. x. 8 (last six words).

This letter is addressed to those who believe in wise, sustained and organised personal efforts to spread the truths of Theosophy.

It appeals to no others.

It is written with the conviction that there exist

## STRAY NOTES.

Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.

*Radium and Life.*—A curious sequel to the

greatly advertised achievements of Mr. Butler Burke, who from the strange appearance of specks in gelatin produced by a radium salt concluded he had discovered the generation of the living from the non-living, is to be found in the observations of a Mr. Douglas Rudge, who communicated the first of them to *Nature* a month or two back. He found that similar specks were produced by barium salts without any appreciable quantity of radium, hence the connection of the specks with radio-activity was, to say the least, rather doubtful. In *Nature* for November 23rd, he contributes further information. He found that lead and strontium salts gave rise to similar "growths" but the strontium ones were less vigorous. All the metals which produced the effect were found to give insoluble sulphates, and steps were therefore taken to test if the "growths" were of this nature. The result of chemical tests on the precipitates formed by radium, barium and lead salts was that in each case the precipitate consisted of a sulphate, or was at least an insoluble compound containing sulphur. The radium precipitate differed from the rest only in its radio-activity. After precipitating and filtering the jelly no longer gave the "growths," showing that the sulphur compounds giving rise to them had been removed. The slow formation of the sulphates by diffusion of the salts gives rise, the observer thinks, to the appearance of growths.

Probably Mr. Burke will not be disposed to see his "discoveries" thus summarily dismissed, and his statement that the specks were soluble in water requires further investigation; but the microscopically small foundation on which he built his amazing speculations is hardly likely to be sufficient to uphold them, and the whole controversy illustrates the necessity for caution in proclaiming new scientific discoveries—especially in the halfpenny newspaper.

G.

*Natural Alchemy.*—*Nature* of December 7th publishes a letter pointing out some interesting and suggestive facts which no doubt will in time receive their explanation, and that explanation may very well be, as the writer suggests, a sort of natural alchemy. The most striking fact is the extraordinary conjunction in nature of silver and lead. "A lead mine is a silver mine and a silver mine is a lead mine all the world over, and yet the chemical attraction between silver and lead is slight, and the two metals are not sufficiently common to occur by chance. It is to be noted also that the concurrence, if the word may be used in this sense, is usually of the order of ounces for silver, and tons for lead, and that the atomic weight of lead is 207 and of silver 108. Hence there seems some ground for suspicion that silver is a disintegration product of lead." The suggestion is made that this could easily be tested on a large scale, as lead is not expensive, and a large amount carefully freed from silver might be left for some years and again tested. However, it seems hardly likely that the progress of change can be so rapid that a few years would suffice

for detection. It is of interest to note that the possible natural alchemy is in the same direction as the old artificial one—the change of a base metal into a noble one. Other groupings of elements are also mentioned in the letter, and especially that of copper and gold. This, however, is not so general as the lead and silver association, and here copper is of lower atomic weight than gold, so that copper should be a disintegration product of gold, although its quantity is so vastly greater. Possibly the explanation of this is that gold is an intermediate product of some heavier material, and that its rate of change is much greater than that of copper. However this may be, we can no longer rest in the comfortable assurance that our elements are there just because they have been so from all time. We have to find out why they are as they are, and why also they are so distributed in the earth. Somewhere in their history we can be sure we shall meet an alchemical incident, and alchemy, so far from being an old, exploded superstition, is in its central idea, though perhaps not in its practice, the suggestion of what is no doubt a universal process of nature.

The following issue, December 14th, of *Nature* also contains some letters on the same subject, all favouring the hypothesis that metals found regularly associated are connected by some disintegration process.

G.

*Sir Oliver Lodge on Reincarnation.*—Sir Oliver Lodge recently delivered an address at the City Temple, London, on "Science and Religion." Questions were invited at the close of the lecture, and Sir Oliver was asked if he recognised the doctrine of reincarnation as a reasonable scientific hypothesis to explain the enormous difference between the moral and intellectual qualities of different individuals, and whether there was any warranty in science for the belief in reincarnation, that is, in the existence of personality in the past as in the future. The following was his answer:—"That again is a very complicated subject. I will just tell you the speculations that I have had reason to make on this subject, and I would recommend you to read Myers' two volumes on *Human Personality*. It is all wrapped up in that subliminal self notion—that 'we are greater than we know,' as one of the poets puts it; that not the whole of us is incarnated at any one time. If we are persistent, and do not go out of existence, it follows that in *some* sense we never came into existence. The idea that we have persisted in the past and must persist in the future is as old as Plato—there is nothing new in it; it seems to me that at birth a bit of that large self was incarnated, and then as the body grew and could hold more, more and more as it were leaked into it—sometimes more, sometimes less. When more of it leaks into the body and displays itself here, we say, 'There is a great man'; when only a little, a very little, we say, 'He is not all there.' We are none of us quite 'all there,' and when this body is worn out we rejoin the big lump, so to speak, and then another bit will be incarnated at another time, and so on. You may call that a suggestion

of reincarnation, though it is not exactly that. The same individual John Smith will not appear again as William Jones, but it may be that different bits of that large lump will associate themselves with matter for a time, for the training which it appears can only so be got—a kind of peculiar training that appears to be got by living on a planet, and utilising material particles which we pick up out of this planet, obtained from beef and mutton and cabbages. We walk about for a time and utilise the things we find here, then we go back; and I should think it is very likely that another portion of us is incarnated, perhaps a bit of the same, perhaps a portion wholly different. Perhaps when a child dies in infancy and goes back it will have another chance. But I am not now talking science, I am talking speculation, but it is based on those facts which you find elaborated in Myers' book—the facts of abnormal memory, multiple personality, trance states, unusual phenomena altogether: not by any means thoroughly understood, and yet which must be studied if we are to throw light upon this great problem."

E. J. C.

*Birth of the Solar System.*—Dr. Halm, in a communication to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, suggests some modifications of the usual nebular hypothesis which are of general interest. Professor George Darwin, as quoted in the October VAHAN, raised difficulties as to the formation of planets by rings thrown off by the increasing velocity of rotation of the parent nebula. According to Dr. Halm the planets are not formed from the nebula at all. The nebula is regarded as a non-rotating one and shrinks into a denser and denser mass by the loss of heat. The conditions necessary for the formation of planets did not, Dr. Halm thinks, exist until the mass was a spherical body with a diameter probably less than the present distance of Mercury from the Sun. This body then encountered a swarm of meteorites which formed a rotating irregular ring from which the planets were finally generated. This theory is in striking contrast to the common one, and gives a very different view of the birth of our planets.

The older idea that the rotating nebula threw off rings as it contracted is stated to be inconsistent with the constancy of the moment of momentum of the system, which, if correct, would apparently be a fatal objection, as this constancy in an isolated system is as definite a principle of mechanics as the conservation of energy.

G.

## ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 279.

(Continued from p. 38.)

X.—If anyone has determined to overcome ignorance (*Avidyā, Māyā*) and to throw his whole life into this effort, how and where can he awaken and train the necessary internal faculties?

*In the midst of common social surroundings such an achievement seems almost impossible.*

*Are not unselfishness, compassion, etc., results rather than preliminaries to insight?*

E. S. G.—May I suggest to X. that the words "to overcome ignorance" are very misleading, since the action indicated is impossible of accomplishment. One can no more "overcome ignorance" than one can "overcome darkness," though we may grow through the first and revive through the latter. Ignorance must surely be as great a necessity as darkness, in that it shelters the too eager from the shock of premature knowing. To step at once into full knowledge would affect us as wiltingly as plants are affected when they grow too soon, or too completely, into strong light and air. Throughout Nature, where the sun is most powerful, thick leaves—like ignorance—interpose to shield the heart growth.

What is necessary to overcome is "unwillingness to learn." X. will doubtless disclaim "unwillingness"; but does X.'s determination to overcome ignorance spring from a desire "to get knowledge," or "to know"? There is a very great difference between the two, and it is in this difference that the danger exists, whose safeguard is the Veil of Ignorance. "To get knowledge" is a matter of education. "To know" is a matter of growth of Being, depending upon the power to assimilate and apply knowledge.

One can obtain knowledge of facts of life and the universe, such as science gathers, all of it indispensable to those who would act, and intensely interesting—but it is not "exciting." One may obtain knowledge of religions, philosophies, rationales; but, again,—though this is indispensable to those who would think, and often it deeply stirs the passionate nature, it is not "exciting." But when it comes to knowledge that affects Being (a blending of the two mentioned with something added), then in proportion to the depth and reality of the knowledge gained, the student will be shaken as a violin string vibrates at the touch of the bow that "makes music."

It is amazing how ungrateful even students are to those who guide our destinies, in that there is always the idea that one might do better under different conditions. Surely there is no knowledge more necessary to grasp than the realisation that our conditions are exactly the most suitable at every passing hour. What we have to do is to make the fullest use of our environment, and, seeing that every phase of gaining knowledge is like a plant growing up into keener air and fiercer light, realise that no social surroundings would ever appear to our partial knowledge to allow of unduly easy or speedy growth.

Yet there are times when the opening of consciousness seems to progress with breathless speed, as of a motor car rushing downhill.

For the Path of Knowledge is mountainous and switchback-like, up and down, yet continually rising. The rush down is when one is vibrating to knowledge that will give the impetus needed for climbing the next grade.

It is here where the danger of premature knowledge lies. Knowledge that affects Being is safe only when it can be utilised. When, for any reason, such knowledge cannot be utilised in oneself and in application in the world, it vibrates the whole being like the pent-up power vibrates a motor-car that is compelled by the action of its brake to be stationary—and it is as dangerous to check the rush of absorbing such knowledge as it is to check the rush of a motor car when going downhill at full speed. Chauffeurs know that no matter what unknown road is before, it is fatal to the car to put the brake on suddenly and fully; to put it on at all tends to shake the car to pieces, to keep it on would wear out the car, and prevent its gaining the momentum needed to aid it in mounting the next hill.

So it is with human being—all advance into knowledge is an entrance into new and strange country, where our ideas have to be repeatedly readjusted to suit the changing conditions, and allow of the free exercise of new and equally strange powers.

The way not only rises and falls, but it curves also, so that we cannot see far ahead. One cannot advance at all without reducing the restraining pressure of the brake; and there are times when one is called upon to "let oneself go," fearlessly trusting the Teacher. That freegoing is often what the student may desire least of all, because of its "freedom" and its "pace"; the mind preferring to keep on its brake, or even to hold on to the rules and regulations and ideals of its more primitive stage. So I think if the students will ponder these things, they will agree with my first assertion that it is no question of overcoming ignorance, but of overcoming unwillingness to learn just that lesson that lies immediately before us, for that invariably involves our taking off the brake we had industriously fastened upon our emotional nature.

Knowledge is the power of emotion; "to know" is "to feel"; and as all knowledge includes its "evil" as well as "good," the brighter our light, the more it reveals to us and puts us in touch with the primitive or elemental forces corresponding to the Higher. So it is that our absorption of knowledge may vibrate our being too intensely for endurance. If one's brake is clapped on suddenly, the danger is self-evident; and when the exercise of the new powers necessitates emotional vibration, to keep a brake always on one's mental emotional machinery will surely deaden its going, like a muted violin, and result in non-production of the power desired for doing the work of the next difficult position.

And again I will challenge students to study, with the assertion that an obstacle to growth greater even than unwillingness to do the apparently trivial duties that fill each day is the unwillingness to be made to vibrate fully and deeply emotionally. So many have spent all their energy in intensifying their brakes so that they may not "feel"; so few are now able to move without fear, having developed the power of self-controlled going.

Of a surety there is no reality of knowledge but

that which is woven into Being as Power; and Power is applied Emotion.

There is no power to advance in the knowledge that affects Being while faith is pinned in a mental-emotional brake that is always rigidly fixed at one pressure, and so those students who do not desire to "feel" should not seek to hasten their growth.

Then, again, there seems to be a very general idea that knowledge, like fruit on a table, can be obtained for the mere effort of taking it. But surely a very little understanding should convince one that it is not so, but that for every gain a price must be paid for the having, and a responsibility incurred in its possessing.

So that students who desire to rush into knowledge should first ask themselves whether they are ready to face and accept all the consequences of unfolding consciousness, no matter what the price may be that must be paid; to accept all the situations appreciatingly, even rejoicingly, no matter how strange, or startling, or disconcerting.

For, if they are not willing to "play the game," to enter with hearty earnestness into the "fun," to subscribe to all new and necessary rules, and accept chance shocks with equanimity, they had better think twice before attempting to thrust aside that Veil of Ignorance that shields the weakness of immaturity.

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#### QUESTION 283.

*L. M. N.—Is it known what was the real reason that Jesus stooped down and wrote with his finger on the ground (John viii. 6)? The suggestion in the Bible "as though He had heard them not," being inadequate in view of the fact that after He had answered the Scribes and Pharisees He stooped down and wrote again.*

*G. R. S. M.—This is taken from the beautiful story of the woman taken in adultery, known technically as the Pericope or Section of the Adulteress, which in the Received Text forms an integral part of the Fourth Gospel. It is, however, now on all hands agreed that it formed no part of the original canonical text. As Westcott and Hort say: "It is absent from all extant Greek MSS. containing any considerable Pre-Syrian element of any kind except the Western D; and from all extant Greek MSS. earlier than Cent. VIII. with the same exception." In the Revised Text it is placed in brackets, and in W. H. it is removed bodily from the text and added as an appendix at the end for reference. Even the conservative Alford prints it apart.*

Moreover, both in the Revised Text and W. H. and Alford the words "as though He had heard them not," are lacking, as not found in the best texts. This should dispose of L. M. N.'s difficulty; for in the first place the story is traditionally inauthentic, and in the second, even if it were authentic, the testimony of the best MSS. is against the words referred to.

But, on the other hand (apart from D, the readings of which are now held to be of the utmost

value as against W. and H.'s opinion), we have evidence that it was probably known in very early times, for if we can believe Eusebius (*Hist. Ecc.*, III., xxxiv. 16), he tells us in closing his account of the work of Papias (first half of second century): "And he has likewise set forth another narrative concerning a woman who was maliciously accused before the Lord touching many sins, which is contained in the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*." Though it is not certain, it is very probable that this refers to our Pericope. And if so, why was it omitted from the canonical account? Augustine (*Conj. Adult.*, ii. 16) gives a reason, when writing: "Some of little faith, or rather, enemies of the true faith, I suppose from a fear lest their wives should gain impunity in sin, removed from their MSS. the Lord's act of indulgence to the adulteress." The "some of little faith," however, prove to have been the vast majority of Christians up to the eighth century. Augustine also notices the ridicule directed by some "sacrilegious pagans" against Church writing on this ground (*Faust.*, xxii. 25). The difficulty of L. M. N. was therefore early felt by many.

For my own part, I am inclined to accept this beautiful story as a true Wisdom *logos*; whether or not it is literally historical. It is one of the wisest judgments ever made; one of the most Divine narratives of the Christ. But when it is asked: "What is the real reason that Jesus stooped down and wrote with His fingers on the ground?"—surely it is enough to say that from the point of view of the inspired scribe of the narrative, he added this graphic touch to show that the Master paid so little attention to this mighty great "point of law" in the opinion of the Scribes or Scripturalists, that He hardly gave it His full attention, and yet even so He entirely set the whole of the letter of the Law aside by the sweetness of His great Love and the inerrant vision of His Divine Justice.

There may also be an "under meaning"; but that at present escapes me.

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QUESTION 284.

*M. L. B.*—*What are the seven keys of interpretation to every symbol and allegory? (See S.D. II., page 25, note.)*

*E. A. D.*—The seven keys of interpretation of symbols and allegory belong to the mysteries of initiation, and they have never been generally known. Madame Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I., p. 330:

"The Seven Keys of the Mystery Tongue have always been in the keeping of the highest initiated Hierophants of antiquity; it is only the partial use of a few out of the seven which passed, through treason of some early Church Fathers—ex-initiates of the Temple—into the hands of the new sect of Nazarenes. It is maintained that India—not confined to its present limits but including its ancient boundaries—is the only country in the world which still has among its sons adepts who have the knowledge of all the seven sub-systems and the

key to the entire system. From the fall of Memphis, Egypt began to lose these keys one by one, and Chaldea had preserved only three in the days of Berosus. As for the Hebrews, in all their writings, they show no more than a thorough knowledge of the astronomical, geometrical and numerical systems of symbolising the human and especially the physiological functions. They never had the higher keys."

The Hebrews may be said, however, to have had some knowledge of the key of interpretation. We know that there are historical, ethical, theological and scientific interpretations of symbology; but merely to know the names of the keys is not to possess them.

An example of one method of applying the scientific key of interpretation is given by Mr. Marsham Adams in his book, *The House of the Hidden Places*. He applies geometry, astronomy and numbers to the interpretation of the symbolism of the Great Pyramid with some very wonderful results.

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QUESTION 285.

*H. H. F.*—*The Story of Atlantis states that Stonehenge was built by the Akkadians about 200,000 years ago. Is it not a physical fact that in a climate such as England's a few thousand years would suffice for its complete disintegration by the elements, to say nothing about the vast period claimed for its antiquity? Recent investigations by antiquarians place the origin of Stonehenge at about 1700 B.C.*

*A. A. C.*—No, I do not think it is a physical fact that a few thousand years would suffice for the disintegration of the stones forming Stonehenge. All geological evidence points the other way. There are plenty of natural rocks in Great Britain which are of enormous antiquity, and which, even when exposed to conditions of erosion much more severe than those prevailing at Stonehenge, do not evidence the decay suggested. Besides it has not been suggested that Stonehenge has been exposed to atmospheric erosion during all the 200,000 years of its history. As for antiquarian opinion—the Flinders Petrie of the Wiltshire plane has not yet manifested himself—we used to be told that Egyptian civilisation was of a similar date!

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The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

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*All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*



# THE VĀHAN



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *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. XV.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 1, 1906.

NO. 7.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### THE CONGRESS OF EUROPEAN SECTIONS.

The following members have kindly undertaken to act as representatives of the British Congress Committee in their own towns and districts:—

- Miss Greene, Laverton House, Hill, Southampton.
- Mr. Bligh Bond, Star Life Building, Bristol.
- Mr. E. E. Marsden, Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury, Manchester.
- Mr. A. R. Orage, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.
- Dr. Nunn, Gestingthorpe, Boscombe, Bournemouth.
- Miss Head, Hillside, West Cliffe Avenue, Harrogate.
- Mr. E. J. Cuthbertson, 3, Cumin Place, Edinburgh.
- Mr. J. Wedgewood, 38, Lord Mayor's Walk, York.

### THEOSOPHY IN CANADA.

We have received the following letter from Canada giving the gratifying information that the movement is sufficiently established there to warrant the expectation of the formation of a new Section next year.

The members of the Theosophical Society who reside in Canada hope to celebrate Mrs. Besant's visit to the Dominion in 1907 by the inauguration of a Canadian Section.

At present they are represented by Branches at Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and Victoria, and by Centres at Hamilton and Winnipeg; there are also a few members at large.

Readers of THE VĀHAN who may know persons

in Canada who are interested in Theosophy but are not attached to a Branch are requested to send their addresses to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Propaganda Committee:

N. W. J. HAYDON,  
498, Ontario Street,  
Toronto, Canada.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to January 20th: M. A. N., 10s.; E. S., 5s.; E. P. D., £1; A. C. P., £12; F. F. L., £2 2s.; L. W., £2; W. S.-E., £2; M. S.-K., £1; A. B., £10; E. T., £1 1s.; A. A. M. de P., £2 17s. Total £34 15s.

#### Monday Afternoon Meetings.

Meetings for members and enquirers are held on Monday afternoons, at 3.30 p.m., at Headquarters.

The speakers in February will be as follows: Feb. 5th, Mr. Mead, "The Transfiguration in Gnostic Tradition"; Feb. 12th, Miss C. E. Woods, "The Group Soul"; Feb. 19th, Mr. Dunlop, "What Theosophical Idea brings most Joy?" Feb. 26th, Miss Lloyd, "Multiple Personality." Each lecture is followed by questions or discussion. Visitors are cordially invited.

E. M. M.

#### Mr. Mead's Lectures.

On Tuesday afternoons in March Mr. G. R. S. Mead will deliver a course of four lectures in the Lecture Room, at 28, Albemarle Street, W., under the general title: "Four Visions of Hades and Their Relation to the Mysteries." Syllabus: Mar. 6th,—The Vision of Er (from Plato); Mar. 13th,—

The Vision of Scipio (from Cicero); Mar. 20th.—  
The Vision of Thespesius (from Plutarch); Mar.  
27th.—The Vision of Zosimus (from Zosimus).

Course tickets, obtainable from the T.P.S.,  
5s.; admission to each lecture, 2s.

#### South-Western Federation.

The Eleventh Annual Convention will be held at Bournemouth on Saturday and Sunday, February 24th and 25th. The following meetings have been arranged:

Saturday, 3 to 6 p.m., friendly welcome, tea and conversazione to delegates and members; 8 p.m., lecture by Mrs. Hooper to members and friends, on "The Body and the Soul." Sunday, 11.15 a.m., business meeting to receive reports, etc.; 3 p.m., public lecture by Mrs. Hooper, on "The Individual." The above meetings will all be held at the Assembly Rooms, Christ Church Road, Boscombe. At 7.30 p.m., at Dr. Nunn's residence, Gestingthorpe, Christ Church Road, Mr. Bellairs will lecture on "Ideality and Reality," to be followed by a discussion. The Convention will be presided over by Mrs. Hooper. It is hoped that members from far and near will make a special effort to attend, so that the eleventh Convention shall be a real success in every way. We shall be glad to see members from any part of the world.

J. W. C.

#### Practice Debating Class.

The meetings for February will take place on Tuesdays, 6th and 20th, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, at 6.30 p.m. exactly.

F. M. M. RUSSELL.

#### West London Branch.

The attention of members and friends is drawn to a discussion which is to take place on February 2nd, at the Lodge Room, 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., at 8.15 p.m. The subject is "The Desirability of Spiritualistic Investigation," and Miss H. A. Dallas is to deal with the *pro* and Mr. D. N. Dunlop with the *con*. Anyone interested is invited to attend.

H. W.

#### Lotus Lodge.

The elder members meet at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., every Saturday evening at 7 p.m. Once a fortnight they are taking for study the Life of Jesus Christ, using Mrs. Besant's chapters in *Esoteric Christianity*, and studying the Gospel narratives fully. The class is quite informal and everyone is encouraged to help in the study. A cordial invitation is extended to any young people, whether members of the Society or not, to attend.

H. W.

#### Meetings in Highgate.

Theosophical Meetings are held at 94, Milton Park, Highgate, N., on the third Sunday in the month, at 6.30 p.m., for enquirers and students. Lecture followed by discussion.

F. M. M. RUSSELL.

#### Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Halle, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street: Feb. 5th, *The Relation of Theosophy and Science*, C. H. Franklin; Feb. 12th, *Our Limitations*, F. Bligh Bond; Feb. 19th, *Philosophy and Religion*, Rev. J. McDowell; Feb. 26th, *Humour*, E. Fagg. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *Alchemy*, S. H. Old; Feb. 11th, *The Mystery of Pain and the Problem of Evil*, Mrs. Bell; Feb. 18th, *The Credentials of Theosophy*, E. E. Marsden; Feb. 25th, *An Important Problem of Reincarnation, I.*, B. Old.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mrs. Anderson, "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Clifton.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

CLIFTON LODGE. "Redwood," Richmond Hill Avenue, Wednesdays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Anderson, at above address.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings for study. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 34, Wicklow Street. On Mondays, at 4 p.m., study class, and advanced study class at 5 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 1st, 15th, and 22nd, Lodge meetings; Feb. 8th, *Santa Teresa the Mystic*, Mrs. Cuthbertson. Library open on Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Meetings on Sundays, at 4 p.m., and on Tuesdays at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmouth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, SOUTH EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbottle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 14th, *Karma*, A. Wallace. Study of *Man and his Bodies* and *A Study in Consciousness*, on alternate Wednesdays. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Sundays, at 3 p.m., at Shepherd's Hall. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 4, Nelson Street.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *Character Building*, Mrs. Bell; Feb. 11th, *The Art of Listening*, Miss Whitehead; Feb. 18th, *Some Aspects of Theosophy*; Feb. 25th, . . . G. R. S. Mead, or B. Keightley. Lodge meetings for study of *The Growth of the Soul*, on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 23, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 11, Story Street. Information from H. E. Nichol, 67, Park Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m.: Feb. 14th, *Some Planks in the Theosophic Platform*, Miss Pagan; Feb. 7th, 21st, and 28th, Study alternately of *The Elements of Theosophy* and *The Pedigree of Man*. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Feb. 4th, *Prayer*, A. Haddock; Feb. 11th, *Evil and Its Purpose*, Miss Bird; Feb. 18th, *Theosophy and Modern Science*, H. Twelvetrees; Feb. 25th, *The Mission of Theosophy*, P. G. Tovey. En-

quiries to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Feb. 1st, *The Celestial Ladder*, Miss C. E. Woods; Feb. 8th, *The Republic of Plato*, E. G. Kilroe; Feb. 15th, *William Blake—Mystic and Poet*, Miss C. F. G. Spurgeon; Feb. 22nd, *Sibyllists and Sibyllines*, G. R. S. Mead. Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Feb. 4th, *Theosophy as a Catholic Faith*, Mrs. Esther Wood; Feb. 11th, *The Gnostic Christ*, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 18th, . . . Dr. C. G. Currie; Feb. 25th, *Masters of Wisdom*, Miss Ward.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 5th, *Evolution*, R. King; Feb. 12th, *The Mission of Theosophy*, P. G. Tovey; Feb. 19th, *The Aeon*, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 26th, *An Out-of-the-way Corner of Christendom*, J. M. Watkins.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., class for the study of *General Elementary Science*. Public lectures on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *The Theosophy of Sufism*, J. M. Watkins; Feb. 11th, *Man and his Bodies*, L. Stanley Jast; Feb. 18th, *Practical Theosophy*, Mrs. Sharpe; Feb. 25th, *Dreams and Dream Teaching*, A. P. Cattnach. Fridays, at 2.45 p.m., meeting for enquirers, and elementary class at 4 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings for young people on Saturdays, at 7 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *Some Objections to Reincarnation Considered*, P. Tovey; Feb. 14th, *The Fourth Gospel*, Rev. A. Baker; Feb. 21st, *Multiple Personality*, Miss Lloyd; Feb. 28th, *Memento Mori*, P. C. Darlison.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: Feb. 2nd, Discussion: *The Desirability of Spiritualistic Investigation*; Feb. 9th and 23rd, Study of *The Pedigree of Man*; Feb. 16th, *The Law of Stability*, W. C. Worsdell.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Enquirers received on Fridays, at 4.30 p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBUY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. First and third Tuesdays, for enquirers, and second, fourth and

fifth Tuesdays, study class for members. Service on Sundays, 6.30 p.m. Doors closed, 6.45 p.m. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 179, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *The Superman*, A. R. Orage; Feb. 11th, *Living Faith—a Wider Religious Outlook*, Mrs. Midgley; Feb. 18th, *War*, Hodgson Smith; Feb. 25th, *The Elements of Comparative Religions*, C. E. Young, Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*. Alternate Fridays and Saturdays, debating class at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meeting on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton: Feb. 4th, *What is Theosophy?* Mrs. Leo.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate; Feb. 2nd, *Man as Being and Becoming*, A. R. Orage; Feb. 9th, *Conversazione*; Feb. 10th, *The Art of Listening*, Miss Kate Whitehead; Feb. 23rd, *Thought made Visible*, E. E. Marsden. Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, York.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

With reference to Question 283, as to why Jesus stooped down and wrote with his finger on the ground, I have quite recently heard a most illuminative suggestion. What the Master wrote was the private sins of each of the accusers in turn, and that is why they went out.

This illuminating suggestion adds a graphic touch that makes all clear. The hide-bound

legalists would probably have remained obdurate to the gentle rebuke: "He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone." They would all most probably have cast a stone with alacrity, and this the better to assert their own ceremonial rectitude; but when the Master wrote there upon the sand each man's hidden sin, the stones fell from their hands and they slunk away.

G. R. S. M.

### NIETZSCHE ON MEDITATION.\*

Nietzsche was a thinker, and a passionate thinker. His sister tells us, and it is plain from his books, that he had no other passion. All his passion, she writes, was in the world of knowledge. He was never so happy as when, to use his own phrase, he was digging out the treasure-pits of his own wisdom,—always, he notes, the very last to be digged. Passion he regarded as necessary in the search for truth. Disinterestedness is of no use, he says, either in heaven or on earth: great problems demand great love. Another of his images of the thinker is conveyed in the words: heart of flame, brain of ice. Nietzsche makes the capital distinction between the Greeks and the moderns that the Greeks found refuge in meditation *from* life, while the moderns find refuge from meditation *in* life. In this respect Nietzsche was neither Greek nor modern, for he sought life *in* meditation. But it was an active life in every sense that he demanded for himself. He twitted Flaubert on being able to think only when seated at his desk pen in hand. "Sedentary spider," he playfully dubbed him. He preferred for himself thinking out of doors and walking. The Piazza of St. Mark's, the hills of the Upper Engadine, were his best study. If possible he would have danced while he was thinking: in this respect, as in so many others, he was what he declared himself to be, a disciple of Dionysos.

At the same time he was not indifferent to the dignity of contemplation. He complains, in fact, that in these modern days the act of meditation has lost its ancient dignity. There is no longer any ritual and ceremonial of thought. The solemn attitude of the old sages, both of the East and of the West, would, he says, seem ridiculous to the modern European. The modern European has vulgarised contemplation. It is with us as if the organ of thought were a perpetual-motion machine to be set going at the will of any circumstance. We think without preparation, hurriedly, in the thick of any sort of business, anywhere and anyhow. The result is the obvious plebeianism of modern thought.

Nietzsche would have an architecture for thinkers, just as there is an architecture for religion. The Church has built edifices for the contemplative life, only for a contemplative life of a purely religious nature. Ecclesiastical buildings express too eloquently and too particularly

\* It is proposed to print from time to time short papers on Meditation as illustrated by the writings of mystics and others, and the present paper is the first of the proposed series.—Ed.

the aspiration after God, to be convenient to those who contemplate after another fashion. The Church has no longer a monopoly of contemplation. Thinkers of the future will demand buildings expressing their needs. We want, he says, to translate ourselves into stones and trees, and to promenade within ourselves when we walk in galleries and gardens. Every city should have great silent spaces, long high galleries, where men may meditate undisturbed by the sound of traffic and the hum of daily life.

On the question of subjects of meditation, Nietzsche warns us against thinking "against the grain." This apparent self-command is really immoral, he says, and as ruinous to the health as debauchery. Moreover, all thought is to be suspected in which laughter is not mixed. His *Gai Savoir* is indeed a recommendation of thought as a joyful exercise.

At bottom he is certain that we can never attain truth, but only our opinions concerning truth. He compares the intellect to a serpent, which in order to live must perpetually be casting off its skins. Every conviction is a prison; every opinion is but one more wrapping round the kernel of one's life. Strip off these opinions one by one, and at each step you come nearer to the centre of your being. His whole philosophy may be summed up in his aphorism:—Become what thou art. Meditation, as the process of converting reason into instincts and instincts into reason, is for him the method of this becoming. It is the means towards self-knowledge.

Greatly as he values the active life ("one only knows what one does") he does not undervalue thought. Indeed, thinking is the active life *in excelsis*. Our greatest events are not those of our loudest, but of our stillest hours. Thoughts that come on dove's feet rule the world. The greatest thought is the greatest event.

Like all thinkers he demands solitude as a condition of meditation. Whoever cannot endure solitude in every sense is not born for contemplation. He would even reckon intellectual rank according to the amount of solitude a man can endure and enjoy.

That he should have broken down in health and mind after a comparatively brief life is a capital fact that few will contemplate with serenity. Yet it is certain that Nietzsche himself would not have regarded his end in this way. He knew the dangers of the contemplative life; he knew that every great mode of living is a crossing of a precipice on a razor's edge. To what did Nietzsche owe his fall? Maybe the Western brain is not yet adapted to the strenuous contemplative life. Maybe the European instinct is a healthy instinct that seeks refuge in active life from perilous meditations. Or was there something fundamentally wrong in Nietzsche's own method? He describes somewhere the terrible sensations he experienced when at last he reached the realisation of his ego. He describes the insufferable cramp, the constraint, the sense of close imprisonment he felt, and the need for air and light, and sky. Was this the end towards which

his method had led? Had he sought himself only to find the monstrous narrowness of his own ego?

Against that, however, one may place the whole drift of his thought as recorded in his books, beginning with the first he wrote. In the *Birth of Tragedy*, written in 1871, he divines the profound distinction between Apollo and Dionysos. Apollo is for him the spirit of individuation, the creator of the illusion of the ego. Dionysos is the destroyer, the redeemer, the ecstatic power that breaks down the illusion of ego, and lifts the spirit to the universal life. And over and over again, in his later books, Nietzsche declares himself a disciple, an initiate, of Dionysos. Moreover, the Buddhist doctrine:—There is no ego, Nietzsche unreservedly accepts and enforces. In the face of all this it is impossible to say that Nietzsche failed through egoism. The alternative is at least as probable that he failed through excess of ecstasy.

But what had he to do with failure? It is certain that here was no failure in the spiritual sense. Failure it may have been in the world's sense,—and on this account, as has been said, Nietzsche's methods of meditation are not for everybody, perhaps not for anybody. But they were his, personal to him, peculiar to him. And only he who would not give his life for thoughts as great as Nietzsche's will venture to say that the sacrifice was not worth while.

A. R. O.

## ENQUIRER.

### QUESTION 286.

*M. L. L.*—*I know a woman, fairly advanced in thought-power, in whom the instinct of pity and protection, combined with a love of nursing, are so strong, that she is constantly picturing her friends as the victims of various diseases, and herself as soothing and ministering to them. What is the effect of her thought-forms upon the friends concerned? Is there any fear of their producing the diseases imagined, when the imagination always proceeds to picture the cure (as arising, of course, from the thinker's ministrations)?*

*M. M.*—The only way of testing the thought power of the woman, whose "instinct of pity and protection," etc., seems to be leading her into a very questionable and morbid form of exercise, would be to find out from one of the "friends" practised on whether symptoms of the imagined disease had shown themselves at the time the woman was concentrating on it and her "friend." Given that the experimenter had some power, the success would vary according to the greater or less sensitivity of the friend attacked. I use the word "attacked" advisedly, for I cannot imagine a more reprehensible form of self-indulgence; it reminds one of the low forms of magic practised in many countries, and though the intention may always be to *sooth* and *minister*, the attempt to induce a condition of disease is not thereby justified.

G. R. S. M.—This morbid person should be suppressed. I have never yet heard of a more insane proceeding. Good Heavens, as if there were not enough disease in the world to alleviate without playing the irresponsible inoculator in this fashion! “Ministrations,” ye powers! But perhaps M. L. L. is joking and is pulling the leg of the sage respondents of THE VĀHAN. If, however, it is meant in all seriousness, and represents the true facts of the case, I should say we may even so breathe freely again, for anyone practising such a form of morbid self-satisfaction can hardly be very strong in “thought-power,” and so her disease-currents and their “cures” will go very little beyond her own atmosphere.

QUESTION 287.

S.—How, and in what manner, from a philosophical and logical point of view, is personal immortality said to be “conditional”?

A. H. W.—The writer understands that personal immortality is conditional on the great achievement of raising the consciousness into the Ego-vehicle, the eternal or spiritual body; and on holding that impersonal standpoint always, during waking physical life. In this way all the details of the personal life are taken up into, and identified with, the consciousness of the eternal pilgrim; who knows himself for the first time as a living man, and will retain his personal memories for ever more. So the personality becomes immortalised, and all subsequent reincarnations are, to the self-conscious Ego, merely re-manifestations of the immortal personality.

In such a case as this the man in daily life realises that he is immortal, a free self; watching and working in the lower worlds, through the medium of his personality, which has become “the mere subject for grave experiment and experience.”

When this consciousness is established, the physical, astral, and lower mental bodies may disintegrate in turn, without altering its steadfast light; the return to incarnation will be consciously made, and in due course the impersonal point of view will be regained in the new personality. Whether the re-manifested man will know himself as the immortalised personality *redivivus*, in waking consciousness, will depend on the development of his lower psychic powers. In most cases he would do so the writer believes; he has heard of an exception. The true inwardness of the three “ways,” is simply this attainment of impersonality in waking life, and immortality in spiritual life. Then the kingdom of heaven, the “mansion” in the Father’s “house,” is occupied, and the “soul” is saved alive. All three ways are trodden more or less at different stages of the evolution of the individual, but one is always paramount. The artists watch and work through the physical body, the devotees through the astral, and the philosophers through the mental. Each makes his sacrifice; the creative artist gives his life, the

devotee his love, the philosopher his thought. To the artist, the pearl of great price is to realise the ideal Perfection; to the saint, it is to realise the ideal Love; to the sage it is to realise the ideal Truth. These realisations are internal, the man becomes his ideal; and to buy that pearl each gives all that he has. For the great sacrifice of every earthly thing alone makes possible the Heavenly life, and the activity of the World Saviour.

G. L. S.—All forms are continually changing and all are impermanent, having a beginning and an end. Form is simply a mode of consciousness. Consciousness which lies behind form and without which no form could exist, is beginningless and endless. This must be so, for to assume the contrary would be to assume that the universe originally sprang into being from absolute nothingness. But out of nothing nothing comes. In the organic forms which surround us we observe the gradual evolution or awakening of centres of consciousness and eventually of self-consciousness—the perception of the “I” and the “not I.” It is only at this latter stage that the problem “To be or not to be” arises: its solution lies much further on. Now as there are no sharp dividing lines in nature, so consciousness does not suddenly become self-conscious, nor does self-consciousness suddenly become all-consciousness. At first the I notion is merely a germ with a development before it, just as the seed of a plant is a germ with a development before it. When once this seed of self-consciousness has got fairly planted and has begun to send out a shoot, the human form is reached and man recognises his physical body as the I. A frail prop this to lean on indeed, for the physical vehicle soon breaks up. The body, however, correctly represents his Egoism at an early stage, just as a tender shoot correctly represents the oak tree at an early stage. Both serve their purpose admirably for the time being. When the seed or centre of self-consciousness, however, is fully unfolded, when the awakening is really complete—higher and more and more durable “forms” being used as successive supports in the process—the centre becomes finally strong enough to withstand the disruption of any form, for it then knows itself to be Eternal Existence—what of course it always was. Man is conditionally immortal until this full awakening or realisation of what is sometimes called “Union with the Supreme” takes place. Until then he may hope and believe himself to be immortal, but cannot know this, being unable to disentangle the Self from some form or other. And this leads him also to imagine that there are a great many egos in the universe, although unity does somehow underlie everything. The disappearance of all these egos but one when the hour strikes for the mahâpralâya would thus be a somewhat dismal prospect for him, were it not that that event is so comfortably far off.

If however the questioner prefer to distinguish between Consciousness and reflected Consciousness, holding that the latter can be separated and

shut off from the former, continue thereafter to exist, and yet ultimately come to an end, like the forms or vibrations of which it is the witness, subsiding and disappearing along with these, then he will find the question of conditional immortality worked out from that point of view in the remarks made on the "Death of the Soul," *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. III., pp. 515-22.

E. A. B.—The expression "conditional immortality" appears to be used in the sense of "relative" or "conditioned" (*i.e.*, in some way *limited*) or "comparative" immortality—which, strictly speaking, is a contradiction in terms. True immortality belongs only to the One Self, and not to any human "personality," which changes with every re-birth. But as spiritual progress is made, the consciousness, which for most of us is limited to our present personality, gradually expands; the memory bridging gulf after gulf, till it attains what seems an endless stretch of unbroken life. Something of this must, I think, be what was meant by the expression used. And we may carry the thought on and on until all lives are merged in the One Life, the Self of All. But there would be no question then of what we know as "personality," in that all-embracing Consciousness.

The subject is dealt with more at length in THE VĀHAN for December, 1902, and in the volume *Extracts from "The Vāhan,"* p. 402.

S. C.—The condition under which the personality becomes immortal is, that it is truly willing to die for the sake of the higher self to which it owes allegiance. It then identifies itself with that higher self, and lives *in it*. "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." "He" here alludes to the personality. This recognition of the higher self as the true man is the end of the purely human stage of evolution, and the beginning of the divine-human stage. Personal immortality, like happiness, cannot be attained by direct effort; it only comes when no longer sought. In the long series of lives, there comes at last one when the personality understands and fulfils the true law of its being, as naturally, and in one sense as unconsciously, as a tree bears fruit. It presents itself "a living sacrifice," knowing that such sacrifice is in no way deserving of praise, but merely "a reasonable service."

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QUESTION 288.

J. K. D. M.—*Many mummies exist that are thousands of years old, and bones of men and animals that have been dead for hundreds of thousands of years; are the etheric doubles of these mummies and bones still in existence, or have they disintegrated although the dense physical remains still exist? How does this affect the reincarnation of the ego, and is it thereby delayed until the physical and etheric materials have been completely restored to their respective planes?*

E. J. C.—The disintegration of the body does

not intimately depend on the dissolution of the physical. The etheric disintegrates like the physical because of the withdrawal of the co-ordinating force of prāna, and the rate of dissolution is that of a normal burial, so that, to quote Mrs. Besant, it goes on *pari passu* with the disintegration of the corpse until "*all but the actual bony skeleton of the physical body is completely disintegrated and the particles have gone to form other combinations*" (*Death and After*, p. 25). It is possible that cremation may somewhat hasten the dissolution of the etheric double, although on this point there is some slight diversity of opinion, but the preservation of the physical vehicle by embalming has no apparent effect on the etheric, nor has the continued existence of the skeleton.

The esoteric reasons for the embalming practised by the ancient Egyptians have been the subjects of much discussion, and I have heard it hazarded that it was resorted to in order to delay reincarnation. I do not think there is any solid foundation for such a conjecture.

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QUESTION 289.

W. S. S.—*How far is the Darwinian theory true? Was the physical body of man on this planet prepared for his coming by means of intermediate links from the animal kingdom; or did his astral body gradually solidify?*

E. J. C.—The theory of evolution put forward by H. P. B. in the *Secret Doctrine*, and annotated and elaborated by Mr. Sinnett, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater, and other members of the Theosophical Society who have studied the subject, is that the physical body of man was on this planet prepared for his coming by means of intermediate links from the animal kingdom—on this planet, but *not* in this the fourth round of life on this planet. In the first round on this planet the forms were gradually evolved through one kingdom into another; the vegetable forms were developed from the mineral, the animal from the vegetable, and the human from the animal; and at that period there were no "missing links." Once the forms were made, however, there was a branching off of each kingdom along its own lines; man developed certain organs, and let others go into comparative or even total disuse; and the animals followed their own path.

In the fourth round on this planet, man, we are told, became a physical being before any other mammal; and in this particular, it may be said that H. P. B. and her colleagues are at variance with Darwin; for they hold that, so far from man being descended from the monkey (to put the Darwinian theory very popularly) the anthropoid ape is the issue of the sin of the earlier and mindless races of man. On the other hand, if the theory of man's descent from the animal kingdom (or rather of his ascent through it) be set back in time ages earlier than Darwin dreamed of, then between the two schools there is much agreement. As to which school has the better grip of the facts it is for each student to satisfy himself; but it

may be mentioned that some scientists (*e.g.*, Prof. R. Virchow) receive with caution the theory of man's descent from a common ape-ancestor, and Herr Hoeckel, a German savant, startled his countrymen some years ago by showing an inclination to adopt the opposite theory held by H. P. B.

For a discussion of the two theories, and a description of the solidifying of man's physical body, I would refer W. S. S. to an article entitled "A Plea for Darwinism," and to Mr. Leadbeater's comments upon it, which appeared in the *Theosophical Review* for October and December, 1898, Vol. XXIII., pp. 132 and 360. He will there find further references to the subject.

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QUESTION 290.

J. W.—It is stated that the *Bhagavad Gītā* is a late work—perhaps the fifth century A.D. H. P. B., on the other hand, assumes this literature to be very old. On what grounds is the conclusion of scholars rejected who say that the language of the book does not show signs of antiquity? Are there any other proofs? A very similar question applies to the Purānas.

W. J. L.—Will J. W. say whose statement he is thinking of when he says: "it is stated that the *Bhagavad Gītā* is a late work—perhaps the fifth century A.D.?" Whether H. P. B. thought the *Bhagavad Gītā* was very old or not, the opinion that it is old is supported by weighty authorities quite outside of (and even hostile to) the Theosophical Society. I refer to Professor Max Müller and those who co-operated with him in producing the *Sacred Books of the East* series of translations. I believe that these gentlemen are universally regarded as authorities on the subject of oriental literature. Let them speak for themselves. In Vol. VIII. of *Sacred Books of the East*, p. 34, it is stated as a definite conclusion that the latest date at which the *Bhagavad Gītā* can have been written is the third century B.C., "and it is impossible to say how much earlier." Also Vol. VIII., pp. 5, 6: "Possibly the *Gītā* may have existed . . . before the *Mahābhārata*, and may have been appropriated by the author of the *Mahābhārata* to his own purpose."

Then let us turn to Professor Max Müller's interesting Gifford lectures at Glasgow in 1892 [Published in a book called *Theosophy or Psychological Religion* (Longmans, Green, 1893)], we find p. 30, *et seq.*: "If people like to call these books modern, let them do so, but let them remember that at all events there is nothing more ancient in any literature." "There can be no doubt that the origin of all the ancient religions of the world goes back to a time when writing for literary purposes was as yet entirely unknown. . . . To those who are not acquainted with the powers of the human memory when well disciplined . . . it may

seem almost incredible that so much of the ancient traditional literature . . . should have survived during so many centuries before it was finally consigned to writing."

It should be noted here that the professor thinks writing for literary purposes came into use about the seventh century B.C. (p. 31), he also says, p. 33, that what we possess of sacred literature "represents a very small portion only of what originally existed."

"If, therefore, people will have it that what we possess of sacred books is modern, I do not object, if only they will define what they mean by modern."

In view of all this surely it must be admitted (first) that the date of the *Bhagavad Gītā* is unknown to us, and cannot be ascertained (unless the results of clairvoyant investigation be admitted), and (second) that, at any rate, possibly the *Bhagavad Gītā* dates, as a written document, from at least the third century B.C.

Will J. W. say what grounds he has for dating it as late as the fifth century A.D.?

A. B. C.—J. W. appears not to distinguish between the written text of the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the oral tradition. It may well be that the scholars are right as to the date of the written Sanskrit, but it does not follow that H. P. B. was wrong as to the teaching being immensely older. When we know that in India the cultivation of a marvellous verbal memory was (and has not altogether ceased to be) a religious duty, and that even to-day there are Pundits who can recite accurately prodigious amounts of literature, we may realise without difficulty the fact of the correct transmission from "mouth to ear" of sacred teachings from a very great antiquity. To Western minds, accustomed to the printed record, and knowing the growth of rumour, it may seem strange at first to realise that teaching thus handed down as a sacred duty could be so completely preserved, but it nevertheless appears true that a whole literature has thus been safely handed down to us through ages which would have ensured the destruction of any modern kind of library.

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The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

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All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

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

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NO. 8.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### THE CONGRESS OF EUROPEAN SECTIONS.

The Congress representative for Belgium is Dr. Bommer, chez Mme. Émile Graeffe, 22, Avenue Brugmann, Brussels. The representatives in Great Britain were given in the last issue of THE VĀHAN.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to February 20th: E. S., £1 1s.; M. M., 10s.; P. W. G. N., £2 2s.; M. H., £1; M. C., 10s.; Anon, £5. Total £10 3s.

#### Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *La Bhagavad Gītā o Poema Divino*, Traduzione di C. Jinarājādāsa e M. L. Kirby; *Plays and Poems*, Paul Hookham; *La Compagnie de Jésus et la Théosophie*, M. A. de F.; *The Progressed Horoscope*, Alan Leo; *The Festival of Spring from The Divān of Jelāleddīn*, rendered into English by W. Hastie, D.D.; *Teozófia És a Teozófiai Mozgalom*, Dr. Hartmann.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *Life and Matter: a Criticism of Professor Haackel's "Riddle of the Universe,"* Sir Oliver Lodge; *The Consolation of Philosophy of Beatus*, translated by H. R. James, M.A.; *L'Évolution de la Matière*, Dr. J. Le Bon; *The Romance of the Milky Way*, Lascadio Hearn; *Shinto: The Way of the Gods*, W. G. Aston, D.Lit.; *Occult Essays*, A. P. Sinnett; *Illusions*, M. Collins; *The Dominion*

*of Dreams*, Fiona Macleod; *Green Fire: A Romance*, Fiona Macleod; *A Draught of the Blue*, translated from the Original Manuscript by F. W. Bain; *Hindu Ideals*, Annie Besant; *Morning Thoughts for the Year*, adapted by a Student from the writings of Annie Besant.

R. A. HOBSON,  
*Assistant Librarian.*

An effort is being made to complete as far as possible the collection of pamphlets in the Section Library dealing with Theosophy and the Theosophical Society. Many pamphlets not in the Library are now unobtainable from ordinary sources, and an appeal is made to members who may have collections of pamphlets or odd copies to assist in filling up the gaps. More particularly pamphlets of historical interest are desired, such as those published in the early days of the Society by various Lodges or Sections. Any pamphlets dating before 1884 would be especially welcome. The Section has the great majority of those published within the last fifteen or sixteen years (amounting to many hundreds), but if any members are in possession of pamphlets or leaflets they think are rare and likely to be missing and they kindly send them to me I shall see that they are duly returned if copies are already in the Library or Office. It is very desirable that a complete record of the Society's work should be in our official Library.

Among pamphlets which are now out of print and are not in our possession are the following; copies sent by members will be gratefully received and surplus ones returned.

*The Nature of Theosophical Evidence.* C. W. Leadbeater.

*Eastern Castes and Western Classes.* Annie Besant.

*Education a National Duty.* Annie Besant.

*Pearls of Truth.* Countess Wachtmeister.

*How best to become a Theosophist.*

*Theosophy as a Guide in Life.*

*Practical Theosophy.*  
*Karma as a Cure for Trouble.*  
*Theosophy and Ethics.* E. T. Sturdy.  
*The Holy Catholic Church.* E. W. Bell.  
*What is Theosophy?* Louisa Shaw.  
*The Pantheism of Modern Science.* E. F. Titus.  
*Life and Death.* J. C. Staples.  
*The Higher Life, or Rules of the Rāja Yoga.*

A catalogue of the Library arranged under authors' names is almost ready and will be issued very shortly. It is hoped that this will enable the Library to be of greater service, especially to members at a distance, who will then be able to see what books are available for borrowing.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

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### Social Committee.

Under the auspices of the Social Committee an Afternoon Debating Society is being started. Meetings will be held on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 28, Albemarle Street, at 3.15 p.m. The Chairman and Secretary have already been appointed, and members desirous of joining should send in their names to the Hon. Secretary Social Committee without delay. The object of the Society will be to give members practice in speaking, and all who join it will be expected to take part in the proceedings.

E. M. M.

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### Practice Debating Class.

The meetings for March will take place on Tuesdays, 6th and 20th, at 6.30 p.m., in the Lecture Room, at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

F. M. M. R.

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### Men's Evenings.

The meetings for discussion by men will be held in March, on Tuesday evenings, at 8.30 as follows:

*March 13th, "Brotherhood."*

*March 27th, "The Gods."*

All men members of the Society are cordially invited.

G. R. S. M.

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### Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Halle, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street: Mar. 5th, *Theosophy as affecting the Next Life*, A. P. Sinnett; Mar. 12th, *The Economy of the Human Form*, Rev. S. J. O. Goldsack; Mar. 19th, *International Brotherhood*, E. R. Blackett; Mar. 26th, *Why we Believe*, Miss E. Mallet.

Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street: Mar. 6th, *The Gnosis at its Height*, J. R. Anderson; Mar. 20th, *Gnosticism and Theosophy*, J. R. Anderson; Mar. 13th and 27th, Class for Members.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings for study. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 34, Wicklow Street, for discussion of Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms*. On Mondays, at 4 p.m., study of *Esoteric Christianity*, and at 5 p.m., study of *A Study in Consciousness*. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 1st, *The Great Pyramid*, G. A. V. Newlands; Mar. 23rd (in Donnell's Hall), *Ancient Cyclopean Remains*, P. Lund. Lodge meetings, Mar. 8th, 15th, and 29th. Library open on Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Meetings on Sundays, at 4 p.m., and on Tuesdays at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, SOUTH EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms,

200, Buchanan Street, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 14th, Public Lecture. Study of *Man and his Bodies* and *A Study in Consciousness*, on alternate Wednesdays. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Sundays, at 3 p.m., at Shepherd's Hall. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 4, Nelson Street.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: March 4th, *The Song of Life*, Hodgson Smith; Mar. 11th, *Theosophy and Christianity: Are they antagonistic?* William Bell; Mar. 18th, . . . ; Mar. 25th, *Some Aspects of Christian Doctrine and Practice*, J. J. Wedgwood. Lodge meetings for study of *The Growth of the Soul*, on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at 11, Story Street. Information from H. E. Nichol, 67, Park Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: Mar. 5th, *Ethics*; Mar. 12th, *The State*; Mar. 19th, *The Problems of Consciousness*; Mar. 26th, *Animal Consciousness*. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m.: Mar. 7th, *On the Mystery of Original Sin*, Mme. de Steiger. Other Wednesdays, study alternately of *The Elements of Theosophy* and *The Pedigree of Man*. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Mar. 4th, *Compensation*, H. J. Adams; Mar. 11th, *Whitman and his Message*, Mrs. Dunlop; Mar. 18th, *Theosophy*, J. M. Watkins; Mar. 25th, *The Doctrine of Non-resistance*, W. C. Worsdell. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattinach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Mar. 1st, *Reincarnation*, Dr. C. G. Currie; Mar. 8th, *Apollo or Dionysos*, A. R. Orage; Mar. 15th, *The True Aim of Theosophic Study*, B. Keightley; Mar. 22nd, *On Different Orders and Degrees of Certainty*, B. Keightley; Mar. 29th, *The Caprices of Theosophists*, B. Keightley. Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Mar. 4th, *Dogmatism and Theosophy*, B. Keightley; Mar. 11th, *The Modern Conception of Liberty*, A. R. Orage; Mar. 18th, *The Gnostic Restoration*, G. R. S. Mead; Mar. 25th, *The Wisdom of Humility*, B. Keightley.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 5th, *The Gospel according to St. Paul*, Miss C. E. Woods; Mar. 12th, *The High Cere-*

*monies*, L. S. Jast; Mar. 19th, *Reincarnation and Karma*, D. N. Dunlop; Mar. 26th, *The Real and the Unreal*, Mrs. Sharpe.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., class for the study of *General Elementary Science*. Public lectures on Sundays, at 7 p.m.: Mar. 4th, *The Reincarnation Hypothesis*, with chemical experiment, Miss H. Clarke and Max Gysi; Mar. 11th, *Why I am a Theosophist*, A. Haddock; Mar. 18th, *The Bible*, Miss Shacklock; Mar. 25th, *The Mission of Theosophy*, Philip Tovey. Fridays, at 2.45 p.m., meeting for enquirers, and elementary class at 4 p.m.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings for young people on Saturdays, at 7 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Mar. 7th, *Theosophy and Modern Science*, H. Twelvetrees; Mar. 14th, *Some Causes of Personal Failure*, Mrs. Esther Wood; Mar. 21st, "The Path of Virtue," *Thoughts from Lao Tze*, Miss F. M. M. Russell; Mar. 28th, *The Mystic Way*, V. Lewis.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: Mar. 2nd, *Consciousness—An Ancient and a Modern View*, H. Whyte; Mar. 16th, *Some Causes of Personal Failure*, Mrs. Esther Wood; Mar. 30th, *An Atlantean Symbol*, Miss Helena Clarke; Mar. 9th and 23rd, Study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Enquirers received on Fridays, 4.30 to 7 p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Mar. 4th, *Theosophy and Life*, Miss Hilda Smith; Mar. 11th, *The Valuation of Theosophy*, C. J. Barker; Mar. 18th, *The Theosophy of Kipling*, Mrs. Marsden; Mar. 25th, *The Mystic Quest*, W. H. Thomas. Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*. Alternate Fridays and Saturdays, debating class at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meeting on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate: Mar. 2nd, *Christian Mysticism*, Rev. A. H. Lee; Mar. 9th, *Conventionality*, A. W. Waddington; Mar. 16th, *Musical Evening*; Mar. 23rd, *The Evolution of Worship*, Rev. R. H. Greaves; Mar. 30th, *The Future of the Drama*, W. Foster. Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, York.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

DATE OF THE "BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ."

Question 290.

*The Hibbert Journal* last summer reviewed the latest enquiry into the language of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The conclusion was that it was written, not in the archaic Sanscrit, but in the form that was used about the fifth century A.D. I do not think the statements of W. J. L. are any reply to this recent criticism.

The note by A. B. C. is more weighty. If he means that the substance of the *Bhagavad Gītā* may be much older than its present shape, I do not disagree but should like evidence that it is so. But I am uncertain whether he means this, as he lays stress on the prodigious verbal memory of those days to preserve it. In such a case why was it not preserved in archaic language? Scholars generally suppose the Homeric poems were preserved this way for a long period. But their language proves their archaic origin and so should that of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, unless it be a late rendering of early teaching.

J. W.

## SAINT TERESA ON MEDITATION.\*

Saint Teresa says of herself that she was unlearned, incapable of making reflections with her understanding, of sluggish imagination, unable to visualise, but possessing strong desires and great resolution. "I was a mass of imperfections except in desire and love."

She speaks of those who begin to be the servants of love, those who resolve to attain, in the way of prayer, to Him who has loved us so much.

The beginner will find prayer in itself wearisome and difficult. He will be tormented particularly by doubts of his own worthiness, by depression coming in all manner of forms. But if there be a quite real resolve to serve God, all this can be borne, by the soul remembering constantly his sincere love and resolve. If this be held on to as the one firm foothold amid much illusion, he will endure the foolishness and barrenness of his utmost efforts, content with them, knowing that God is accepting them, for they are his best. This illusion and depression will prove whether the soul's love of God be a mere fancy or not. If it is not real, he will be unable to stand firm, and it will be better for him to turn his mind to worldly affairs.

If the beginner's resolution be clear and genuine the greater part of the work is done. If he is determined not to care much whether grace and consolation fail him, but is resolved to serve in justice, fortitude, and humility, regardless of results, the building is begun on a firm foundation. He must begin with this indifference, this liberty, and never be distressed thinking he is doing nothing. We do what we can. It is the resolution which God requires, all the rest He knows better than we do. So we must never be anxious; anxiety merely disquiets and disables us. If we try to torment the soul into doing that which is beyond it, we will effect nothing but harm. Anxiety is vanity and discontent, and is very often the result of bodily ill-health. We must take great care of the body, but not be over anxious about the effect of prayer upon its health. There is no better health than its loss in such a cause. The poor soul must not be dragged. No one should distract himself because his thoughts are restless and distracted. Let him make no account of evil thoughts, but remember his resolution, and get out of this desert as best he can.

In this first state of prayer the soul can only work with the understanding. Saint Teresa herself found this state infinitely laborious and painful. He who can make use of his mind learns how to defend himself against his own fancies, but he who has not this power ought to occupy himself much in reading, seeing that he is not in the slightest degree able to help himself. If mental prayer be beyond his reach reading is a substitute.

Her method of prayer, as she could not use her mind, was to contrive to picture Christ as within her, to think of those mysteries of His life during

\* This is the second of a proposed series of short papers on Meditation as found in the writings of mystics and others. The first paper, dealing with Nietzsche, appeared in the last issue.—Ed.

which He was most lonely; and many simple things of this kind. She found that looking on fields and water and flowers helped her to remember God, and pictures were a great help to her also. Later in life she had doubts as to whether the possession of pictures was consistent with holy poverty. But Christ asked her: Which is better, poverty or love? Whatever kindled love, that she must not give up.

From this first state of prayer the soul must not try to rise of itself. There is no reason to trouble ourselves if we have no sensible devotion: let us be thankful for what we have got. Devote the mind to the practice of the presence of Christ; accustom the soul to many acts of love and remain continually in His presence. He who would of himself pass out of this state will lose all, and his soul will be left desolate. We cannot still the mind by means of the mind. This, she says, must not be attempted, nor must we allow the understanding to cease from its acts, for in that case we shall be stupid and cold, and the result will be neither one thing nor the other. It is of great moment not to raise our spirit ourselves if our Lord does not raise it for us; and if He does, there can be no mistaking it. The mind will cease from its acts when God suspends it. A clear realisation of what is meant by humility will save us from falling into this serious error and its painful consequences.

We should always be cheerful and unconstrained; but there are not many so perfect as to be able to relax themselves always. Have great confidence and never contract the desires. God loves courageous souls. But, at the same time, we must clearly understand what is meant by humility. We must believe that one day we shall die to this world.

It is true that we may make the best of both worlds by walking according to justice and clinging to virtue, but it is the pace of a hen, and will never bring us to liberty of spirit. However it is an excellent way—for those in the married state, for instance.

As for subjects of meditation, we must meditate on what helps us most. But the subject of self-knowledge must never be put aside. Among all the states of prayer, however high, there is not one in which it is not often necessary to go back to this subject of self-knowledge.

Make use of the learned. A spirituality, the foundations of which are not resting on the truth, had better not be accompanied with prayer. From silly devotions, God deliver us.

When the soul is raised to the second state of prayer, the prayer of Quiet, the memory and understanding, though they usually help the will, yet sometimes hinder it very much. In this case the will must never heed them at all. If it tries to make them recollected, it will miss its way, together with them. The soul is now so near God, that it need not trouble to send messengers to Him.

Many souls attain this state, but few go beyond it. It is of great importance for the soul that has advanced so far as this, to understand the great dignity of its state. Miserable will that soul be if

it turns back. Such souls are implored to know and make much of themselves in order that they may never return. If through weakness and wickedness they should fall, let there be no giving up of prayer. They must believe and believe again that if they cease praying they run into danger.

We shall know whether this state of prayer comes from God, or from ourselves, or from Satan, by its effects; if we seek it of ourselves, no effect is produced, except great aridity; if it comes from Satan it leaves trouble and darkness behind. When it is the work of God, it is a visible beginning of real love. All concerning that love is perfectly and naturally apprehended, without effort. It is the beginning of all good.

The third state of prayer is the state of Union, wherein the soul casts all care away, and knows what is meant by dying to this world. The memory and imagination still remain free, and make war on the soul, labouring to throw everything into disorder. The soul cannot prevail against them, yet, beyond troubling its rest, they are able to do it no harm. Saint Teresa knows of no remedy for this torment, the only remedy she found after years of weariness is to make no more account of the mind than of a madman. Left to itself it cannot drag the other faculties in its train. When the fourth state of prayer, the state of Rapture, is attained, all the faculties will be reconciled.

Even if souls should fall after our Lord has raised them to such high degrees of prayer as these, they must not be discouraged unless they would lose themselves utterly. If we cannot pray in one way, we can pray in another. When the soul finds itself so stupefied and foolish that it is unable to pray, or fix the thoughts on anything good, the best course is to be absolutely resigned, confessing that we can do nothing—this also is a prayer—and so apply ourselves to something else; for even this aridity comes from God to remind us of humility.

To lose one's way is nothing else but the giving up of prayer. The soul must distrust itself, but have unbounded confidence that in the end it will attain to God by His grace. We must use discrimination, recognise that we are as yet unfledged, and incapable of much resistance to evil, and inexperienced; lest by attempting too much, we become more disheartened than we can bear. And for the soul to give up prayer from motives of false humility, is to go away in its misery from its true rest.

Let the soul look to it again and again for the love of God, that Satan deceive it not by tempting it to give up prayer. J. O.

## ENQUIRER.

### QUESTION 291.

*W.*—*In the Stanzas of Dzyan (Secret Doctrine, Vol. ii., p. 110; Stanza iv.), among the Powers who bring gifts to men is one named the Drainer of Waters, who gave a vehicle of desires. Can any information be given about this entity?*

G. R. S. M.—The Stanza runs: “The Breath needed a vehicle of desires (*kāma vāpa*); ‘It has it,’ said the Drainer of Waters”; and the “Drainer of Waters” is glossed as “Shuchi, the Fire of passion and animal instinct.” On p. 258 Shuchi is given as one of the three Fires in notes on a Commentary which runs: “Our earth and man [are] the products of the three Fires.” These three Fires are further glossed as the “Electric Fire,” the “Solar Fire” and the “Fire produced by Friction,” and are said to correspond with Spirit, Soul and Body in their most extended meaning. In its physical aspect the “Fire produced by Friction” is said to relate to the “creative spark” or germ that fructifies and generates the human being. On p. 107 these Fires are referred to as “Living Fires,” and Shuchi is called the “Solar Fire” (as also on pp. 60 and 107); while in volume i., p. 567, Shuchi is equated with the “Drinker of Waters,” an explanation being added to the effect that solar heat causes water to evaporate. A comparison of these passages will, however, show that H. P. B. is somewhat confused in her exegesis and seems to confound the Sanskrit names of these Fires.

I have so far never come across the graphic title “Drainer of Waters” in any scripture, but in the “Pœmandres,” the First Sermon of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, § 20, we read:

“It is because the gloomy Darkness is the root and base of the material frame; from it (*sc.* Darkness) came the Moist Nature; from this (*sc.* the Moist Nature), the body in the sense-world was composed; and from this body Death doth the water drain.”

The physical body, or body in the sense-world, is composed of the Moist Nature, which is a subsequent phase of cosmogenesis remains as Water-Earth, and in a still subsequent phase divides itself into the physical elements of physical earth, water, and air. The dissolution of the combination of these elements is effected by Death—that is, Darkness, the Drainer of the Water, the Typhonean Power. Water must, then, here symbolise the Osirian Power of fructification, and holding together. The Moist Nature, then, seems to be differentiated from the Darkness by the energising of Light in its most primitive brooding. But seeing that the Light is also Life, the Darkness, which is posited as the ultimate opposite, is Death.

I believe that both the Stanzas and the Hermes cosmogony and anthropogenesis are reflections from the same Living Teaching. Light and the Solar Fire are the givers of the animal life vehicle in one reflection, Darkness and Death are the withdrawers of it in the other. But both are one; He who gives also takes away; for He is the Drainer of the Waters of Life, in that “when they are weary and they fail, He takes them in His arms again”—to refresh them.

QUESTION 292.

B. G. T.—With a view to purifying the body has

*Theosophy any special teaching on diet or hygiene, besides abstinence from flesh foods?*  
*Which foods are rhythmic (Sāttvic)?*  
*Why did the Pythagoreans eschew beans, and did they avoid other pulses?*

M. C.—There does not seem to be any special book giving the teaching of Theosophy on hygiene; but there are many guiding thoughts throughout Theosophical literature embodying these main ideas: (1) early retiring and early rising; (2) daily bath with thorough ablutions; (3) pure air; (4) profitable work which gives pleasure to the worker; (5) due opportunities for recreation; (6) the cultivation of the mind and heart. The *Bhagavad Gītā* has it, “Verily Yoga is not for him who eateth too much nor who abstaineth to excess nor who is addicted to much sleep or even to wakefulness. The Yoga which is pain-destroying is for him who is regulated in eating and amusement, regulated in performing actions, regulated in sleeping and waking.” In *Man and his Bodies*, Mrs. Besant includes abstinence from fish and alcohol, as well as flesh, in her rules for purification.

It is said that all fruits are Sāttvic, and in Mrs. Besant’s translation of the *Bhagavad Gītā* we find: “The foods that augment vitality, energy, vigour, health, joy and relish, savoury, oleaginous, solid and agreeable, are dear to the Sāttvic.” And in the Appendix to Professor Dvivedi’s translation of *Yoga Sutra*, which is a translation of extracts from the *Hathapradīpikā* (science of regulating the breath) it is said that “the food also should consist of substantial liquids and tasteful solids. Bitter, acid, pungent, saltish, and hot things, as well as green vegetables, oil, intoxicating drugs, animal food of every description, curds, whey, etc., are to be strictly avoided. Wheat, rice, barley, milk, ghee, sugar, butter, sugar-candy, honey, dry ginger, the five vegetables beginning with Patol, oats, and natural waters are most agreeable.”

The Pythagorean attitude to beans is a moot point. Aristoxenus (350 B.C.) is quoted by Aulus Gellius in the second century A.D. as affirming that beans were recommended and frequently used by Pythagoras, who thought them both “digestive and laxative.” On the other hand, Diogenes Laertius in the same century, quoting from some unknown authority, asserts that Pythagoras forbade the use of beans on the ground that they were “flatulent and partook of animal properties, and that men could keep their stomachs in better order by avoiding them.” The latter tells a story of the death of Pythagoras as follows: When escaping from Crotona he came to a field of beans and, rather than cross it, he allowed himself to be captured and slain. Is not this analogous to the tradition that Buddha died of a surfeit of roast pork? And may there not be some political significance in this reputed distaste for beans? Beans were used in voting, and Pythagoras was, like our own Carlyle, no believer in the *vox populi* but rather in the government of those who had proved themselves fit. These might not, probably would not, be popular favourites, elected by the requisite number

of beans. The destruction of the school at Crotona was the result of a political rising, and it is thus easy to read the allegory in the beanfield story of the Master's death as told by Diogenes Laertius.

F. L.—Theosophical students and teachers have not so far expounded this matter as much as we must hope they will do in the future. It is a department which requires more attention, and of course more knowledge of individuals than is obtainable at present. The rhythmic foods would be those which are purest, *i.e.*, free from animal constituents. But as each individual differs in his make-up, a change of diet must at first be largely a matter of experiment. We should begin by trying to discover the particular foods—fruit, vegetable, cereal—which, taken in conjunction, suit us best. We should keep to regular hours for the meals, and avoid too much mixture, and give time for digestion, matters which have been neglected by many “diet reformers” and which have been largely the cause of breakdown and hysteria. A change should be made gradually, with reference to the particular work or circumstances or constitution of the person it concerns. Do not eat lentils because so and so does, and because they are “nourishing,” but see if they agree with you. Avoid monotony, and take exercise and daily baths. Get as much fresh country air as possible, clothe yourself in woollen undergarments and keep your window a little open night and day during winter, and fully so in summer. Avoid extremes as you would poison, “The body is not to be shattered, it is to be trained.”

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QUESTION 293.

F. M. M. R.—*In connection with Mrs. Besant's chapter on Memory in A Study on Consciousness, may we not assume that everything, states of consciousness, and events, past, present, and future, are always present in the consciousness of the Logos in a state of solution, and that we, His embodied ideas or incarnated thoughts, perform continually the work of crystallising or bringing into objective existence His ideas? Yet we emanated from Him in order to evolve into independent centres; so is it not evident that we are free agents within our limitations,—free to solidify or not all ideas?*

E. A. D.—We may assume that everything,—all possibilities, all conceivable things and happenings,—are always present in the consciousness of the Logos in a state of solution, that is as ideas which generate forms on the lower planes; and that we and all other self-conscious beings,—His embodied ideas or incarnated thoughts,—continually perform the work of crystallising His ideas. The whole process of evolution is this bringing down of the ideas of the Logos into the lower plane, one after another in succession or time. The complete plan of evolution is contained in the consciousness of the Logos, but the exact details of its working out are not absolutely defined. All possible details and methods of working are in His consciousness: these are more numerous than those that are worked out in the universe. It is

in this choice of ways that we and other beings (devas, etc.) find scope for individual action.

It is true that we have emanated from the Logos in order to evolve into independent centres, and at our present stage, *viz.*, the human stage, we have become to some extent self-moving centres. By its long evolution through the lower kingdoms, mineral, vegetable and animal, the germ of will within us has acquired a certain power of spontaneous action. We are therefore free to choose among the possible ways of working out the great plan of the Logos, and in this limited way free to solidify or not divine ideas.

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QUESTION 294.

M. L.—*If the “Heaven-World” is truly described as the sphere of supreme bliss or happiness, how is it possible that such bliss can be experienced, when the astral vehicle—the only vehicle of motion or feeling—has been left behind? I can understand how emotion colours thought on the physical and astral planes, but I cannot understand how, when the “body of feeling and desire” has been cast aside, any feeling such as bliss can be experienced on the mental plane. If there is no power of emotional vibration on this plane, no happiness can be possible.*

E. A. B.—Astral matter interpenetrates all physical matter, and is the vehicle through which the One Life animates all lives. A man's astral body, being formed of this matter, vibrates under every impulse of thought, both from without and from within, and is the connecting link between the mind of man and his physical body, acting on the latter through sensations, and being itself the centre of the senses and of the desires of the lower nature. After the death of the physical body, the astral body is of course no longer needed as a vehicle, and in time it also “dies,” as man passes on, for astral matter cannot exist on the devachanic plane. This does not mean the annihilation of emotion or feeling, but that the man is now living on this plane of mind, which before he could only approach through the astral vehicle. And as he rises in spiritual development, other and higher “vehicles” will bring him into touch with yet higher regions of consciousness. The astral body is sometimes spoken of as the “reflection” of the Buddhic—the “Body of Bliss”—which may suggest how independent of any astral body are the higher forms of bliss.

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that the feeling of bliss comes into consciousness through the “permanent astral atom,” which is never cast aside. This atom must remain in contact with the atomic sub-plane of the astral world, and as it is free from the limitations of the astral body, it will vibrate harmoniously with the “great life-wave” which flows eternally through all the planes. Hence the *permanent state of happiness*, experienced as the “Heaven-world,” while the Self is identified with the lower mental body, and is conscious on the lower mental sub-planes.

The idea of the “chain of permanent atoms”

in which the Ray is centred, as a series of foci, or points of view, from which the Self contemplates the field of the Not-Self, is a very valuable aid to the analysis of consciousness. Taken in conjunction with the diagrammatic system of the "Ladder of Life," it becomes very illuminating for those who think along that line.

The permanent atoms are represented by the ultimate points of the vehicles, through which the Ray contacts the vibrations of the several planes. The existence of the "Mental Unit" of the matter of the fourth Mental Sub-plane probably indicates that a similar focus exists on all sub-planes below the atomic ones, where the permanent atoms function. It seems highly probable that the Ray would require a focus, or point of view, for each sub-plane, just as it does for each plane as a whole.

The points of view for the three lower vehicles may be indicated as selfish—unselfish—selfless, respectively—or personal—other-personal—impersonal; transitional attitudes being based on the intermediate units functioning on intermediate sub-planes.

Considering this hypothesis in regard to the question, it will be seen that the three lower sub-planes of the Heaven-world correspond to the steps of the Ladder marked feeling, higher feeling, and acute perception. The corresponding astral and mental units would convey to the Self the bliss feeling and the heavenly vision.

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QUESTION 295.

*J. L. P.—How does Theosophy explain the purpose of creation, i.e., the reason why creation has been started in the beginning? I quite understand that while matters are as they are, it is necessary for men to develop the Divine Spark in them, so as in the end to bring it back to the Central Flame from which it once emanated. But as it cannot be possible to add to the experience, or to the knowledge, or to any other quality or capacity of It, why then did It deem it necessary to send out Sparks of Itself by creating the Universe and all beings therein? Without an explanation it seems to me that by living and developing our Higher Selves we are only "carrying water to the ocean."*

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that the first part of this question can best be answered in the words of the *Upanishad*, "The One willed to multiply Itself."

In the beginning, it has been said, is the One; at the end, a host of glorious adepts.

That, "It cannot be possible to add to the ex-

perience, or to the knowledge, or to any other quality or capacity of It," is, in the writer's view, an assumption which cannot be justified. We are speaking of the One Self in Manifestation, not of the Unmanifested Absolute of which nothing whatever can be conceived. And of the Manifested Self we can imagine nothing, except in an anthropomorphic way. We may talk of "Its" creative energy as the First Cause, and of "Its" consciousness as the Universal Mind, and so far flatter ourselves that we are quite impersonal and abstract. But the anthropomorphism only lurks concealed, so long as the Self who owns these powers is ignored.

When we come to face the idea of the Self of Selves, at the root of all; then our anthropomorphism stalks forth unashamed. We have nothing to enable us to think of the One Self, except our own Self, such is the nature of our Selfhood. We can, therefore, only judge of "Its" experience in manifestation, by our own. It is the universal experience that we add to our own experience knowledge and capacity; hence it is unjustifiable to assume that the Self of Selves does not do the same during Its life in Manifestation. This assumption further involves the idea that all the experiences of this evolution were gone through in a former one; otherwise where did "It" acquire that knowledge, experience and capacity which cannot be added to. Against this we have the universal experience of life, that no two experiences are ever exactly alike; circumstances invariably differ. Hence, we have absolutely no grounds for assuming that two world-evolutions, considered in their totality as events, could conceivably be exactly alike.

Therefore the experiences of this world-period must be different from the one before; and therefore the One Self must gain knowledge and experience by living through it. Hence we are not "carrying water to the ocean."

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The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, 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. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary.*

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. Any 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. XV.

LONDON, APRIL 1, 1906.

NO. 9.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### PARIS CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION.

I am requested by the Congress Committee in Paris to again remind the members of this Section that the time of the Congress is drawing near (June 3rd, 4th and 5th), and that help to be effective should be offered without delay. The special help that I am urged to ask from our members is that which will take the form of papers contributed to the Departments and questions suitable for discussion at the two meetings set apart for that purpose. I make this appeal with great willingness, knowing from experience how much help is available within this Section and believing that it will be given as generously to a Congress to be held in Paris, as it was to one held in London. By reason of this change of place, and because our French colleagues have decided that contributions to art and music shall this year be national, our help is chiefly needed along these two lines of papers and questions for discussion. But contributions to the Departments are very seriously needed and help though restricted in kind should not therefore be limited in quality or quantity. I hope this will not be so, and that our Section will this year put into good papers the same energy and devotion it gave last year to organisation. I shall be glad, therefore, to hear from those willing to send in papers and I will forward to them forms to fill in. All information as to the kind of papers asked for, and the rules with regard to them will be found on pages 5 to 8 in the Congress Programme, and with regard to questions for discussion on pages 10 to 12. As fewer copies of the Programme have this year been printed, a copy will not be sent to each member, so that those who wish for them should write to Mr. Keightley, the Congress Secretary, at 28, Albemarle Street. As the Programme has

been issued later than was intended the date for receiving questions will be extended to April 10th, and that for receiving papers to May 1st.

On my own behalf I would like to urge that there shall be a large attendance from this Section at the Congress this year and that each member shall, wherever possible, grow to feel his presence there to be a pleasure and a duty. For it is the gathering together of members, each with his world of living thought and aspiration about him, far more than the record of those thoughts on paper—valuable as that is—that makes a Congress.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

### VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT- FOUNDER.

Colonel Olcott is expected in England between April 20th and 26th, and will remain till about the middle of May, proceeding then to Paris. He will preside at the Congress to be held there in June. A reception will be given at 28, Albemarle Street, on Saturday, April 28th, at 8 p.m., and all members of the Society are cordially invited to meet their President.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

### CLOSING OF HEADQUARTERS FOR EASTER.

The rooms at Albemarle Street will be closed for cleaning from and including Wednesday, April 11th, and will re-open at the usual time on Monday, April 23rd.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

### FORM OF BEQUEST TO THE BRITISH SECTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

In accordance with a resolution of the Executive Committee, legal advice was taken as to the possibility of leaving money directly to the funds of the British Section, and the following form of bequest was drawn up by the authority consulted, and is published for the information of any persons who may desire to bequeath money to this Section.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

"I give and bequeath the sum of £ free of legacy duty to the British Section of the Theosophical Society, the headquarters of which Section are now or were in the year 1905, and for several years before 1905, at No. 28, Albemarle Street, London, and I direct that the said sum be paid to the Treasurer for the time being of the said British Section, and that the receipt of the said Treasurer be a sufficient discharge for the same. And I further direct that the said sum be placed by the said Treasurer among the funds and property which belong solely to the British Section of the Theosophical Society, and are controlled solely by the Governing Body of the said British Section, and not among the funds or property of any other Section, or part of the Theosophical Society, so that the said sum may be devoted exclusively to the use and benefit of the said British Section, and be exclusively at the disposal of the members of the said British Section."

### HEADQUARTERS ACCOMMODATION.

#### Report of the Building Sub-Committee.

At the Convention of the British Section last year the subject of more spacious premises for the Headquarters of the Section was raised, and as the outcome of a brief discussion it was decided to call for the appointment of a small Committee to undertake preliminary inquiries as to conditions and possibilities. As part of such inquiry it became necessary to obtain some rough idea as to the probable amount of capital which could be raised within the Section itself in the event of any company being formed to carry through a plan for securing and adapting more convenient premises. To further this inquiry a circular was sent out, with the approval of the Executive Council, in the January issue of THE VAHAN. In response a number of replies have been received, from which it is gathered that shares to the extent of about £2,000 would be likely to be taken up by members of the British Section. Such a sum would of course be inadequate for the purpose. From some of the correspondence it is also evident that the purport of the circular was not always clearly understood. It was not a request for subscriptions, donations or guarantee fund, but an inquiry as to how many

£1 shares would probably be taken up *if* and *when* such an undertaking as the formation of a Limited Liability Company for the erection or adaptation of a building for Headquarters should be carried through.

The Building Sub-Committee have now requested the Executive Council to publish their original report in THE VAHAN so that all members of the Section may be fully informed as to the results of the inquiry they requested by resolution to be set on foot. With the publication of this report and the announcement of the amount and nature of the replies received to the circular of January, the duties for the performance of which the Sub-Committee was appointed are practically completed. The information is now before the Section as a whole and it is extremely desirable that in appointing delegates for the next Convention the matter should be thoroughly ventilated in order that the Convention may express a well-considered opinion as to whether or no the time is ripe for a further prosecution of any plan to secure to the British Section its own permanent Headquarters. It may be noted that the Dutch Section has already made considerable progress towards the adoption of a business plan for the erection of a building, and the American *Theosophic Messenger* for March ventilates the matter as a subject for serious consideration.

The report of the Building Sub-Committee follows:—

*To the Council of the Theosophical Society, British Section.*

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF ACCOMMODATION AT HEADQUARTERS.

At the recent Convention, on 7th July, 1905, the following resolution was passed unanimously:—

"That the Council of the British Section be and are hereby requested to appoint a small Committee to consider the question of accommodation for the work at their Headquarters, and how it can best be provided, after which to advise and report to said Council."

In accordance with that resolution the Council, on 11th July, 1905, nominated as a Committee the undersigned, who beg to report:—

1. That at their first meeting Mr. William Theobald was appointed Chairman and Miss Kate Spink Secretary; but subsequently, at the suggestion of Miss Spink, Mr. G. A. Whalley-Chapman was elected Secretary in her place.

2. That several formal meetings have been held and many informal ones between individual members, each of whom has engaged in separate enquiry in his or her own circle. In this connection your Committee have received great and valuable help from Mr. F. A. Higgs, a member of the Society, who was unfortunately precluded from joining the Committee officially.

3. That the present Headquarters are not sufficient for even present requirements, and are wholly inadequate for meeting the growing necessities of the Section.

4. That while it is indispensable that the Head-

quarters should be in a conveniently accessible and, if possible, prominent position, it is not necessary to have them on such an expensive site as Albemarle Street.

5. That the lease of Albemarle Street cannot be terminated until September, 1912 (*seven months' prior notice having been given, and this requirement must be borne in mind*), and that it might be difficult to sublet the premises for so short a term.

6. That the lease of the premises occupied by the Theosophical Publishing Society does not expire until 1916.

7. That it is exceedingly desirable that the Theosophical Publishing Society should secure ample accommodation on the premises at Headquarters.

8. Your Committee have also given serious consideration to the suggestion (thrown out at Convention) that a building scheme should be entered upon which should include offices and a public hall to hold 1,000 persons, which could be let for concerts, etc., when not required by the Society. Such a hall is undoubtedly much wanted in London, but it would be absolutely necessary for it to be built in a most costly style and position, involving an expenditure of from £30,000 to £100,000. (One very suitable site was reported to us, the price for the freehold ground alone being £80,000.) It would also make it necessary to enter into business plans and management in order to raise income, not only from letting shops, offices, etc., which could be done through house agencies, but letting and maintaining always up to date the halls and smaller rooms for concerts, meetings, entertainments, etc., which require special business experience. Your Committee with regret advise foregoing this attractive scheme. If that part of the scheme is given up the area for seeking a site or premises is at once very much extended, and would include neighbourhoods which, although sufficiently central for the purposes of the Society, would be much less costly than such a site as would be required for the suggested large hall, and more consistent with the capital upon which we may probably count on obtaining from the members of the Theosophical Society.

9. When the matter was discussed at the Convention we were under the impression that the lease of 28, Albemarle Street would expire at Christmas, 1906: the fact that it will not expire until September, 1912, and that the lease of the Theosophical Publishing Society extends until 1916, present unexpected difficulties, and may involve considerable expense in arranging the union of interests we think so desirable.

10. In seeking sites or premises your Committee discovered a Freehold Mansion in Pembroke Square, Bayswater, close to the Notting Hill Gate Metropolitan and Tube stations. The Freehold could be acquired for £4,750.\*

Your Committee was so impressed with the suitability of the building for adaptation to the needs of the Society that they considered very

seriously the wisdom of recommending the scheme for adoption. If advised by experts that the structure would admit of the ground floor being gutted and supported upon pillars, a platform to hold 100 persons, and a room to hold about 500 persons, *i.e.*, a Hall with seating for about 600 in all, could be obtained, the scheme seemed practicable and indeed tempting in many ways.

It is thought that sufficient accommodation could also be obtained in the basement and the upper floors for the Society's other requirements. A rough estimate of the cost of the purchase and alterations is put at £7,000.

For the upkeep of such a place it might not be necessary to go outside Theosophical circles, and the capital, say £8,000 or £10,000, subscribed, and called up if and when required, should be wholly raised from the members if they be reasonably responsive, and that as an investment might earn 2 or 3 per cent.

11. The consideration of the premises in Pembroke Square has, however, suggested the possibility of finding a Mansion within such an area as would perhaps meet all requirements. That area your Committee suggest should be, *as nearly as possible*, within one of two central districts:—

- I. That bounded—  
On the West by Edgware Road.  
" " East " Gray's Inn Road.  
" " South " Oxford Street.  
" " North " Marylebone and Euston Roads.

- Or II. That within the region—  
East of Regent Street.  
West of Chancery Lane.  
North of the Strand.  
South of Oxford Street.

12. Your Committee are unanimous in their opinion that the time has arrived when it is necessary to ascertain what funds can be relied upon as likely to be obtained from members, and that a circular (a form of which is attached hereto)\* should be sent to all members of the Theosophical Society throughout the world—perhaps in first instance to the British Section only.

We are,  
Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM THEOBALD, *Chairman*,  
KATE SPINK,  
EDITH WARD,  
G. A. WHALLEY-CHAPMAN, *Secretary*,

} *Committee.*

28, Albemarle Street,  
London, W.  
December 9th, 1905.

## ACTIVITIES.

### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to March 20th: L. S., 10s.; S. C. C., £5; J. D. C., £6 6s.; E. A. B., £6; M. A. B., £2 2s. 6d. Total: £19 18s. 6d.

\* This building was soon afterwards disposed of.

\* This refers to the circular sent with the January VAHAN.

### Section Reference Library.

A few of the pamphlets mentioned in the last issue of THE VAHAN have been received and many thanks are due to the members who so kindly contributed them. There are still, however, several missing and if any members can send any of the following list they will be most gratefully received. It is important that the Section Library should have as complete a collection as possible of the literature issued in connection with the Society, and more especially the official publications of early date, so that the attention of older members to this notice is especially desired, as they may possibly have some of the pamphlets required.

*Eastern Castes and Western Classes, and Education a National Duty.* Annie Besant.

*Pearls of Truth.* Countess Wachtmeister.

*How best to become a Theosophist.*

*Theosophy as a Guide in Life.*

*Practical Theosophy.*

*Life and Death.* J. C. Staples.

*Hints on Esoteric Theosophy.* No. 1.

*The Theosophists of Free Thought.* H. P. Blavatsky.

Reports of the American Section for 1887 and 1891.

Reports of the General Meetings of the Society, Nos. 1 to 7, 10 to 15, and 23, 24 and 25.

Report of the Fourth Indian Section Convention, 1895.

First Annual Report of the Central Hindu College.

Any official publications of the Society before 1884.

KATE SPINK,  
General Secretary.

### Return of Charter.

Owing to the departure from Clifton of some of the most active members the Clifton Lodge has returned its Charter, most of the remaining members attaching themselves to the Bristol Lodge.

KATE SPINK,  
General Secretary.

### Monday Afternoon Meetings.

Four Monday afternoon meetings will be held at the Headquarters during April, on the following dates, from 3.30 to 4.30. April 2nd, "Things seen in Gnostic Ecstasy," Mr. Mead; April 9th, "Theosophy as a Social Factor," Mr. Faulding; April 23rd, "Unity and Diversity," Miss Lilian Lloyd; April 30th, "Colour and Number," Mr. Robert King.

E. M. M.

### Social Committee Debating Society.

Meetings in April will take place on Fridays, 6th and 27th, at 28, Albemarle Street, from 3.15 to 4.15.

L. S.

### Practice Debating Class.

Meetings will take place on Tuesdays, April 3rd and 10th, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, at 6.30 p.m. Members are cordially invited to attend as visitors.

F. M. M. R.

### South Western Federation.

The eleventh Annual Convention of the South Western Federation was held at Bournemouth on Saturday and Sunday, February 24th and 25th, Mrs. Hooper presiding. On Saturday afternoon a reception and conversazione was held at the Assembly Rooms, Boscombe, where all the meetings took place.

Mr. Bellairs, President of the Bournemouth Lodge, in the name of his Lodge, extended a very cordial welcome to the twenty members who attended from the widely separated Lodges and Centres of Oxford, Bath, Bristol, Exeter and Southampton. Unfortunately Plymouth and Cardiff were not represented.

A very interesting feature of this meeting was the album of pendulograms which Mr. Bligh Bond of Bath (a student of the subject for twelve years) brought with him. An attentive group of listeners heard him explain the process of their making. Among the subjects talked about was the growth of the feeling of the Brotherhood of man, striking evidence of which comes from France where a Society of Associated Teachers numbering 15,000 has just held a Congress at Lüttich, in which eighteen nationalities were represented. Among other things, these teachers resolved that children must no longer be taught that there are two kinds of morality, one for nations and another for individuals. They must be taught brotherly love, without distinction of nation, colour or religion, and that humaneness must be inculcated not merely towards man, but also to the lower kingdoms of nature. At 8 p.m. Mrs. Hooper gave a lecture on "The Body and the Soul," to a fairly good audience.

On Sunday at 11.15 a.m. members met for business. Good work was done at this meeting. The reports of the Lodges were so good and suggestive that it was decided to print a summary of them, and some of the methods of Lodge work which have proved to be successful may be of service to other Lodges. Owing to a suggestion at the last Convention six or seven more copies of *The Theosophical Review* have been taken in by as many groups of readers. The scheme for providing better and more suitable headquarters for our Society now before the members was discussed.

At 3 p.m. Mrs. Hooper again lectured on "What is the Individual," about fifty people being present. Several interesting questions were asked at the close. Mr. Bellairs at 8 p.m. lectured on "Ideality and Reality," which was followed by a thoughtful discussion. It was felt by all who attended the meetings that a most pleasant and profitable time had been spent and all looked for

ward to the next Convention, which will be held at Exeter in February, 1907. It is hoped that next year we shall be able to record the starting of a Centre at Cheltenham.

J. W. C.

### Lewisham Centre.

Meetings are now being held at Avenue House, 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham, on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. The attention of members having friends in the neighbourhood of Lewisham, Lee, Catford, Forest Hill, New Cross and Greenwich, is kindly invited to this fact.

T. A. C.

### Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Halle, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street: April 2nd, *Transmission of Power*, H. von Kramer; April 9th, *Things seen in Gnostic Ecstasy*, G. R. S. Mead; April 23rd, *Revivals from a Theosophic Standpoint*, Miss M. Smith; April 30th, General Meeting. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 0.30 p.m.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street: April 3rd, *The Gnostic Oedipus and Theological Sphinx*, J. R. Anderson; April 10th, *The Gnostic Restoration*, G. R. S. Mead.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings for

study. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 34, Wicklow Street, for discussion of Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms*. On Mondays, at 4 p.m., study of *Esoteric Christianity*, and at 5 p.m., study of *A Study in Consciousness*. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: April 12th, *The Inner Purpose of Theosophy*, Mrs. Stead; April 5th, 19th and 26th, Lodge meetings. Library open on Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Meetings on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., and on Tuesdays at 8.15 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, SOUTH EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street, at 8 p.m., on Wednesdays. Study of *Man and his Bodies* and *A Study in Consciousness*, on alternate Wednesdays. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Sundays, at 3 p.m., at Shepherd's Hall. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 4, Nelson Street.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 7 p.m. Lodge meetings for study of *The Growth of the Soul*, on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: April 2nd, *Human Consciousness*, A. R. Orage; April 9th, *Cosmic Consciousness*, A. R. Orage. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. April 4th, *The Psychic Faculty: Casual, Induced, and Natural*, E. E. Marsden. Other Wednesdays, study alternately of *The Elements of Theosophy* and *The Pedigree of Man*. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: April 1st, *Our Duty to the Physical Body*, B. G. Theobald; April 8th, *Radioactivity*, S. Ransom; April 15th, *Through the Gate of Joy*, D. N. Dunlop; April 22nd, *God, Nature, Man*, F. Horne; April 29th, "Old Wives' Fables," Miss Lilian Lloyd. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanch, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: April 5th, *From the Sibylline Oracles*, G. R. S. Mead; April 12th and 19th, no meetings; April 26th, *Work among the Buddhists*, Col. H. S. Olcott. Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): April 1st, *Duty in the Light of Theosophy*, Miss E. M. Green; April 8th, *Suggestion*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; April 15th and 22nd, no meetings; April 29th, *The Sacred Marriage*, G. R. S. Mead.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.: April 4th, *Some Causes of Personal Failure*, Mrs. Esther Wood; April 11th, *Fragments of Science and Sentiment from the Unseen*, Mrs. J. Page Hopps; April 18th, *Theosophy and Socialism*, J. G. D. Hooker; April 25th, *Karma*, P. Tovey. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: April 2nd, *Symbolism*, A. H. Barley; April 9th, no meeting; April 16th, *Zodiacal Physiognomy*, Miss M. Higgs; April 23rd, *The Christian Line*, Miss E. Mallet; April 30th, *Karma*, A. J. Faulding.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: April 1st, *Yoga, or Hindu Methods of seeking Truth*, J. C. Chatterji; April 8th, *The Opening of the Christian Way*, Miss Mallet; April 15th, No meeting; April 22nd, *The Silent Ministry of Prayer*, Miss Margery Smith; April 29th, *The Value of Environment*, P. Tovey.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings for young people on Saturdays, at 7 p.m.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N., on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: April 4th, *The Gate of Joy*, D. N. Dunlop; April 9th, *Experimental and Spontaneous Personalities*, B. Keightley; April 11th, *Gospel of the Sayings*, Rev. A. Baker; April 18th, *The Mystic Way*, V. Lewis; April 25th, *The World Egg*, G. R. S. Mead.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: April 6th, Study of *Pedigree of Man*; April 13th and 20th, no meetings; April 27th, Col. Olcott, it is hoped, will lecture.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Enquirers received on Fridays, 4.30 to 7 p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE,

Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: April 1st, *The Æsthetic Basis of Music*, J. I. Wedgwood; April 8th, 15th and 22nd, *Theosophy and Modern Problems*. Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*. Alternate Fridays and Saturdays, debating class at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meeting on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate: April 6th, *The Æsthetic Basis of Music*, J. I. Wedgwood. Sundays, at 6.45 p.m.: April 1st, *The Mystery of Pain and the Problem of Evil*, Mrs. Bell; April 8th, *Is Prayer Efficacious*, J. E. Reid; April 15th, *Vicarious Suffering—An Easter Message*, J. I. Wedgwood; April 22nd, *Lord Lytton's "Zanoni," and its Message*, J. E. Reid; April 29th, *The Building of Character*, J. I. Wedgwood. Information from Miss Browne, River View, Marygate, York.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

In reference to Question 292, is not the Pythagorean precept "Abstain from beans" to be taken, like many other Pythagorean sayings, rather in a symbolic sense? In Porphyry's treatise *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, we read, beans "were considered by the ancients as a symbol of generation

proceeding in a right line, and without inflection ; because this vegetable is almost the only seed-bearing plant whose stalk is perforated throughout without any intervening knots." And Taylor adds, in a footnote to his translation : "Hence, when Pythagoras exhorted his disciples to abstain from beans, he intended to signify that they should beware of a continued and perpetual descent into the realms of generation."

WM. C. WARD.

## ENQUIRER.

### QUESTION 296.

*P.*—Is it not correct to say that Pythagoras taught the heliocentric theory of the planetary system and also the axial rotation of the earth? I have been taken to task for making this statement and should like to have the data for refuting what I believe to be the erroneous opinion of my critic.

G. R. S. M.—What Pythagoras taught on the subject we have no means of ascertaining, for he left nothing in writing. The Pythagorean Philolaus, a contemporary of Socrates, is supposed to have been the first to have written down the teaching of the school on this subject. Of his book fragments in sufficient number have been preserved from which to get a fairly accurate idea of the system. An excellent summary is given by Dr. J. L. E. Dreyer of Armagh Observatory in his just published work, *History of the Planetary Systems from Thales to Kepler* (Cambridge : at the University Press), where on pp. 40 ff., we read :

"By a strange fatality, this system of the world has been totally misunderstood by medieval and later writers, and even at the present day the mistake is frequently made that the Pythagoreans taught the motion of the earth round the sun, although it is nearly a hundred years since Boeckh gave a correct exposition of the system of Philolaus. . . .

"The leading idea of it is that the apparent daily rotation of the starry heavens and the daily motion of the sun are caused by the earth being carried in twenty-four hours round the circumference of a circle. . . . The idea of the earth rotating round an axis did not occur to Philolaus, or, if it did, it did not commend itself to him, possibly because there appeared to be no other case of rotation in the world, the moon always turning the same face to us, and therefore *not* rotating, as philosophers of that age (and of many succeeding ages) argued. If the moon had an orbital motion, always keeping one side directed to the centre of the orbit, might not the same be the case with the earth? Evidently, if this were the case, and the period of the earth's orbital motion were twenty-four hours, an observer on the earth would see the whole heaven apparently turn round, and the sun, moon and stars rise and set once in the course of a day and a night. And this arrangement would offer the advantage that all motions took place in the same direction, from west to east.

"Philolaus and his adherents were, perhaps, influenced by these considerations, and they considered the nature of the earth too gross to make it fit for the exalted position of occupying the centre of the universe. In this commanding position, they placed the 'Central Fire,' also described as the Hearth of the universe (*Ἑστία τοῦ παντός*) or the Watch-tower of Zeus (*Διὸς φυλακή*), round which the earth and all the other heavenly bodies moved in circular orbits. The orbit of the earth had, of course, to be supposed to lie in the plane of its equator, and the fact that no one had ever seen the Central Fire could be easily explained by assuming that the known parts of the earth, Greece and the surrounding countries, are situated on the side of the earth which is always turned away from the centre of the orbit. It would therefore be necessary to travel beyond India to catch a glimpse of the Central Fire, and even after travelling so far, this mysterious body might still be invisible, as another planet intervenes between it and the earth. About this unseen planet, Aristotle says : 'They also assume another earth, opposite to ours, which they call the counter-earth (*ἀντίχθων*), as they do not with regard to the phenomena seek for their reasons and causes, but forcibly make the phenomena fit their opinions and preconceived notions, and attempt to construct the universe.' In another place Aristotle says : 'When they (the Pythagoreans) anywhere find a gap in the numerical ratios of things, they fill it up in order to complete the system. As ten is a perfect number and is supposed to comprise the whole nature of numbers [being the sum of the first four numbers], they maintain that there must be ten bodies moving in the universe, and as only nine are visible, they make the Antichthon the tenth.'

"These nine bodies are the earth, the moon, the sun, the five planets, and the sphere of the fixed stars. To complete the number ten, Philolaus [rather, the tradition of the school—G. R. S. M.] created the Antichthon or counter-earth. This tenth planet is always invisible to us, because it is between us and the Central Fire and always keeps pace with the earth ; in other words, its period of revolution is also twenty-four hours, and it also moves in the plane of the equator. It must therefore hide the Central Fire from the inhabitants of the earth, in longitude 180° from Greece. . . . The Pythagoreans do not appear to have indulged in speculations as to the physical nature of the Antichthon, but it does not seem that they assumed it to be inhabited, as only the region below the moon and beginning with the earth was considered to be given up to generation and change, and was called the heavens (*οὐρανός*), while the kosmos, the place of regulated motion, embraced the moon, the sun, and the planets ; and the Olympus, the place of the elements in their purity, was the sphere of the fixed stars. Outside this was the Outer Fire, and outside that again the Infinite Space (*τὸ ἄπειρον*) or the Infinite Air from which the world draws its breath."

All those heavenly bodies were spheres. Enough has now been quoted to give the reader some idea

of the main features of the Pythagorean planetary system. The sun, moon and planets described their circular orbits round the Central Fire. The earth and the counter-earth also described their orbits in the plane of the equator. As the counter-earth was in all things similar to the earth, it follows that it is very probable that the Pythagoreans thought of it as inhabited; indeed, they very probably thought of all the heavenly bodies as being inhabited, for, for them, they were all "animals." None of the heavenly bodies, however, were thought of by the Pythagoreans as endowed with axial rotation. It therefore follows that neither the heliocentric orbit of the earth nor its axial rotation was taught by the Pythagoreans.

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QUESTION 297.

K. L.—In Mrs. Besant's *Theosophy and the New Psychology*, p. 71, we are warned of the danger which the inflow of the higher forces may bring to an unprepared and unpurified nature. But on pp. 19-21 instances are given of the marvellous and often permanently good effects of sudden "conversion" upon such natures; and Mrs. Besant practically defines "conversion" as "the inflow of a life higher and more compelling." How are these two passages to be reconciled?

A. H. W.—The writer thinks that, in the first case, the "higher forces" are developed directly on the physical plane, and consequently that they act with great energy upon the tissues. Unless the body has been brought into harmony with them by due preparation they will force it to vibrate at their rate and disintegrate it in the process.

In the second case the higher force is developed in one subplane of the astral body, and harmonic vibrations alone reach the physical tissues. That these are almost too strong to be endured the records of the convulsions, dances, and emotional crises in "conversion" amply demonstrate. The difference in power between the two cases can be symbolised by holding a note on the piano down, and striking the octave above. The higher note is reproduced on the lower string. But this is very different in power to the sound produced by striking the lower string direct. So it is with the development of the occult forces on the different planes.

E. A. B.—The discrepancy here spoken of is, I think, more apparent than real. In the case of sudden "conversion," an appeal, unexpected and unsought, is made to the person's *religious* emotions. It may come in many ways—a word, an event, a sudden sense of awe from some scene of beauty and wonder (as in the instance given by Mrs. Besant); in any case it comes as a spark falling on inflammable material lying (unconsciously) ready to receive it, and kindling a fire, which may die out, or may last and spread in in-

creasing strength. The fact that the emotion is religious is in itself a safeguard, and to some extent at least a purifier. Whether permanent or not, the exaltation pertains specially to the emotional nature rather than to the intelligence. On the other hand, with regard to innate "genius," or to the deliberate effort to reach to a higher level of consciousness and of the "knowledge" which is "power," the influx from above affects the whole man; and *all* his energies, physical as well as mental and spiritual, share in the increased vitality. Hence the caution, the necessity of purification and of balance, lest the lower forms of energy (being the easier) should gain the ascendancy, and the greater the possible height the greater be the fall.

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QUESTION 298.

P. H.—A physical atom is formed of a whirl of etheric atoms; an etheric atom of a whirl of super-etheric atoms; these again of a whirl of the sub-atomic atoms; and so on. Is there any definite line of demarcation between the substance of the different planes and of the sub-planes, or does the one substance gradually merge into that above it?

A. B. C.—P. H. would do well to carefully study Mrs. Besant's *Occult Chemistry*, recently reprinted by the T.P.S. He will there find a description of what one may term the molecular structure of the units of the different planes. He might also consider what he sees of the three lower physical sub-planes, *i.e.*, solids, liquids and gases, and since he finds them of differing degrees of density, almost in some cases merging the one state into the other, he may not unreasonably conclude "as below, so above" (if one may venture to reverse the occult axiom) and therefore that the etheric forms of matter probably may at times appear to merge the one in the other. Nevertheless, broadly speaking, the planes must be regarded as distinct and distinguishable.

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The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

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All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. Any 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. XV.

LONDON, MAY 1, 1906.

NO. 10.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS IN PARIS.

#### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION.

Fifty-five questions have been submitted to the Debating Sub-Committee for the two meetings for discussion to be held during this third annual Congress. From these the Sub-Committee has selected those which it regards as of first importance, and each of its members has given separately and in writing his or her final choice. The results of this voting have been submitted to the Organising Committee, which at its meeting on April 21st has confirmed this choice by an almost unanimous vote of the members present.

The following are the questions thus chosen:

First Meeting (Sunday, June 3rd, 1906):

1. To what extent is the Theosophical Society simply a group of seekers after Truth, and to what extent is it a group of students, of propagandists, of exponents of a system?

2. If the Society has no dogmas, there exist within it—and very rightly—authorities of different degree. Is the relative value of these authorities purely a question of individual appreciation? On what qualities or on what faculties should such authority be established?

3. (a) Should the moral character of individuals be considered in regard to their admission into the Theosophical Society?

(b) Have those individuals whose morality, according to current opinion, appears defective in some respects their place in the Society?

(c) Is there a general standard that could be applied in cases of this kind?

Second Meeting (Monday, June 4th):

1. (a) Is propaganda an essential aim for the Theosophical Society?

(b) Is propaganda a necessary consequence of the three objects of the Society?

2. (a) Considering the length of time the Theosophical Society has existed and the amount of propaganda carried on, how is it that the members are so few in number? (About 13,000, according to the Report presented to the thirtieth General Convention of the Society in December, 1905.)

(b) Has there been an absence of method or of system in the work of the Theosophical Society?

(c) If so, is it to be regretted?

(d) If so, how can it be remedied?

3. Should the Theosophical Society and its divisions (Sections, Branches, etc.) in their official capacity, and with more method and detail, endeavour to make their members acquainted with everything of interest in the general trend of the Movement as well as with the whole of their activities?

#### TRAVELLING ARRANGEMENTS.

In connection with the Congress to be held in Paris on June 3rd, 4th, and 5th, a Committee of French members has very kindly offered to give any information required as to travelling to or from Paris, and has also offered to secure rooms at hotel or pension for those who wish it and who write in time. Members of this Section wishing for more information on these matters than is given or offered in the Congress Programme may write to the Travelling and Entertainment Secretary, 28, Albemarle Street, W. Members are asked to send in their requests at least one month before the Congress, in all cases as soon as possible, otherwise it may be difficult to secure rooms, as the Congress is being held in the Whitsuntide holidays.

#### “WHITE LOTUS” DAY.

The usual meeting will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Tuesday, May 8th, at 8.30 p.m., to commemorate the work of Mme. Blavatsky, and

also that of other workers who have passed out of this life.

Flowers for the decoration of the room should be sent on the morning of May 8th.

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### THE CONVENTION.

The next Convention of the British Section will be held in London on Saturday, July 7th, and Sunday, July 8th. Any resolutions which members desire to bring before the Convention should be duly notified to me at the earliest possible moment, in order that they may appear in the agenda paper to be issued with the next VĀHAN. Secretaries of Branches must send a corrected list of their members, at latest before the end of June, in order that the Section registers may be brought fully up to date. Unattached members are reminded that they have power to vote upon any resolution, the votes being given in writing or in person to the General Secretary. Every fifty votes so recorded count as one vote at the Convention. The time, place and programme of the meetings will be announced in the June VĀHAN.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

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### SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE BRITISH SECTION.

Members are reminded that the financial year of the Section ended on April 30th, and that subscriptions for the year 1906-7 are now due.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

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### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to April 20th: F. M. M. R., £1; E. W., £5 5s.; G. A. A., £3 15s. 10d.; F. L., £2 10s.; C. M., £10; E. F., £5. Total, £27 10s. 10d.

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#### Section Reference Library.

The following book has been gratefully received for the Library: *A Handbook of Proverbs*, collected by H. G. Bohj.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *The Dissociation of a Personality*, Morton Prince, M.D.; *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, Paul Deussen; *The Early History of India*, Vincent A. Smith; *Studies of English Mystics*, W. R. Inge; *The Egyptian Heaven and Hell*, E. A. Wallis Budge, 3 vols.; *The Māndūkyopanishad*, with Gaudapāda's *Kārikās*, and the *Bhāshya* of Ś'ankara, translated into English by M. N. Dvivedi; *Lawā'ih, A Treatise on Sūfism*, Jami; *Dictionary of*

*Philosophy and Psychology*, Edited by J. M. Baldwin, Vol. III., Parts 1 and 2; *Shrī Rāma Chandra, the Ideal King*, Annie Besant.

R. A. HOBSON,  
*Assistant Librarian.*

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### Northern Federation: Visit of the President-Founder.

The Members of the Northern Branches are looking forward with much pleasure to a visit by the President-Founder, Colonel Olcott, who will not only preside over the next quarterly Conference of the Northern Federation at Harrogate, but will also stop at Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, and Edinburgh, to meet all the members who can be gathered together at those several points. Since Colonel Olcott's last visit to the North of England half-a-dozen years have gone by, and in that time there has been a large accession to the membership and several new Branches have been established. The venerable President-Founder will therefore see among his old friends many fresh faces, but his welcome will be none the less hearty on that account. On the other hand, he will miss some old members, of whom several have transferred their activities to other districts, while others have been summoned beyond the veil.

Colonel Olcott will first visit Birmingham, addressing the members of that Lodge on Tuesday, May 1st. He will next be welcomed by Sheffield, on Thursday, 3rd; thence he travels to Manchester, where he will address members of the three local Lodges (with, it is hoped, a contingent from Liverpool), on Saturday, the 5th, and possibly on the Sunday. From Manchester Colonel Olcott will travel to Scotland, where he will be the guest of the Edinburgh Lodge. The members in the Northern capital intend to arrange a meeting to celebrate White Lotus Day (May 8th), with the President-Founder in the chair; and at this or some other gathering it is hoped a number of the Glasgow members will be able to attend. On May 7th he visits the Scottish Lodge, and on May 9th gives a public lecture in Dowell's Hall. On Thursday, May 10th, Colonel Olcott will arrive in Harrogate, and is expected to address the Harrogate Lodge on the evening of Friday, the 11th (to which meeting other members who may have arrived in the town are cordially invited). On the Saturday afternoon he will preside at the Conference of the Northern Federation, when "The Significance of the Theosophical Society," will form the subject of discussion; and in the evening of the same day he will deliver an address to the members. Finally, Colonel Olcott will, it is hoped, deliver a public lecture in the Theosophical Hall, on Sunday evening, May 13th. This will bring his visit to a close; and on Monday, the 14th, he will leave for London *en route* for Paris.

As it is impossible for this tour to be extended beyond the limits set forth above, the members of the Society in the North are desired to make a special endeavour to attend the Harrogate Con-

ference, and accord there a hearty welcome to the President-Founder, whose strenuous services to the cause of Theosophy they so thoroughly appreciate.

EDW. E. MARSDEN,  
*Hon. Secretary, Northern Federation.*

Spath Lodge, Didsbury, Manchester.  
*April 20th.*

### New Centre.

A Centre has been formed in Folkestone. Weekly meetings for readings and discussion are held at the house of Mrs. J. B. Scott, 98, Bouverie Road West, at 8 p.m. Members visiting Folkestone will be heartily welcomed. The meetings will be discontinued in August and the first half of September.

### Crouch End.

Meetings will be held at the Assembly Rooms, Middle Lane, Crouch End, N., on Sunday evenings, at 7 p.m., as follows:

*May 6th*, "Reincarnation," Philip Tovey; *May 13th*, "Karma," Philip Tovey; *May 20th*, "The Power of Thought," Philip Tovey; *May 27th*, "Theosophy and Christianity: The Resurrection," Miss F. M. M. Russell.

T. A. C.

### Monday Afternoon Meetings.

Meetings will be held at 28, Albemarle Street on the following Mondays in May, from 3.30 to 4.30 p.m.

*May 7th*, "The Life side of Nature," Bertram Keightley; *May 14th*, "The Riddle of the Sphinx," G. R. S. Mead; *May 21st*, "Science—Occult and Otherwise," Miss Edith Ward; *May 28th*, "Knowledge and Goodness," A. P. Sinnett.

Visitors are cordially invited.

E. M. M.

### Mr. Mead's Lectures.

Four lectures will be delivered in May, on "The Dream of Rāvan: a Mystery," by Mr. G. R. S. Mead, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, W., from 5 to 6 p.m.

Date of lectures: May 9th (Wednesday), 15th, 22nd, 29th (Tuesdays).

"In the caves of Eastern Sibyl, what curious leaves lie hidden, or go whirling in the wind! Written over with strange hieroglyphic characters, not without deep meaning,—akin to prophetic,—*Teste David cum Sibylla*. Fragmentary—incomplete—hard to put together, yet furnishing here and there, when the attempt is made, a piece of chance mosaic that engages our attention like the forms in the moss-stone. Such a bundle of Sibylline leaves is the 'Dream of Rāvan,' of which we propose to

put together and interpret some torn and ragged fragments."

Course tickets, 5s. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., or at the door. Admission to each lecture, 2s.

### Men's Evenings.

The fortnightly Men's Evenings for discussion, having proved a decided success, will be continued during the month of May, on the following Tuesdays at 8.30 p.m., with the appended subjects:

*May 1st*. "Myths."  
" 15th. "Sleep."  
" 29th. "Heaven and Hell."

G. R. S. M.

### Practice Debating Class.

Meetings will take place on Tuesdays, May 1st, 15th, and 29th, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, at 6.15 p.m. Members of the Theosophical Society are cordially invited to attend as visitors.

F. M. M. R.

### Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Halle, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: May 6th, . . . F. Smyth; May 13th, *The Christian Doctrine of the Atonement*, Sidney H. Old; May 20th, *Thinking*, A. J. Lofting; May 27th, *The Life of Buddha, and its Lessons*, W. Howell. Information from Mr. A. Norman Comely, 7, Blenheim Road, Moseley.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Church Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and second Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.; class for study on the second and fourth Mondays, at 3 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 80, Richmond Road, Montpelier.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58,

Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings for study. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 34, Wicklow Street, for discussion of Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms*. On Mondays, at 4 p.m., study of *Esoteric Christianity*, and at 5 p.m., study of *A Study in Consciousness*. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: May 8th, Commemoration Day, Colonel Olcott will give an address for all Theosophical Society members, in the Lodge Room, at 8 p.m.; May 9th (in Dowell's Hall), Public Lecture by Col. Olcott. Lodge meetings on May 3rd and 22nd, *Psychic Healing*, Macbeth Baue. Library open on Mondays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Meetings on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, SOUTH EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Meetings at 98, Bouverie Road West, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Information from Mrs. J. B. Scott, at above address.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street, at 8 p.m.: May 2nd, *The Seven Planes of Nature*, J. Lorimer Thomson. Study in *Consciousness* on alternate Wednesdays. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Sundays, at 3 p.m., at Shepherd's Hall. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 4, Nelson Street.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: May 6th, *The Valuation of Theosophy*, C. J. Barker; May 13th, . . . Col. Olcott; May 20th, *The Cost of Cheapness*, A. W. Waddington; May 27th, *The Spiral of Life*, Baker Hudson. Lodge meetings for study of *The Growth of the Soul*, on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss

Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m.: May 2nd, Annual Meeting. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: May 6th, *What Theosophy does for Us*, L. S. Jast; May 13th, *Experimental and Spontaneous Personalities*, B. Keightley; May 20th, *The Jewish Problem*, Bernard Robert; May 27th, Closing Address by the President. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanaach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: May 3rd, *The Spirit of the East*, the Hon. P. Rama Nathan, K.C., C.M.G.; May 10th, *Experimental and Spontaneous Personalities*, B. Keightley; May 17th, "Group-Soul," Miss C. E. Woods; May 24th, Annual Meeting: May 31st, *Symbolism*, Rev. Dr. Cobb. Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): May 6th, *Spiritual Life: Its Substance and its Forms*, B. Keightley; May 13th, *The Theosophical Society*, Mrs. Sharpe; May 20th, *The Master*, G. R. S. Mead; May 27th, *The Mission of Theosophy*, P. Tovey.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

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

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: May 6th, *The Crafts and the Social Problem*, E. Spencer; May 13th, *Epictetus*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; May 20th, *The Psychological Personality*, B. Keightley; May 27th, *True and False Sacrifice*, Mrs. Esther Wood.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings for young people on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Attention is called to the change of day. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

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

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: May 11th, *Why do we believe?* Miss E. M. Mallet; May 25th, *Health in Relation to Harmony*, Miss Margery Smith; May 4th and 18th, Study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Enquirers received on Fridays, 4.30 to 7

p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE, Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Pedigree of Man*. Alternate Fridays and Saturdays, debating class at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meeting on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Sundays, at 6.45 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate; May 6th, *The Pulse of God in Nature*, P. Dodds; May 20th, *Sympathy*, J. E. Reid; May 27th, *The Purpose of Earth Life*, Miss M. L. Browne. Study class on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. Information from J. E. Reid, Hon. Sec., 9, First Avenue, York.

## ENQUIRER.

### QUESTION 299.

E. E. L.—*The Theosophical statement that Man has existed on this planet for many millions of years is one*

*that is absolutely repudiated by practically all scientists and theologians, the objection raised by the former school being that geology has revealed a deposit of human remains in strata no deeper than alluvial—such deposit being, therefore, distinctly modern and its age to be reckoned at the most in tens of thousands of years, and by the latter school the literal scriptural assertion, that man has existed for 6,000 years only, is adhered to. Dealing with the scientific objection, have we Theosophists any proof for our assertion as to Man's age, apart from clairvoyant research? Have traces been found in the earth's crust, and if not, are they to be found, of Man's existence millions of years ago? If Atlantis cannot yield us proof because it is not accessible, why should not Lemuria—Australia—do so? And should not a great portion of Asia offer a suitable field for investigation?*

B. K.—Geologically speaking, I believe that the presence of human relics and remains in Tertiary Strata is now generally admitted; but when it comes to translating this statement into terms of years we are confronted by very serious difficulties. For we have practically no reliable means of estimating in years the time that has elapsed since any given series of strata, in any particular locality, was deposited. Nor do I see any probability, I had almost said any hope, of science becoming able to make such a determination by any ordinary method. The time estimates made by various authorities, and sometimes indeed by one and the same authority, are most hopelessly at variance. For instance, in one work Dr. Croll states that 2,500,000 years represents the time since the beginning of the Tertiary age, while in another he says that 15,000,000 have elapsed since the beginning of the Eocene period, which is the first of the three Tertiary epochs.

The problem therefore reduces itself to this: How can the age of the Tertiary deposits be determined in those special localities in which undoubted traces of humanity have been found? So far science has entirely failed to arrive at anything even approaching a consensus of opinion on this question. Authorities of equal weight and arguments of equally great—or small— cogency can be adduced in support of any figures we choose to select between one million and fifteen million years, and when such mighty doctors differ who shall decide?

At any rate the real existence of the Lemurian continent is now a practically admitted datum of science, and considerable advance is being made towards the acceptance of Atlantis. So under the circumstances, it is not too much to hope that in course of time the Tertiary beds in which traces of humanity have been found may be assigned to something between ten and fifteen million years ago, and that is more than enough for our requirements.

A. B. C.—While agreeing that geological science will not allow so great an antiquity for man as Theosophical writers claim, we cannot accept the statement that it permits only an antiquity measured by alluvial deposits. Tertiary man is granted by many competent investigators and the

evidence for his existence may be readily found in Laing's *Human Origins* (1892). This would give us far more than tens of thousands of years. Dealing with the major premise it may be at once admitted that geologists are certainly unlikely to discover the fossil remains of men that were boneless, jelly-like, and even etheric, and unless some other class of evidence becomes available it does not seem likely that science will accept the Theosophical view of man's age on the earth. But as to Lemuria—archæology has not I believe as yet offered any explanation of the Cyclopean statues of Easter Island and until it presents us with a better hypothesis we may continue to claim that if the gigantic humanity of the third Root Race has not left us traces of its actual bones, it has certainly left us evidence of its handiwork in colossal erections whose existence science is as little able to explain as it is to solve the riddle of the transport of the Sarsen stones to Salisbury Plain and the making of Stonehenge.

W. C. W.—Madame Blavatsky, in *The Secret Doctrine*, states that it is eighteen million years ago since physical man, as we know him to-day, first appeared on the globe, and that it was on the great southern continent of Lemuria that he lived. This fact she obtained, presumably, from the ancient *Book of Dzyan*, whose teachings are, also presumably, supported by the Masters of Wisdom by the agency of whom *The Secret Doctrine* was given to the world through Madame Blavatsky. Clairvoyant research by some of the modern Theosophical seers I understand to support this teaching. In all of this there is certainly no *proof*, in the ordinary scientific sense, for us that man existed on the earth at so distant an epoch. Scientific proof of man's previous existence on this earth is afforded solely by the human remains found in the Quaternary geological strata, such as the "Cro-Magnon" and "Furfooz" Man and the Lake-dwellers of Switzerland, all of whom, our clairvoyant Theosophical investigators tell us, are representatives of the earlier races of the Atlantean continent at the period of their extreme degeneracy.

An extremely interesting discovery was made in 1892 or 1894 by the Dutch physician Dubois in Pliocene deposits of Java, *i.e.*, in a geological formation belonging to the Tertiary period, of remains of a creature which was clearly more or less intermediate in structure and characteristics between man, as we know him, and the anthropoid apes. Professor Haeckel is absolutely convinced that this *Pithecanthropus erectus* is the "missing link" between man and monkeys, and that the discovery establishes once and for all the fact of man's direct ancestry from the apes. It is supposed to be between 200,000 and 300,000 years since this mysterious individual walked the earth.

Now it *may* be (more we cannot say) that *Pithecanthropus* represents a member of one of the earlier physical Lemurian human races at the period (a very late one) of its extreme degeneracy. We are told that Lemurian man, even at his best,

was but a more or less ape-like creature; hence the above view is not at all unreasonable.

Unless cremation was a universal practice on Atlantis and Lemuria I see no *à priori* reason why fossil remains of the man of those periods should not be somewhere preserved on the portions of existing land-surfaces which were once part and parcel of those great continents. We are quite familiar with the habit and structure of plants and animals which existed millions of years before Lemurian man appeared. Impressions or petrifactions of the bones of the latter may, therefore, be somewhere obtainable. But we must not forget that the great bulk of Lemurian and Atlantean remains must be at the bottom of the Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans.

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QUESTION 300.

G. F.—What do Theosophists mean by the word "Brotherhood," and is "Brotherhood" an original and fundamental object of the Theosophical Society? Is there any place for Women under "Brotherhood"? Is there any vital objection to the use of the word "Fellowship" as expressive of what is meant by "Brotherhood," and as removing any ambiguity as regards Women?

A. B. C.—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity is clearly and prominently stated as the first object of the Theosophical Society, and by "Universal Brotherhood of Humanity" it does not seem possible to mean anything less than the words ordinarily imply, namely, relationship of *all* humanity. To question the inclusion of women under so complete a category savours of the crank or the pedant, and surely if "Brotherhood" is open to objection, "Fellowship" is not less so. As one of the "sisterhood," I would sooner be recognised as a "brother" than a "fellow," but in thirteen years' membership I have not hitherto felt any ambiguity in my position.

E. A. B.—The word "Brotherhood" is a generic term, and includes men and women alike, as does the word "mankind." By "Brotherhood," Theosophists mean to express a great fundamental fact in Nature—*i.e.*, that all human beings without exception are children of the One Universal Father. The word "Fellowship" could not replace it, being much more restricted in meaning, and, though applicable to membership of any Society, whether small or large, implies some selection, and therefore exclusion.

This fact of Human Brotherhood remains a fact, whether recognised or not, and it is in order to help its recognition throughout the world, that it is made the first "object" in the Theosophical Society. G. F. may notice that this first object is thus expressed: "To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour."

Some of us would extend this recognition even below the human kingdom, acknowledging animals as our "little brothers," as coming from the same

One Source of all life, and therefore to be treated with the consideration and kindness of the "elder" and wiser towards the "younger" and ignorant.

B. G. T.—The writer cannot imagine any ambiguity as to women arising over the word "Brotherhood." Surely it must include both men and women, just as the words "brethren" and "mankind" do, for example.

"Brotherhood" is certainly a fundamental object of the Theosophical Society, but we do not attach any unusual interpretation to the word, except, perhaps, to give it a deeper spiritual signification than is generally done.

S. C.—The questioner may be referred to *Extracts from the Vāhan*, pp. 4, 7, 9, 203, where this subject is discussed at length. Every man is, in his inner nature, allied to the spiritual source of all human life, the life wave which transmutes the animal soul into the human ego. (Man in the above sentence, of course, means *homo* not *vir*.) There is thus a real spiritual relationship between all human beings, a relationship which by no means involves equality, since the souls are of different ages, but which involves a community of real interests, and a mystic union which is realised more and more by individuals as their evolution proceeds. The word "Brotherhood" is used because there is no other word which is not equally unsatisfactory on the point mentioned by the questioner. I do not quite see how the word "Fellowship" would remove any ambiguity which may exist. The word "fellow" is generally applied to a man, is it not? I never heard a woman called a fellow.

#### QUESTION 301.

N. A.—Some Upanishads, *Shankarāchārya* and *Buddha* tell all men to step over the intermediate planes and reach Nirvāna at once. And H. P. B. also advises all ordinary men to do so. But our Theosophical writers and preachers teach the very opposite doctrine. They prescribe the Astral Plane as the next step of advance for all men. And between Nirvāna and the poor wearied man of the Earth they build such a complicated series of innumerable steps that it seems as if the mounting would never be finished. Now which doctrine is right, or is there any reconciliation?

A. B. C.—It would be interesting to learn on what grounds N. A. bases his assertion that great teachers intended "all" men to reach Nirvāna "at once" by their various exhortations. It would be still more interesting if references might be given to demonstrate that H. P. B. advises "all ordinary men" to do so. When these are forthcoming no doubt the matter can be satisfactorily tackled in THE VĀHAN. Meantime the alleged saying of another Great One occurs to us: "Be ye also perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Does N. A. imagine that Jesus intended His disciples to understand that they *could* be perfect then and there? Surely it needs no "occult"

science to perceive that all such *logia* point only to a distant goal which *does* lie in front of all men, but only to be reached by strenuous and unceasing effort or after millenia of less energetic climbing. "Theosophical writers and preachers" (*sic*) teach no "opposite" doctrine but only give the complementary explanations, and helpful and necessary detail as to that path whose summit is "lost in glorious light Nirvānic." If N. A. will take the trouble to read *The Voice of the Silence* he will not again make the mistake of supposing H. P. B. to have minimised the difficulties of reaching Nirvāna.

B. K.—Not only the Upanishads, *Shankarāchārya* and *Buddha*, but all great schools of spiritual teaching of which we have any remains seem to teach with one voice that "Salvation," "Liberation," "Moksha," "Nirvāna," "Union with God," "The Beloved," "The Good,"—or by whatever name man has designated THAT—*cannot be attained by process of evolution*, however long continued, through however many worlds or universes we may imagine it carried on, however stupendous the heights of knowledge and of power that may be scaled in these infinities of time.

To state the same thing in other words, it seems to me that all the great spiritual schools, without exception, are agreed that man's true goal is not to be attained by "growth," by "progress," by "evolution" or "development," however far it may be carried, however long the process as such may continue. As I understand their statements, the entity which we now call a "human" entity may maintain his place in the front rank of human evolution from now till the final pralaya of our earth chain, beyond that through the remaining "chains" which follow this, and then on and on—as long and as high as you please, and still he will not have attained the goal, *he will not even have come one step nearer to it than he is to-day*. And that still remains true, however exalted the position and functions in the Cosmos he may attain; however inconceivably vast may become his knowledge and his power.

For all this is simply an elaboration, in order to bring the idea more definitely home, of the simple statement that "Moksha" or "Nirvāna" in the true sense is not to be attained by any process of evolution, is not, and cannot be, in any sense regarded as the result or outcome of evolution.

To employ an analogy, you can no more reach Nirvāna by evolution than you can exhaust the Infinite by counting.

Or, to put what seems to me to be the root thought of these great schools in the form of another analogy, let us compare the process of evolution to a spiral in three dimensions. Obviously such a spiral is infinite in both directions along its axis. You cannot go so far back along it in the "past" direction as to reach a point where you can say: There is no spiral beyond this point. Nor again, going in imagination forward along the spiral in the opposite direction, can you ever reach a point in the "future" where

you can say: Beyond this the spiral cannot continue.

That means in other words that The End, or Nirvāna, does not lie *along the spiral at all*.

And that is just what all these great schools seem to me to be always trying to make us realise.

But where then is The End, is Nirvāna? For after all even Buddha went so far as to say: Nirvāna is.

The answer in terms of our spiral analogy would be that The End, Nirvāna, is another dimension of space altogether, is as it were a Fourth Dimension, which is equally near to any and every point along the whole length of the spiral, but which is not and can never be in the same space as that spiral.

Thus, it seems to me, did those great schools teach about Nirvāna—not about a “plane” called the “Nirvānic Plane,” whatever that may mean, for Nirvāna is certainly no “plane” in any sense whatever.

Now I know quite well that this is diametrically opposed to the view put forward by Mr. Leadbeater in some of his writings and more or less implied in all. For he teaches explicitly enough that you “evolve” into Nirvāna—or at any rate on to the “Nirvānic Plane,”—just as he says that the “successful” units of humanity at the end of the seventh Race of the seventh Round will be Aseka Adepts. They may perhaps be on *the same level*, in respect of power and knowledge, as Those we now speak of as the Masters, but in so far as we mean by “Masters,” Great Ones who have attained Liberation (Jivanmuktas as Mrs. Besant calls them), then most certainly the whole consensus of ancient teaching is opposed to Mr. Leadbeater’s view and asserts that neither at the end of the seventh Round, nor of any other cycle of evolution, will the beings evolving reach to *that* Liberation, *that* Nirvāna of which the Buddha taught, and of which every great school of spiritual knowledge has possessed the tradition.

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QUESTION 302.

E. O. M.—On pages 15, 18 and 19 of *Karma Mrs. Besant* makes the statement that Elementals “ensoul” thought forms.

*This seems to contradict the answer given by C. W. L. to question 99 in Extracts from the Vāhan. C. W. L. therein most clearly states that in “every possible case” the thought is the soul and the body is made up of Elemental Essence. Furthermore, in that same reply, I find a quotation from Mrs. Besant endorsing this answer. I should be glad to have this matter put right, or, if I have misunderstood it, to have my error pointed out.*

W. C. W.—Both Mrs. Besant and C. W. L. clearly state that a thought-form is both generated

and ensouled on the mental and astral planes by the thought of the human Ego. Yet it seems perfectly clear to my mind that Mrs. Besant affords an addition to this teaching of which C. W. L. (Mr. Leadbeater) nowhere, so far as I can find, breathes a word. On p. 15 of *Karma* Mrs. Besant speaks of “the nature of the motive inspiring the generator of the thought-form. If the motive be pure, loving, beneficent in its character, the colour produced will summon to the thought-form an Elemental, which will take on the characteristics impressed on the form by the motive, and act along the line thus traced; this Elemental enters into the thought-form, playing to it the part of a soul, and thus an independent entity is made in the astral world, an entity of a beneficent character.” From this passage it is clear that two distinct entities are concerned with the thought-form: (1) the human thought which generated and vivifies it, and (2) the Elemental which *subsequently* is attracted to it and ensouls it. By comparing the description of Elementals given in *Karma* with that in *A Study in Consciousness*, it will be seen that the same entities are referred to in each case, and that they clearly stand for the lower orders of Devas or Nature Spirits, which, as is said in the *Study*, “are constantly busied in the shaping of forms, etc. etc.”

The persistence of the thought-form would depend on the strength and vividness of the original thought of the Ego, and the Elemental would be subservient to this latter; but whether it would add to the vitality of the form or not I could not venture to say. The Elemental probably gives to the thought-form a more distinct and definite individuality, thus causing it to assume the nature of a living being. I wonder very much myself why Mr. Leadbeater never refers to this action of the Elementals whose whole work consists in tending, ensouling and building up all forms throughout the universe. Why, then, should these particular creations and bodies known as thought-forms be exempt from any connection with them?

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The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

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All communications for “Activities” must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.



# THE VĀHAN



## A VEHICLE FOR THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

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

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LONDON, JUNE 1, 1906.

NO. 11.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### THE CONVENTION.

The Sixteenth Annual Convention of this Section (the third under the title of "British Section"), will be held on Saturday, July 7th, at 2.30 p.m., in the Small Queen's Hall, Langham Place, W.

The President-Founder will preside. In the evening at 8 o'clock a reception for members will be held in the same Hall.

On Sunday evening at 7 p.m. there will be a meeting for members and their friends at which Colonel Olcott will preside. The speakers will be announced later.

On Sunday afternoon the rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be open to members for general discussion and social intercourse, and it is hoped that members will make free use of this opportunity of meeting each other in an informal manner.

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. The President alone represents a Lodge of less than twenty-five members. Unattached members may vote on any resolution, the votes being given in person or in writing to the General Secretary. Every fifty votes so recorded count as one vote at the Convention.

All Branches should send in a correct list of their members at least ten days before the Convention, and the Reports of Branch Secretaries should be sent at the same time.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary*.

### PARIS CONGRESS.

#### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION.

By an oversight of my own the last question on the list of those for discussion during the Congress

on June 3rd, 4th and 5th, was not included in the May VĀHAN. I therefore give it below.

KATE SPINK.

4th Question: Are organised measures for the giving of material assistance to Theosophists opportune or not?

### REPORT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE.

Owing to some matters remaining unsettled the financial report usually issued with the June VĀHAN is sent in an unaudited and preliminary form to meet the Rules of the Section. An audited report will be sent with the next issue.

EDITH WARD,  
*Hon. Treasurer*.

### CLOSING OF THE SECTIONAL ROOMS AT WHITSUNTIDE.

The Rooms of the Section will be closed at Whitsuntide from the evening of Friday, June 1st, and will reopen on Wednesday, June 6th, at the usual time.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary*.

### ACTIVITIES.

#### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to May 20th: H. L., £1; G. G., £4; C. A., £1 1s.; M. C., £1 1s.; E. M., £1 2s.; G. P. E., £5 5s.; A. C. A., £1 19s.; C. B. I., £6; W. E. F., 5s.; A. P. C., 10s; C. H., £5; E. A. B., £6; V. C. T., £15. Total, £48 3s.

### Social Committee Debating Society.

Meetings will in future be held on the second and fourth Fridays in the month, at 3 p.m., instead of on the first and third at 3.15. Consequently the meetings in June will take place at 28, Albemarle Street on the 8th and 22nd at 3 o'clock precisely.

L. S.

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### Practice Debating Class.

The meetings are discontinued during the summer and will be resumed on Tuesday, October 2nd,

F. M. M. R.

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### Hampstead Heath Centre.

A lecture will be delivered at Stanfield House (Subscription Library), Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Tuesday, June 12th, at 8.15 p.m., by Mr. G. Dyne, on "The Sound Principle in Nature."

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### Northern Federation and Tour of the President-Founder.

The forty-ninth quarterly Conference of the Northern Federation was made the occasion of a tour among the Northern Lodges by the President-Founder, as outlined in advance in last month's VAHAN.

On Monday, May 1st, Col. Olcott arrived in Birmingham from London. In the evening of that day he met the members of the Birmingham Lodge, and on the following day had a chat with some of them at his hotel, prior to leaving the Midland city for Sheffield. The visit was the subject of friendly comment in one of the Birmingham daily papers, which published a lengthy sketch of the work accomplished by the President-Founder in the cause of Theosophy.

Sheffield next accorded him a hearty welcome, first at an assembly of the Lodge, and afterwards at a meeting to which outsiders were admitted.

Arriving on Friday, the 4th, in Manchester (where he was the guest of Mr. M. H. Larmuth, President of the Manchester City Lodge), Col. Olcott held a reception on the Saturday evening at the Deansgate Hotel, where there mustered nearly a hundred members from the Manchester City, the Didsbury, and the South Manchester Lodges, with a contingent from the Liverpool Lodge, and the recently-formed Moss Side (Manchester) Centre—to whom his address on the early days of the Theosophical Society proved highly interesting. On the Sunday afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Larmuth kept "open house" for all the members in the district, who once again had the pleasure of an address from "the Colonel."

Departing for Edinburgh, Col. Olcott spent several days in the Scottish capital, where White

Lotus Day was observed on Tuesday, the 8th. The Edinburgh members invited the attendance of members from Glasgow, and in every way the visit was a success.

Turning again southward, Col. Olcott arrived in Harrogate in time to hold a reception at the Harrogate Lodge on the afternoon of Friday, the 11th, and to address the members on the same evening. On the Saturday afternoon he presided over the Conference of the Northern Federation, and addressed the members again in the evening. During the interval for tea at the Winter Gardens, the visit was commemorated by the taking of a large group photograph, with the President-Founder as the central figure. On the Sunday evening Col. Olcott delivered the usual public lecture, the subject being his work among the Buddhists of India, Ceylon and Japan.

On all these occasions the President-Founder made it his endeavour to greet personally each and every member, winning thereby the affection, as he had already won the esteem, of his large family of "children." Departing on the Tuesday morning from Harrogate *en route* for London and Paris, he had a hearty north-country send-off at the station.

EDW. E. MARSDEN.

Miss M. Broughton Head, of Hillside, West Cliffe Grove, Harrogate, has been elected Hon. Secretary of the Northern Federation for the year 1906-07, and to her all communications relating to the Federation should be addressed.

E. E. M.

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### Lectures on Indian Philosophy.

A series of four lectures will be delivered by Pandit Sakarani Ganesh, on Indian Philosophy, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, W., from 5 to 6 p.m., on June 12th, 19th, and 26th, and July 3rd.

The following points will be dealt with: Main Division and Basic Ideas; the Existence of the Soul; Transmigration and Reincarnation; Karma; Pramāna; How do we know? Pessimism; Were the Indian Philosophers unpractical dreamers? the End of Philosophy; the Sāṅkhya System; its doctrine of Causality; Pramāna, Puruṣa, Prakṛiti; the three Guṇas; the Twenty-five Tattvas; Bondage and Liberation; the Yoga System; Patanjali; Concentration; the "Eight Limbs" of Yoga; the Siddhis or Powers; Spirituality and Psychism; the Atomic Constitution of Matter; the Pūrva and Uttara Mūnānsā; the Karma Kāṇḍu or Ceremonial; the Gñāna Kāṇḍa or Vedānta; the Re-action of Vedāntic Thought on Individual Life, on Ethics and on Religion; the Harmony of the Six Systems.

Course Tickets, 5s. Admission to each lecture 2s. Open to non-members.

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### Songs for Lotus Circles.

There are now between twenty and thirty Lotus Circles in the Theosophical Society, and the need

for printed copies of the Lotus Songs—which are important features of the work amongst children—has become pressing.

A manuscript of words and music has been compiled which is in the hands of the Editors of the *Lotus Journal* for publication. The cost of printing a selection of some seventy of these songs would be about £100, as printing music is very expensive. Thanks to the generosity of two friends £70 has already been promised for this purpose.

A Lotus Song Book can hardly expect to be a financial success, at any rate for some time to come, but as its publication will be a great and permanent benefit to Lotus work, the Editors of the *Lotus Journal* venture to appeal for help to sympathisers in the different Sections of the Society. The amount still required is about £30. Contributions would be gratefully received if sent to the Editors, *Lotus Journal*, 8, Inverness Place, Bayswater, London, W.

H. W.

#### Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Halle, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street: June 11th, *The Christian Doctrine of the Atonement*, S. Old; June 18th, *Socialism*, Mr. Logie; June 25th, *Plant Life*, Miss Whittaker. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Council Room, Midland Institution, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: June 3rd, Discussion; June 10th, *Karma*, J. S. Akehurst; June 17th and 24th, *Catastrophes*, B. Old. Information from Mr. A. Norman Comely, 7, Blenheim Road, Moseley.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 80, Richmond Road, Montpelier.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m.,

at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings for study. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street. Regular meetings suspended for the summer. Library open on Mondays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, SOUTH EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Meetings at 98, Bouverie Road West, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Information from Mrs. J. B. Scott, at above address.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Sundays, at 3 p.m., at Shepherd's Hall. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 4, Nelson Street.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: June 3rd, *The Ideal and the Actual*, W. Bell; June 10th, *What is our Object in Life?* W. H. Thomas; June 17th, *Life, Health and Disease*, Ald. Ward; June 24th, *The Spiral and the Serpent* (with illustrations), E. E. Marsden. Lodge meetings for study of *The First Object of the Theosophical Society*, on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: June 11th, *Some Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*, J. Wedgwood; June 25th, *The Spiral and the Serpent*, E. E. Marsden. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: June 7th, *The Mystical Philosophy of Browning*, Miss Spurgeon;

June 14th, *From the Sethian Gnosis*, G. R. S. Mead ;  
June 21st, *The Evidence for Atlantis*, H. L. Shindler ;  
June 28th, Meeting for Election of Delegates.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: June 4th, no meeting; June 11th, *The Gospel according to St. Paul*, Miss C. E. Woods; June 18th, *The Law of Stability in Nature*, W. C. Worsdell; June 25th, *The Universal Kinship*, E. Bell, M.A.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead. Regular meetings suspended till October.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings for young people on Wednesdays, at 8.15 p.m. At these meetings some of the Parables and Miracles of Jesus are being studied. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

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

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.: June 1st and 29th, Class for study of *The Pedigree of Man*; June 8th, *The Group Soul*, Miss C. E. Woods; June 15th, Annual Meeting; June 22nd, *Modern Reformers*, Edward Spencer.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE, Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Study of *A Study in Consciousness*. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of *A Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first

Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., study of Saleeby's *Organic Evolution*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meeting on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Sundays, at 6.45 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate: June 3rd, *The Law of Perfect Justice*, E. J. Dunn; Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Information from J. E. Reid, Hon. Sec., 9, First Avenue, York.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### NIRVĀNA.

B. K.'s reply to Question 301 is of such a frankly challenging nature as to call forth responsive challenge. The assumptions contained in N. A.'s question itself are dealt with by A. B. C., and the two may be left to thrash out the matter between them. B. K.'s reply, however, brings other matters to the front.

I would ask for some evidence in favour of the sweeping assertion in the first paragraph of the reply. Where, when, and how do these Teachers, and "great schools of spiritual teaching" make their assertion that Nirvāna "cannot be attained by process of evolution?" If not attainable by this process, what process do they indicate as being the right one?

If Nirvāna "is not to be attained by any process of evolution," are we to understand that it is to be attained without any process of evolution?

If all "these great schools" are "always trying to make us realise" "that Nirvāna does not lie along the spiral (of evolution) at all," they surely do not cease their efforts for our benefit at that point. Is it to be understood that, having established their negative to their own satisfaction, their only positive contribution is to the effect that "Nirvāna is another dimension of space altogether?" If they have any further information on this head, we are surely entitled to know what it is.

"Nirvāna is certainly no plane in any sense whatever." How does B. K. know this?

O. F.

In his answer to Question 301 in last month's VĀHAN B. K. says that it seems to him "that all the great spiritual schools, without exception, are agreed that man's true goal is not to be attained by 'growth,' by 'progress,' by 'evolution,' or 'development,' however far it may be carried, however long the process as such may continue." By placing the words growth, progress, evolution, and development in inverted commas it would seem that B. K. has in view some particular meaning of these words, in view of which he contends that certain Theosophical writings are "in opposition to the whole consensus of ancient teaching." Such a far-reaching statement inevitably raises many questions and opinions in the mind of a Theosophical student, and the writer ventures to formulate some which have occurred to him.

Theosophical writings speak of two distinct modes of growth—spiritual growth and psychic growth. Broadly speaking, psychic growth means the perfecting of instruments of consciousness in the three worlds; this includes the development of the physical, astral, and mental bodies, and the perfection of the senses appropriate to each of these, so that the consciousness using them is thoroughly at home on the corresponding planes. Such psychic growth argues nothing as to the nature of the consciousness functioning through such bodies, so that it can be obtained by an adept of the white or of the dark schools. This mode of growth is covered by the first half of the verse, "The Self-born pierced the senses outwards, hence the Jīva seeth the outward, not the inner Self" (*Kāthopaniṣhad* IV. 1), which describes the outward Pavritti Marga.

Spiritual growth seems to be the birth and unfoldment of a particular mode of consciousness. The ordinary man treading the Pavritti Marga is working chiefly as a separated consciousness, endeavouring to take and not to give. In such a consciousness there may arise a gradual change of front, whereby it no longer works entirely for its separated self, but begins to give and not to take, a complete reversal of its former attitude, and marking the turning-point from the Pavritti Marga to the Nivritti Marga. It seems to the writer that spiritual growth begins with this change of direction of consciousness, this fourth dimensional movement away from the endless three-fold spiral of Samsara; in terms of consciousness it may be expressed as the birth of Altruism. This is the Nivritti Marga, which is described in the conclusion of the verse already quoted—"one thinker, here and there, turneth his gaze inwards, desirous of immortality, and beholdeth the Pratyag-ātmā (the abstract Self)."

The Buddhist teaching, as expressed in two such books as the *Voice of the Silence* and the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* (Aṣhvaghosha) is that the path which culminates in Liberation begins in Altruism, and that there is an age-old, six-stepped ladder of Six Transcendental Virtues, beginning with Dāna, the Key of Charity and Love Immortal, by the growth of which final Liberation is attained. H. P. B. says that the true Theosophist must "put in practice the

loftiest moral ideal, must strive to realise his unity with the whole of humanity, and work ceaselessly for others" (*Key to Theosophy*, p. 18). This is a doctrine of hope and peace, for it means that the beginning of the miracle of the turning of water into wine is not far off and remote, but within the cup of each life it may be begun.

In view of the foregoing I cannot see that modern Theosophical writings which teach the path of Altruism, as altogether apart from the path of Psychism, are contrary to ancient teachings and to H. P. B.

H. W.

### STRAY NOTES.

*Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.*

*Platonism in England.*—There are signs of an approaching Renaissance of Platonism in England. In numerous and both likely and unlikely places the dialogues of Plato are being seriously read and discussed. We need not wonder that several well-known artists are reading him. The wonder is that they have not read him before. But when we hear of Dr. Emil Reich's lectures on Plato before a fashionable Mayfair audience, we are both pleased and surprised. In connection with our own Branches, Plato classes have been held in various towns for some years. In one town a group of Platonists has existed for seven years. The most significant, however, of all the signs is the amazing metamorphosis of Mr. H. G. Wells. The parallel with the evolution of Berkeley is almost exact. From enthusiastic Spencerianism Mr. Wells has been changed by contact with the "proliferating" genius of Plato into at least as enthusiastic a Platonist. And in this he is the symbol of the coming age. Academic students of Plato may be warned, however, that Lutoslawski's researches have disposed of the possibility of a Platonic system. Plato had no final system. Platonism in the modern sense is no more than a temperament, and a *point of view*.

O.

*Science and Spiritualism.*—Profoundly interesting are the experiments of Professor Charles Richet, the eminent French scientist, as detailed in the October and November numbers of the *Annals of Psychological Science*, especially as they are accompanied by photographs. "Concerning the Phenomenon called Materialisation" he styles his article, and it is an account of séances which took place in a kiosque in a garden in Algiers during a whole month from August 10th to September 10th, 1905. Friends of the scientist were present, and every possible precaution was taken to ensure perfect immunity from the slightest possibility of fraud. Then photographs were obtained of the entity who appeared by the light of sudden flashes of magnesium and chlorate of potash. These were taken by a kodak, a stereoscopic camera, and a Richard

stereoscope-verascope, so that five simultaneous impressions were thus got. The negatives were developed by a photographic firm in Algiers who were entirely ignorant of their nature.

The appearance spoke, giving his name as Bien Boa, moved about, exerted a certain amount of muscular activity, breathed out carbonic acid gas like an ordinary mortal, and responded to Professor Richet's touch, who ascertained that his hand was normal and anatomically correct in its structure. The photographs show a draped figure, a face with black beard and moustache, the head surmounted by a turban, and on another occasion by an old-fashioned metal casque.

Professor Richet, having used every known scientific test, is quite satisfied that a materialisation presented itself both to the sitters and their cameras; but he does not in consequence take his stand amongst the spiritualists. All the length, and it is a good way, he will go, is summed up in his concluding paragraph, in which he says:—

“Certainly I cannot say in what materialisation consists; I am only ready to maintain that there is something profoundly mysterious in it, which will change from top to bottom our ideas on nature and on life.”

M. C.

*Prayers for Rain.* According to Sir Oliver Lodge, the whole of the present controversy between Science and Faith hinges, in one sense, on a practical pivot—the efficacy of prayer, and he formulates the question in dispute thus:—

“Is prayer to hypothetical and supersensuous beings as senseless and useless as it is unscientific? Or does prayer pierce through the husk and apparent covering of the sensuous universe, and reach something living, loving, and helpful beyond?”

In Northern India, the question assumed recently a practical aspect in connection with the threatened famine, and the following extracts from the *Civil and Military Gazette* (Lahore), the leading daily paper of the Punjab, are an instructive record of facts that have a direct bearing on the controversy. In its issue of Sunday, September 10th, 1905 (published on the previous Saturday), the *Gazette* remarked:—

“As September moves forward, and the skies remain cloudless, the gloom which is settling over the agricultural situation in the Punjab deepens. Hardly a single district is now in good case, as the following latest crop reports show. . . .”

Then followed a long list of withered districts.

In the *Gazette's* issue of Tuesday, September 12th (published on Monday), this paragraph appeared:—

“To the general astonishment, on Sunday evening about sunset, rain began to fall in Lahore in true monsoon-like style, and continued throughout the night without a break. By sunrise on Monday the fall, which was steady, without being heavy, has given more than two inches.”

Telegrams from other districts showed that the fall was general from Lahore to Delhi,—that is, over two-thirds of the Punjab, or a distance of 300 miles.

In its issue of Wednesday, September 13th (published on Tuesday), the *Gazette* again remarked on the unexpectedness of the rainfall, and on the facts (1) that less than twenty-four hours before the downpour everyone was confident that rain was as remote as ever; (2) that the air was charged with dust, which could not coexist with atmospheric moisture; (3) that the last dust storm had hardly died down; and (4) that from the remote Southern Indian Ocean right away to the Himalayas the official meteorological reports indicated by convincing charts that rain was not even distantly on its way to the drought-parched Punjab. It then printed the following letter, received from a Mohammedan gentleman who, the editor stated, was personally known to him, and for whose *bonâ-fides* he vouched:—

“The age of miracles is not passed! Strange beyond all imaginings are the ways of the great God! In compliance with a notification circulated in the streets by beat of drum on Saturday, an enormous crowd of earnest Mohammedans from the teeming city of Lahore gathered on Sunday morning on the immense maidan near Lahore Fort, and with bare heads, and from the bottom of their hearts, offered soulful, heaven-moving prayers without intermission for two passionate hours for speedy rain. Let Allah be ever praised! The prayers were conducted by Maulvi Abdul Wuhud, a holy man of God. I speak the truth. On the self-same day at evening, the rain began to fall in Lahore, and it continued to descend in torrents during the whole night and practically all Monday. Who is like unto God? This wondrous rain will most certainly revolutionise the agricultural condition of the season for the Punjab zamindars, and will be in ample time for sowing for cold weather crops, especially including wheat. Only a few days ago the unforeseeing and unprayerful banias raised the price of wheat to Rs.3 per maund. God is just; Traveller from Jullundur and Gujranwalla experienced heavy rain on Sunday. Wonderful are the works of Allah! My words are not false. I give my name to it—Hakim Ali.”

E. J. C.

*Is Mars Inhabited?*—Alfred Russel Wallace, in *Man's Place in the Universe* (1903), quite confidently asserts that Mars, receiving as it does only half the share of the sun's heat which falls to us, is too cold to be inhabited. It is now nearly thirty years, however, since Professor Schiaparelli, of the Brera Observatory, Milan, discovered what he named *canali*, or channels, on Mars; and since then, many advances in Martian research have been made, till in 1905 at the Lowell Observatory, successful photographs of these canals have at last been obtained. The results stand thus: Mars, like our earth, has north and south poles, where the snows periodically melt. Being, in the view of astronomers, an older planet than our earth, water is scarce; and the inhabitants, presumably more highly civilised than we, have constructed canals along which the melted polar snows flow and thus irrigate the planet.

M. C.

## ENQUIRER.

## QUESTION 303.

E. E. L.—With regard to suffering in Kāma-loka, is not Mrs. Besant's theory one generally accepted by Theosophists, that a person who has lived an evil life suffers in Kāma-loka to the extent of the evil he wrought whilst in physical incarnation, and as the result of such suffering gains knowledge which in his next incarnation enables him to make a better fight against similar evil? That a drunkard here would there experience a maddening desire for alcoholic liquors, and being unable to obtain them, would suffer accordingly? It is stated by some intelligent observers of astral plane doings that entities there craving for sensual gratification do actually obtain it. Is this interpretation of a difficult subject a correct one, and if so can it be made to coincide with Mrs. Besant's teaching on the matter?

P. H.—Any fancied discrepancy between the teachings referred to will, I think, be resolved if E. E. L. will keep clear in his mind the distinction between astral gratifications (feelings) and physical gratifications (sensations), *i.e.*, those which proceed from the physical plane.

With the casting aside of his physical body, the drunkard also casts aside the means for the gratification of his desires; but he does not cast aside those desires. These, ingrained in his astral nature, are as poignant as, perhaps far more poignant than, ever. The only possibility he has of gratifying them is by taking possession of some weak physical entity—that is, coming back again to the physical plane. This, doubtless, may occur; but we may take it, I think, that it is a rare occurrence.

These remarks apply to all gratifications ordinarily called "sensual," *i.e.*, those that have their rise on the physical plane. There are, however, other gratifications, often allied to these, but which may arise in the astral world, and exist entirely independent of the physical plane. These we generally discriminate from the "sensual" by calling them "sensuous"—and these, doubtless, since they are in themselves astral looked at objectively, may be enjoyed to the full in the astral world—indeed, can only be enjoyed to the full in the astral world. It is, perhaps, these sensuous gratifications that are referred to by the intelligent observers of the astral plane mentioned by E. E. L.

A. B. C.—The generally accepted view among Theosophists is, as E. E. L. states, that an individual suffers in Kāma-loka until he has purged himself of many evil cravings which may beset him, and which he is not normally able to gratify, as he did on earth, for lack of a physical body. But the observations stated to have been made as to sensual gratification being actually obtained do not contradict the above general statement but only amplify it. If E. E. L. will turn to Mrs. Besant's *Man and his Bodies* he will find that she there makes the same statement (see p. 21, 1896 edition): "Drunkards who have to their

physical bodies, and can therefore no longer satisfy their hateful longing for intoxicants, hang round places where drink is taken, and round those who take it, endeavouring to push themselves into the bodies of people who are drinking, and thus to share the low pleasure to which they surrender themselves." It is by a kind of vicarious gratification that these unhappy creatures endeavour to assuage their cravings. But it need hardly be said that all such proceedings are of the nature of illicit mediumship and black magic, and cannot be too strongly condemned. The knowledge of the existence of such possibilities in the vast laboratory of Nature should render every student the more careful to ensure the purity and self-control of his own vehicles, and emphasise the need of a strong guard over the "open door" in these days of ever-increasing curiosity as to psychic phenomena and astral manifestations.

W. C. W.—I would recommend the querent to read also Leadbeater's *Astral Plane* and *The Other Side of Death*, as well as Mrs. Besant's *A Study in Consciousness* (especially the chapter on "The Permanent Atom"). The powerful vibrations set up by the indulgence of passion in the matter of the astral body during physical life, on the death of the physical body, and the consequent removal of the inertia which it imposes to the complete and full play of such vibrations, naturally cause such astral impulses to be felt as if considerably reinforced and, if such desires and passions are not satisfied but persist as such alone, suffering will inevitably ensue. These desires cannot be satisfied on the astral, but only on the physical plane. There are plenty of records in spiritualistic literature, and accounts of séances in which "entities" (probably in most cases "shades" and not the complete ego) have vicariously, by means of the materialised etheric body of the medium, temporarily satisfied their cravings. I heard of one such instance where an "entity" appeared having an intolerable thirst and eagerly demanding a glass of water, for which, on swallowing the contents, he expressed great gratitude. Mrs. Besant teaches this possibility. Speaking of the victims of accident of the lower type as they are met with in Kāma-loka she says: "They are enticed by the opportunities which mediums afford to gratify them [their passions] vicariously."

As the result of suffering in Kāma-loka no knowledge is gained, as that term is usually understood in the sense of the assimilation by the memory of concrete facts; but if the querent means soul-knowledge, in other words, *experience*, then I am at one with him in the belief that this is what the ego gains by suffering in that sphere. I understand such experience to be gained in this way: the permanent atom in the man's *astral* body, as the result of the suffering due to the inharmonious and conflicting vibrations set up in the astral body (the outcome of unfulfilled desires), becomes very differently affected as compared with its condition when those desires were time after time satisfied during physical life, and when, consequently, harmonious vibrations of the coarser astral matter

held undisputed sway, and affected the permanent atom so as to make it responsive chiefly or entirely to the unfettered harmonious play of such coarse vibrations.

The response of the permanent atom to the *in*harmonious vibrations caused by the suffering astral vehicle would, it seems to me, be entirely favourable to the well-being of the ego, who, on rebirth, carries over with him, as part of his being and stock in trade, the permanent physical and astral atoms and the "mental unit" into his next incarnation.

On the building of a new astral body around the permanent atom at rebirth of the Ego, this permanent atom would, as is obvious from what has been said above, tend to vibrate in a way which would be largely subversive of the construction of an orderly astral body of coarse matter, *i.e.*, of one composed of the harmonious vibrations of its molecules and atoms. The permanent atom, taught to respond to the *chaotic* vibration of such an astral body in a state of pain and suffering, could never, therefore, aggregate around itself a well-developed orderly astral body of such coarse and gross matter. It would attract around it the more harmoniously-vibrating atoms of somewhat less gross matter, and in this way a rather purer and, therefore, better astral body would be ready for the Ego at his next incarnation. The Ego, by means of direct contact with the permanent atom, would also have reaped a lesson, and would act accordingly in the next life.

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#### QUESTION 304.

*P. H.*—*A physical atom is formed of a whirl of etheric atoms; an etheric atom of a whirl of super-etheric atoms; these again of a whirl of the sub-atomic atoms; and so on. Is there any definite line of demarcation between the substance of the different planes and of the sub-planes, or does the one substance gradually merge into that above it?*

*A. H. W.*—Some time ago the writer reflected very carefully on this and kindred questions, in the light of such general and theosophical knowledge as he happens to have. He cannot give authorities here, but his conclusions may be briefly illustrated as follows. Imagine a room full of thick smoke, and let each particle of carbon symbolise an ultimate astral vortex-atom. Now imagine the whole of the smoke to be swept up into a series of smoke-rings. These rings will symbolise the vortex-atoms of the physical plane. The six lower sub-planes of the astral plane consist of increasingly complex combinations of the ultimate astral atoms, symbolised by the particles of smoke. The six lower sub-planes of the physical world consist of a parallel series of increasingly dense combinations of the ultimate physical atoms, symbolised by the smoke-rings. When the one force plays in the atomic astral

sub-plane, it reproduces itself in the atomic physical sub-plane, and the smoke-image enables one to imagine the process. Suppose each of the astral atoms involved in a given physical vortex were to suddenly vibrate, the physical vortex would also vibrate, and push against the surrounding physical atoms. Thus a wave would radiate throughout the physical atomic sub-plane. Lower manifestations of the force working in the denser astral sub-planes are reproduced on the corresponding physical sub-plane harmonically, in an analogous way to the reproduction on a lower harp-string of a note struck an octave above. There is therefore a perfectly definite line of demarcation between planes, for what has been said of the relation between the astral and physical planes applies to the mental and astral, and to the buddhic and mental; the image of the smoke and the series of smoke-rings being simply re-applied higher up.

It will be objected that it is continually stated that the ultimate physical atom, when broken by the investigator, results in astral matter of the densest nature. This may well happen when only force enough *just* to break the vortex has been applied. But it has also been stated that the physical atom can be unwound into a number of strands, in which *single* ultimate astral atoms lie in series. That this shows the real nature of the physical atom—that it is a vortex set up in the ultimate astral atomic sea—becomes evident from what has been stated of the original emergence of the planes in the cosmic mist stage. *Then* the atomic sub-planes alone existed, and each sea of ultimate atoms gave origin to the next, on the principle of the smoke and the smoke-rings down the seven steps of space.

Only at a later stage did the lower sub-planes on each plane emerge. Hence the ultimate physical vortex atoms were in existence before the dense astral matter came into being. This view is further supported by the statement that the seven atomic planes constitute one Cosmic plane. There is thus a special relationship between the primary atomic "seas," apart from the denser forms of matter developed from combinations of the ultimate atoms on the several planes.

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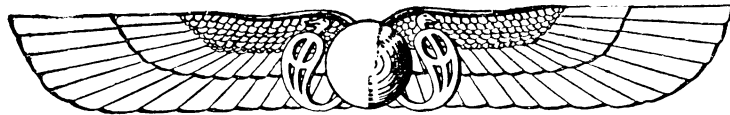
The subscription to THE VAHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

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*All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*



# THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

## THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. 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.—KATE SPINK, *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. XV.

LONDON, JULY 1, 1906.

NO. 12.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

### THE CONGRESS IN PARIS.

About 450 members were present at the Third Congress of the Federated European Sections held in Paris on June 3rd, 4th and 5th. As usual, the wide scope of the Society and its aims was well shown by the number of subjects discussed, the arts presented, and the cosmopolitan spirit, ignoring all differences of race, so apparent at all the meetings.

Our President-Founder, Col. Olcott, presided, and the meetings were held in the beautifully-decorated rooms of the Washington Palace, 14, rue Magellan. The proceedings were formally opened on Sunday, 3rd, by the singing of a chorus specially written and composed by a member, M. Ed. Bailly. After a short address of welcome by the French Secretary, Dr. Pascal, Col. Olcott gave a most stimulating and helpful presidential address. He spoke of the increasing prosperity of the Society generally (which has now branches established in forty-four different countries). He specially contrasted its present active condition in France with the three small groups connected with spiritualism and occultism which represented the Society in 1884 when he and H. P. B. visited the country.

The Colonel spoke of the Headquarters at Adyar, the "vital heart" of the Society, with its magnificent library of ancient MSS. and occult literature; and of the international character of the movement, with its basis so broad as to exclude the usual causes of quarrel—sex, race, caste, creed, etc. He gave again the oft-repeated warning to members not to put the leaders and teachers of the movement on a pedestal, expecting them to be perfect—still less to reject the teachings of any when they were found to have faults like ourselves.

He also reminded the members that the Society as a whole should keep a strictly neutral attitude

towards vexed questions, and not narrow its broad platform by identifying itself with any one movement, and pointed out the danger of confusing psychic gifts with spirituality.

The President-Founder concluded by presenting the Subba-Row medal to Dr. Pascal as a mark of recognition, not only of his literary work, but also of his devotion to the Society.

Short speeches of greeting, each in his or her own language, were then given by representatives of fifteen different countries, which closed the morning's work.

In the afternoon there was a debate on two given questions:

(1) To what extent is the Theosophical Society simply a group of seekers after Truth, and to what extent is it a group of students, of propagandists, of exponents of a system?

(2) If the Society has no dogmas, there exist within it—and very rightly—authorities of different degree. Is the relative value of these authorities purely a question of individual appreciation? For what qualities or on what faculties should such authority be established?

Several members took part, but unfortunately it was very difficult to hear, as the acoustics of the hall were not very good, and the constant movement of members in and out was somewhat distracting. Most of the speakers agreed (1) that the Society should unite the search for truth with propaganda; and (2) that the relative value of authority must be judged by the teaching.

In the evening we had two excellent lectures: one in English by Mr. Mead on "The Religion of the Mind," and one in French by M. Bernard on "Problèmes de l'heure présente." Mr. Mead spoke of the sublime teaching of Hermes Trismegistus and his followers,—the Gnosis which is founded on "the intimate union of the love of God with the whole science of nature and of man." It is a religion of intuition and of continual progress, opening out glorious possibilities to the initiate.

M. Bernard spoke of the work Theosophy had to do in working out present-day problems.

On Monday morning the Departmental Work began. Under Section B (Religion, Mysticism, Myths and Legends, Folklore), Mr. Geo. Doe read a paper on "Some Folklore Gleanings, chiefly from Devonshire." Then a paper on "An Aspect of Islam," by Edward E. Long, was read by Mrs. Sharpe. He spoke of the lofty nature and moral beauty of this religion, so much maligned and misunderstood, whose keynote is the unity of God, bringing harmony and peace. In the Middle Ages art, science and literature advanced by leaps and bounds in its train, but with prosperity came the fall of spirit into matter, and the teaching degenerated into bigotry and love of power. A new spirit has now come into the religion, and Theosophists should study it. Islam in its highest aspect is Theosophy.

This was followed by an interesting short *résumé* of much research into the early religions of the Slavs, by Frau von Ulrich. She found four distinct groups among the ancient Slavs, each with a separate religion :

(1) Lithuanians and Letts in the Baltic provinces with a very simple religion ; adoring the forces of Nature without temples or priests—every hearthstone an altar, every householder a priest.

(2) The Russians who had the same religion first, but accepted with the domination of the Scandinavian princes the German gods, giving Slavonic names to them. Two hundred years later they left them very readily to embrace Christianity.

(3) The Russians, Wends, etc., who occupied the North of Germany and changed their faith only in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They had richly decorated temples, and gods in the Indian style.

(4) The Bohemians and Poles, the only ones who have preserved for us a beautiful cosmogony and some legends of deep meaning.

The last address was a most interesting one by Dr. Steiner on "Theosophy in Germany a Hundred Years Ago." He said that the great works in philosophy, poetry and music in Germany were really the fruits of an inner occultism. To judge Germany only by her great names was a superficial method. Ever since the fourteenth century there have been unknown occult brotherhoods, each with a leader. There have been many others besides Paracelsus and Boehme. Schiller, the darling of the German people, was an initiate, and in his works can be found a clear insight and much occult knowledge. In his youth he wrote a pamphlet, "Theosophy of Julius," being a series of letters between himself (Julius) and his teacher Raphael. Schiller's friend, Fichte, too, was another occultist, with his pupil Novalis. You find much intuition and occult teaching and a passion for spirituality, in their writings. Among others there were Kerner and Troxlar, who in 1812 described the astral body. He used the word Biosophy instead of Theosophy. They did not teach Reincarnation.

On June 4th, in Section C (Philosophy), an interesting paper was given by Mr. Herbert Whyte on "Açvaghosha's Awakening of Faith in the

Mahâyâna." He pointed out that the theme of the Mahâyâna was practically the same as that of the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, and drew parallels between Açvaghosha's teachings and the unfolding of self-consciousness as described in Mrs. Besant's *Study in Consciousness*. True enlightenment cannot be obtained by outward activity alone, because it is beyond even the activity of the mind. Mind is like a mirror, it gathers dust while it reflects. It must be disciplined by charity, morality, patience, energy, tranquillisation, centralisation.

M. Xifré gave a short *résumé* of a paper by Professor Rafael Urbano, dealing with Spanish mysticism, as exemplified by St. Thérèse, St. Jean de la Croix and others. He also drew parallels between the teachings of Christ and those contained in the Kabbalah.

The "Yoga" group of students from Algiers contributed some thoughts on "Devotion and Providence." As man is largely ignorant of the consequences of his acts, the responsibility for these, on higher planes, is borne partly by the Masters. When man evolves further, he begins to collaborate with them, and thus to share the responsibility. This is Devotion. The energies coming from above they term Providence, and the reunion of these two is Yoga.

A short *résumé* of his paper was given by M. Maurice Largeris, in which he dealt with the supposed pessimism of Indian teaching, as understood by most people in the West. Needless to say this pessimism is only apparent and not real ; in truth we are perfectly free when we have once realised our own divinity.

Mr. Wallace offered some suggestions as to the use of diagrams and their relation to symbols. He classified diagrams as (1) Static and (2) Dynamic, the former being, as it were, topographical and having no intrinsic merit of their own, and the latter being conceived in such a way that their constituent portions move in accordance with what we call natural laws. He thought that all true symbols might be considered as sections in time of such dynamic diagrams, which in their essence are the reality of things.

M. Louis Desaint described the philosophy of M. Bergson in its relation to the ancient philosophies of India. We must begin, he said, by describing matter, before we attempt to define spirit. Spirit is a reality independent of matter. Memory is likewise a reality, whereas our brain and nervous system are only images and therefore cannot contain all the images of the universe.

M. Eugène Lévy gave a very useful sketch of a kind of practical guide for everyday life, compiled and inferred to a considerable extent from the writings of Mrs. Besant.

In the afternoon there was a debate on Propaganda, and many members spoke on the different points raised :

- 1 (a) Is propaganda an essential aim for the Theosophical Society ?
- (b) Is propaganda a necessary consequence of the three objects of the Society ?
- 2 (a) Considering the length of time the Theo-

sophical Society has existed and the amount of propaganda carried on, how is it that the members are so few in number? (About 13,000 in 1905.)

(b) Has there been an absence of method or of system in the work of the Theosophical Society?

(c) If so, is it to be regretted?

(d) If so, how can it be remedied?

The general trend of the speeches was to the effect that a certain amount of propaganda was a necessary result of feeling that we have received help ourselves. But all agreed that living the life, and speaking out of the fulness of the heart, was the only useful kind. Mr. Mead, especially, warned members against using technical terms and Sanskrit jargon, partially understood. Members should find out what they can do, and do that, not all try to lecture; and always try to use the local language and traditions. Numbers are unimportant, but each member living up to the aims of the Society will spread its teachings. Keep always in view the inner meaning, not putting too much value on the changing forms.

3. The third question: Should the Theosophical Society and its divisions, in their official capacity, and with more method and detail, endeavour to make their members acquainted with everything of interest in the general trend of the movement as well as with the whole of their activities?—was answered by the resolution that Colonel Olcott's annual report should be distributed to each member by the General Secretaries of the Sections.

4. Are appropriate measures for theosophical material assistance needed or not?—was not much discussed, but it was agreed that the Theosophical Society was not a philanthropic body.

On Monday evening some French members gave an excellent concert, followed by light refreshments.

Tuesday morning, under Section I., the desirability of a universal spiritualist Review was brought forward, and the importance of using Esperanto as a universal language.

Under Section E, Art, were two very interesting papers: one by M. Ed. Bailly on ancient Egyptian music, illustrated by the singing—women's voices in unison—of an ancient Invocation of the planetary gods, on the vowel sounds, each representing a planet. The other was by Madame André-Gedalge on the mystic meaning of Mozart's *Magic Flute*. She said that Mozart, as well as Beethoven and Haydn, was initiated in the Scotch order of Freemasonry, and that all his music had an occult signification.

Under Section H Mr. Taraporwalla spoke of Theosophical work in India, and its tremendous effect in promoting tolerance and understanding of real religion.

In the Sections D (Science), A (Fraternity) and G (Administration, Propaganda, Method of Work, etc.) other papers were read.

In the afternoon the proceedings were brought to an end. To the great disappointment of the members the President-Founder was not able to be

present owing to his having caught a chill. It was announced that affectionate greetings had been sent to Mrs. Besant, and that next year the Congress would be held at Munich. After that it was proposed to hold them every two years.

Dr. Pascal, M. Bernard and the General Secretaries spoke, and a farewell chorus, specially composed by Rita Strohl, was sung.

Most of the speaking throughout the meetings was in French, though English, German and Spanish were also used.

A small Art Exhibition was open daily at the Headquarters, containing some interesting symbolic and other pictures.

On Wednesday a most enjoyable excursion by boat was arranged to Bas Meudon, where the members were most hospitably entertained. This gave a much valued opportunity for social intercourse, and made a very pleasant finish to this stimulating gathering.

One of the pleasures of these yearly Congresses lies in this, that in each a new departure is taken and new experiments made. The introduction of meetings for the discussion of given questions was the more obvious new departure this year, but there was another which should be as widely known, more especially in the younger and smaller Sections that may one day wish to hold a Congress within their borders. From the first the French Committee had determined to organise a successful Congress, the expenses of which should not exceed the funds at their disposal. No special appeals for donations were made in any Section, though, of course, donations which were volunteered were accepted. It is due to the care and able management of our French colleagues that we have now the assurance that a Congress can be a success without entailing very heavy expense on the Section in which it is held. The time had come when this needed to be known, and it will have considerable influence on the future development of this movement. Much appreciation is due to the Congress Committee for their achievement, as much gratitude is due and is felt for the generous hospitality extended to all members of all Sections present at the Congress by so many members of the French Section. Undoubtedly the best work of this last Congress was that of strengthening the bonds between the members attending and the Sections represented. The members who offered hospitality and the members of the Travelling and Entertainment Committee who had made such excellent hotel arrangements, ably contributed to this as did also the meetings for discussion. There remained in the mind a conviction of the growing solidarity in this movement and that this was the essential note of this last Congress.

## THE CONVENTION.

As already announced in the June VĀHAN all the meetings in connection with the Convention will be held in the Small Queen's Hall, Langham Place, W.

The business meeting will be held on Saturday, July 7th, at 2.30 p.m., and delegates (except Presidents of Branches) and proxies are again reminded that they should bring their credentials in writing. The President-Founder will preside at the meeting.

Mr. Whalley-Chapman has upon further consideration decided to withdraw the resolutions appearing in his name in the agenda issued with the last VĀHAN and they are therefore not included in the agenda given in the programme of the Convention. Mr. Faulding has, however, since the agenda were sent out, submitted further resolutions and these are printed in the programme.

In the evening, at 8 o'clock, there will be a reception for members.

On Sunday, at 7 p.m., there will be a meeting for members and their friends, at which Col. Olcott will preside and speak and an address will also be given by Mr. Mead on "The Gnosis of the Mind."

On Sunday afternoon the rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be open to members for general discussion and social intercourse, and it is hoped that members will make free use of this opportunity of meeting each other in an informal manner.

Any Secretaries of Branches who may not yet have complied with the requirements as to Reports and lists of members are requested to do so without delay.

A programme of the Convention and a duly audited Receipts and Expenditure Account are sent to members with this copy of the VĀHAN.

The General Secretary's Report is also enclosed, as was done last year, in order that members may read it before the Convention and it may then be taken as read at the meeting.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

#### CLOSING OF HEADQUARTERS IN AUGUST.

Members are notified that the rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be closed for cleaning during the last week in July and the month of August, reopening as usual on September 1st. The rooms will close from Tuesday evening, July 24th.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

#### THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER.

Colonel Olcott will be at the Section Rooms, 28, Albemarle Street, to meet and talk with members on the following days: Monday and Tuesday, July 2nd and 3rd, from 8 to 9.30 p.m., and Thursday and Friday, July 5th and 6th, from 3.30 to 5 p.m. Members who wish to meet the President-Founder informally are very cordially invited to take this opportunity.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

#### ACTIVITIES.

##### New Centre.

A Centre has been formed at Margate. Weekly meetings are held to which members visiting Margate are cordially invited. Information may be had from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

KATE SPINK,  
*General Secretary.*

##### Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to June 20th: P. A. G., £2; Anon., £5 5s.; E. F., £4; M. A. N., £1; R. P., £5; P. E. D., £10. Total, £27 5s.

##### Social Committee Debating Society.

The next meeting, which is the last of the Session, will take place on Friday, July 13th, at 3 p.m. The winter session commences on Friday, October 12th.

L. S.

##### Northern Federation.

The next Conference of the Northern Federation will be held in Harrogate on Saturday, July 28th, when Mr. G. R. S. Mead will take the chair.

In the afternoon, "Theosophy and Dogma" will be the subject of discussion, and in the evening at 7 p.m. Mr. Mead will give an address on "The Riddle of the Sphinx."

On Sunday evening, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. Mead will give a public lecture on "The Religion of the Mind."

The meetings will be held in the Theosophical Hall, and all members of the Society are cordially invited to attend.

M. BROUGHTON HEAD,  
*Hon. Secretary.*

##### Blavatsky Lodge: Informal Meetings.

Informal meetings will be held during the summer holidays, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m. The speakers in July will be: July 19th (28, Albemarle Street), Miss Lilian Lloyd, *Education*; July 26th (8, Inverness Place), Mr. Ransom, *Friendship*.

All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend, and to take part in the discussions, which will, it is hoped, play a large part in these meetings.

During August the meetings will be held at 8, Inverness Place, Bayswater.

E. M. M.

## Lecture List.

- ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Halle, 300, Rue Provence (sud).
- BATH LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 2, Argyle Street: July 2nd, *How to control Electricity*, H. von Kramer; July 9th, . . . ; July 16th, *On the Teaching of Fiona Macleod*, Dr. Goodchild; July 22nd, *Colour and Number Symbolism*, Tudor Pole: July 30th, . . . , C. Gooding. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.
- BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.
- BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.
- BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings suspended till September 5th. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.
- BRIGHTON LODGE. Sundays, at 3.30 p.m., at 17, Compton Avenue, Compton Hall. Closed for summer from middle of July. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine.
- BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 80, Richmond Road, Montpellier.
- BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.
- BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.
- BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.
- BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.
- BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.
- COVENTRY CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings for study. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.
- DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.
- EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street. Regular meetings suspended for the summer. Library open on Mondays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.
- EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.
- FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Meetings at 98, Bouverie Road West, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Information from Mrs. J. B. Scott, at above address.
- GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.
- GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street, W.
- HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: July 1st, *Death and After*, J. I. Wedgwood; July 8th, *Karma*, Miss Hilda Smith; July 15th, *Some Planks in the Theosophical Platform*, Miss Pagan; July 22nd, *Reincarnation*, S. G. Pandit; July 29th, *The Religion of the Mind*, G. R. S. Mead. Lodge meetings for study of *The First Object of the Theosophical Society*, on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade.
- HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.
- LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: July 9th, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Rev. A. H. Lee; July 23rd, *Hinduism*, C. J. Barker. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.
- LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.
- LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.
- LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.
- LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.
- LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: July 5th, *Novalis*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; July 12th, *Concerning the Æon*, G. R. S. Mead; Informal Meetings at 8 p.m.: July 19th, *Education*, Miss Lilian Lloyd, July 25th (8, Inverness Place, W.), *Friendship*, S. Ransom.
- LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon, on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.: July 4th, *Reincarnation*, C. G. Kilroe; July 11th, *Karma*, Mrs. Raphael; July 18th, *Some Aspects of Psychical Science*, Miss Russell; July 25th, Social Gathering. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.
- LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: July 2nd, *Practical Theosophy*, Mrs. Leo; July 9th, . . . Col. Olcott; July 16th, *Conversazione*.
- LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead. Regular meetings suspended till October.
- LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.
- LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings for young people

on Wednesdays, at 8.15 p.m., for the study of *Esoteric Christianity*.

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

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Meetings suspended during July and August.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURO LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE, Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Study of *A Study in Consciousness*. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study of *A Study in Consciousness*.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Sundays at 7 p.m., papers and addresses.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., study of Saleeby's *Organic Evolution*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meeting on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Fortnightly meetings on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., alternately at 44, Westgate, and Craven House, Belle Vue. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Information from J. E. Reid, *Hon. Sec.*, 9, First Avenue, York.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### A TRAVELLING LIBRARY.

DEAR EDITOR,

We very much need a "Travelling Library" of Theosophical literature for the use of new centres. There are a number of Centres of activity at present where excellent use might be made of such. The object is to give members and enquirers at new Centres access to the representative literature of our movement and thus supplement the efforts of the local workers.

May we ask you to give this matter prominence through your columns as it frequently happens that members possess books they would readily spare if they knew they would be put to good use.

The books most required are probably the Manuals (latest editions, if possible), *Outlines of Theosophy*, text-books on Reincarnation, *Esoteric Buddhism*, *Growth of the Soul*, *The World Mystery*, *The Ancient Wisdom* and *Esoteric Christianity*. But any books on Theosophy or kindred subjects would be serviceable.

Miss Spink, at Headquarters, and Miss Ward at 161, New Bond Street, would be glad to receive any gift of books or of money for purchasing second-hand copies.

Yours faithfully,

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE,  
P. T.

### NIRVĀNA.

I have read with pleasure and interest B.K.'s suggestive answer to Question 301 in the May VĀHAN, and also the correspondence on the subject in the last issue. I read with pleasure because I am one of those dreadful people who like to hear the other side, and whose greatest gratitude is due to any who will set me thinking; I read with interest because I have always thought that it is precisely in this view of things we must seek for an understanding of the philosophical basis of the absolutism of salvation for all who repent, preached in the Good News of the Christ (in its general tradition), as opposed to the infinite perfecting envisaged by an imperfect understanding of the idea of Nirvāna.

Nirvāna, if I understand the Buddha's Dhamma aright, is the "ceasing" of the "wheel." Now if one simply transmutes the "wheel" of repeated enfleshments into a "wheel" of repeated states or repeated "worlds," or repeated greatnesses—even though they be supposed to be in an increasing series of betterment, I cannot see that we have understood the word of the Master aright. Even He did not say what Nirvāna is; though He asserted that it *is*; so that when I speak of "ceasing" from the "wheel," I simply re-echo the wording of the third Noble Truth, the Ceasing of Sorrow,—I do not venture to dogmatise on the Way—the fourth.

I would, however, suggest that the "Kingdom of the Heavens" points to the same idea. It

should be translated, I dare to believe, the *Kingship of the Heavens*; and that Kingship, I would also believe, includes the rulership of the Earth as well, and of all Lokas. Kingship in this sense means precisely Freedom or Liberation,—the opposite of the state of Slavery to Fate. Now where will you make Fate cease? That is the first question. The Gods are under its sway; no being is beyond it but he who is one with God Himself; for Fate is His Divine Spouse.

How then will you free yourself from the Divine Necessity? How, indeed, but by becoming one with Her, and that too with all your heart and mind and body; giving yourself wholly to Her even as God gives Himself ungrudgingly to His Divine Complement.

It is, however, quite evident from last month's Correspondence that there are those of our colleagues who consider the idea of infinite progress and evolution as the highest of ideals; and naturally so. But is Progress rightly envisaged by means of the symbol of a straight line or even of a spiral? I think not. Progress to be right progresses refunds itself into itself, into ever more perfect realisation; it never departs from itself—that is impossible. And as Right Views are one of the fundamental categories of the Dhamma of the Buddha, it is right and proper that we as Theosophists should strive to win towards a better comprehension of the nature of the problems we set ourselves to solve.

Evolution is the god of this age; but just because it is the temporal idol set up in our scientific sanctuaries, is it proper for us to bow the knee to this Baal? Surely we have already refused to worship the image that Nebuchadnezzar the King has set up, when we have been all these years asserting that Evolution is but half a truth, and that without its syzygy and complement Involution, it is not a living idea, but a half-mutilated concept,—a mental fakir with one arm and leg shrivelled. We men are like this fakir, for we are halves. The true man is male-female, and we are all of us either male or female. The true man contains in himself the potencies (not simply the potentialities) of both natures. So also with ideas and concepts. Evolution is an abortion apart from Involution; Involution is the Christ that descends to "enform" that abortive Sophia (a Sophia nevertheless as containing a truth, though a partial one)—to "enform" her, first "according to substance," and then "according to gnosis."

Now we students of Theosophy in these latter days should not resent the passing on from the stage of the "enformation according to substance" to the consummation of the "enformation according to gnosis"; and the views of Nirvāṇa hinted at in the suggestion put forward by B. K. should be carefully considered, not as to detail as yet, but as the germ of an idea.

If Nirvāṇa cannot be realised on the lines of Evolution alone, equally so can it not be realised on the lines of Involution alone. Both must work together for righteousness; and if they both work together in full and perfect union, the twain will unite with the One Mystery that looks neither

without alone nor within alone, but which self-realises itself in the joy of being.

Dare one venture to find any words that can in anywise adumbrate this Mystery, then perhaps we might suggest the idea by speaking of it as Completeness and Satisfaction (neither too much nor too little), as Perfection (not perpetual perfecting) and Peace.

Dare one also suggest that true union is possible at any moment; that it is attained by every moment realising that what Fate has ordained for us to do at that moment is the true complement of ourselves; is the only thing that can at that particular moment of time complete our nature? Should we not every moment of life wed fate (the lower working out of Great Fate) as enthusiastically and with as much love and delight as a bridegroom weds his bride? For without this true love there is no power to bring ourselves to birth.

But the man who seeks to gain liberation for himself alone is deluded. And even a man who may attain momentary liberation is no more use in the world than an ordinary man—unless he is well "evolved" and has acquired plenty of material to use to work out the "information" ("enformation" rather). In attaining such "liberation," then, we are not helping humanity, we can see this from the very expression used. And this is why it is taught not to seek final liberation till all humanity is ready. True help and "progress" are attained by those who can touch "liberation" and yet keep in touch with what is highly (and lowly) "evolved," and "involved."

G. R. S. M.

#### STRAY NOTES.

*Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.*

*The Dowsing Rod.*—The following interesting account of water-finding appears in the June 18th issue of *The Yorkshire Daily Observer*:

"During the last three months water-finding experiments have been carried on on the estate adjoining the works of Colbeck Bros., Limited, Alverthorpe, Wakefield, and they recently culminated in a success which astonished even the heads of the firm, some of whom were profoundly sceptical as to the practicability of water divination. It appears that in droughty seasons the stream which runs underneath the works has been totally insufficient for their purposes, and for some time they have been paying the Wakefield Corporation no less a sum than £1,000 a year for an adequate water supply. Three months ago the directors decided to employ Mr. H. Chesterman, an expert water-finder, of Bath, and he, assisted by his two sons, has periodically prospected the estate for water. He used a triangle-shaped piece of aluminium wire, the widest part of which he held in front of him with both hands, with the angle downwards.

"Mr. Chesterman prophesied that when he stood over any place where water could be found the angle of the wire would voluntarily move upwards with a struggle corresponding with the volume of water to be found underneath. Abundant success crowned his efforts last week, when the triangular-shaped wire moved upwards irresistibly at a spot close to the works. Boring operations were commenced, and last Tuesday pumping operations were continued without a break for thirty hours, and at a depth of about 260 feet. Most of the directors were present at the experiment, and a huge tank was filled in four minutes.

"It is estimated that the well has a yielding capacity of 10,000 gallons of water per hour, and the directors are now having it analysed to ascertain its suitability for manufacturing purposes."

### ENQUIRER.

#### QUESTION 305.

*E. E. L.—Is one justified in believing that Jesus, the Christ, as an historical personage, was a man in his last physical incarnation, one who, by virtue of his crowning act of self-renunciation, won redemption from the cycle of birth and re-birth, and now exists as a spiritual entity, infusing his followers the world over with his spirit, ever seeking to proclaim to them their at-one-ness with the Father, or that he was a man who, by reason of his extraordinary physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual advancement, had rendered himself a fitting instrument for the fulfilling of a great mission, but one which he, as he was constituted, was unable to accomplish, and therefore a higher spiritual entity, one capable of carrying out the work, entered into his physical shell, mingling with or absorbing his (Jesus') spiritual self? Or was Jesus one who had achieved emancipation from physical incarnation, but who deliberately chose to incarnate that he might become a World Teacher and aid the mighty work of evolution thus?*

B. K.—The expression "justified" in the question rather puzzles me, especially in its application to such a subject matter as this. If it means no more than to imply that a certain opinion is rational, or intelligible, or capable of being supported by reasonable arguments, then one can only say that each and all of the three views stated in regard to Jesus may be "justifiably" believed. But that leaves the question of truth and fact altogether open; and indeed I cannot see how any of us can go beyond mere "opinion" in the Platonic sense in regard to such matters. On the one side we have the traditional view of the Churches; on another the various views taken by the early Gnostic schools of Christianity, with some of which the labours of Mr. Mead are making us acquainted; on a third we have the view put forward by Mrs. Besant in her *Esoteric Christianity*.

Now we have in the question three new and differing theories advanced, *no one of which exactly coincides with any of the three just named*; and I suppose an indefinite number of other variants could be devised by the exercise of sufficient ingenuity.

Who then shall decide for us between all these conflicting alternatives and possibilities? Those who cling to authority and lean thereon, will naturally each attach himself to his own special tradition, or teacher, or authority, and I can see no final court of appeal—accessible to us—competent to decide between them. Nor, after all, does it seem to me in any way important or desirable that such a decision "on authority" should be reached at all. For such a decision, if it were possible, would really *only* leave matters where they were. For so long as we follow authority it does not appear to matter in the least either what that authority is or what it teaches, so long as we follow it blindly and without doubt or question and in every respect conform our whole lives and natures to its dicta.

But for many, at least, a time comes when this is no longer possible, when the intellect awakens and refuses to be content with what does not satisfy its own nature and inner *logos*. For such any authority is as good—or as bad—as any other, and they are constrained by their own natures to hold all such statements and assertions as equally requiring verification. And that verification it seems can only be obtained by the individual for himself. For such matters as these are beyond the scope of the discursive intellect and can at best be barely touched by the highest flights of intellectual intuition. Indeed my personal opinion is that they demand the development and exercise of a super-intellectual order of consciousness for their apprehension and elucidation.

And therefore—to come to what seems to me the practical issue—what we need to do is to try to realise within ourselves that higher life which we feel and sense in the world's illuminators, rather than try to speculate upon details concerning them, when the very terms in which we think—as for instance in this question—are such as to involve a whole volume of controversy as to their proper meaning and application.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, 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. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.*