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GET UNDERSTANDING.

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W. P. PHELON, M.D. MRS. M. M. PHELON, C.S.B.

EDITORS

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RAMAYANA THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

Meets every Sunday afternoon. Time, 3 o'clock. Pince, 2008. Lincolust. All Theosophists visiting Chicago are cordially invited. So, also, are all who seek the Truth for the Truth's sake. The first Sunday of each month is a closed meeting for Theosophists only. W. P. Pinelon, Pres. Mrs. A. M. HATCH, Sec'y; 2008. Lincoln street, Chicago.

When this paragraph is marked with a blug cross it shows our friends that their time has expired, and we shall be happy to receive a renewal of their subscription soon.

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SONNET ON LIFE.

Fair Life, thou dear companion of my days—
Life with the reserved lips and shining eyes—
That ledist me through my Youth's glad Paradise,
And standist beside me still, in these dull ways;
My older feet must tread the tangled maze

Where cares beset me and fresh foes surprise; On the keen wind and from the far-off skies Is borne a whisper, which my heart dismays, That then and I must part. Beloved so long,

Wilt thou not stay with me, inconstant Love?
Nay, then, the cry upon the wind grows strong—
I must without thee fresh adventure prove;

And yet it may be I but to thee wrong,

And I shall find thee waiting where I rove.

I.OUISE CHARDLER MOULTON.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE SPHINX AND PYRAMID.



IHLE the Sphinx of Gisch served as entrance to the subterranean retreats, in them were undergone the trials or mysteries of the Magi. This entrance, obstructed in our day by sands and debris, was designed between the forelegs of the crouching Colossus. It

was closed by a bronze door whose secret was only known to the Magi. It was guarded by public respect, and a sort of religious fear maintained its inviolability far better than an armed protection could have done. In the body of the Sphinx were excavated passages that led to the Great Pyramid. These passages intersected each other so ingeniously that to enter by chance, and without a guide, would return one, as by fatality, to the point of beginning. It must have taken an enormous amount of work to have excavated this mysterious labyrinth lu the massive granite, and such work is proof enough that the mechanics of Ancient Egypt were not inferior to the learned engineers who to:day bore the tunnels for our failways.

Two initiates, dressed in the rank of Thes-MOTBETS, or guardians of the rites, were commissioned to lead by night the postulant, whom an unanimous vote admitted to the mysteries. He gave himself to the discretion of his guides, took their advice as command, and forebore to question. On leaving Memphis his eyes were bandaged so that he could give no account of the distance, nor of the secret place into which he should be conducted.

The postulant with veiled face is led to the foot of the Sphinx. The door of bronze opens and closes without noise. One of the guides takes a lamp suspended from the wall and walks in advance to light the way. The other conducts the postulant by the hand and causes him to descend a spiral stairway of twenty-two steps. At the bottom of the stairs there opens and shuts a new door of bronze, giving access to a large circular hall. The interior of this door is covered with a granite plaster, whose tint harmonizes with that of the walls so that the entrance is not discernible. Here commence the scenes of the mysteries. The two guides suddenly arrest the postulant, whom they make believe to stand on the brink of a precipice, over which one step more would plunge him.

"This depth," they tell him, "surrounds the temple of the mysteries and protects it from the audacious curiosity of the profanc. We have arrived a little too soon; our brothers have not yet lowered the bridge by which the initiates communicate with the sacred earth. Let us await their coming, but if thou dost value thy life remain motionless; cross thy hands upon thy breast and do not remove thy bandage until the signal to advance is given."

The postulant knows that from this moment he belongs no more to himself, and that a passive obedience has become his law in order to pass the perils which are to prove his strength of mind and the measure of control Which he can exercise over himself. He submits to this condition of obedience which is imposed upon him, and which he has freely accepted before setting out with his guides. He has the strength of his will, intelligence, and the ardent desire to know the mysteries. whose key is promised to his decility and perseverance. But however strong he may be, he has senses, and his senses recoil on the threshold of the unknown;-

emotion, the guides take from an altar two robes of white linen, two belts, one of gold and the other of silver, and two masks, one representing the head of a lion and the other the head of a bull. The robe is an emblem of the purity of the doctrine of the Magi; the gold is sacred to the sun, the silver to the moon. The head of the lion symbolizes the zodiacal sign, which astrologers call the throne of the Genius of the Sun; the head of the bull symbolizes the zodiacal sign, where the Genius of the Moon exercises his most powerful influence. The guides dressed in these emblems then represented the two Egyptian Genii, PI-RIII and PI-ISII, who govern the movements of the sun and moon, the two stars to which magic attributes the most direct action in creation, the dissolution and renewing of terrestrial beings. This symbolism expresses further, that the study of the laws of visible nature is the first step toward the highest illumination of the spirit But the meaning of the material signs should not be revealed to the postulant until the trials of initiation have been successfully accomplished.

As soon as the guides had masked themselves, a trap was lowered in the floor with great noise, and a frightful specter arose am d clouds of smoke and flame, brandishing a scythe, while a hollow voice cried from the depths:

"Ill fortune to the profane who comes to disturb the peace of the dead."

At the same instant the bandage of the postulant was snatched off, and he stood face to face with the three monstrous figures who await his first failure. If, in spite of the horror of this surprise, he is courageous enough not to faint before the scythe, whose blade grazes him seven times by a rapid movement, the specter disappears, and the trap closes. The guides unmask and congratulate him on his courage.

"Thou hast felt the cold of the murderous iron and thou hast not recoiled; thou hast contemplated the frightful and thy gaze gave it defiance. It is well. In thy country thou mightst be a hero admired by all and assured of the homage of posterity. But among us there is a higher virtue than manly courage; it is the voluntary humility which triumphs over vain pride. Art thou capable of a like victory over thyself?"

The postulant, reassured by the benevolent While he braces himself against this first glances of his guides, believes the physical

trials to be ended and offers' himself to the moral trials.

"Very well," they say. "It is necessary to crawl in the dust even to the middle of the sanctuary where our brothers await thee, to give thee knowledge and power in exchange for humility. Dost thou wish to submit to this shameful journey?"

To be continued.

RAMAYANA THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

A little company of seekers after truth met yesterday at the residence of Dr. W. P. Phelon, No. 206 S. Lincoln Street,

The meeting-place was a richly furnished apartment. The strong light of the sun, as it beat against the windows, was modified and softened in its passage through tinted curtains. In the center of the room stood a curiously wrought round table, the top of which bore representations of the universe, Aryan legend and mystic Egyptian signs. Upon it were placed at the points of a triangle three vases containing incense. Around the table sat a number of men and women serious with the subject of their inner thoughts.

Behind it sat a man, whose long gray hair and beard would suggest considerable age, but whose vigor of body and mind belied the suggestion. He was old in fact, but young in appearance. He is the president of the Ramayana Theosophical Society, and the others were, its members who had met in their regular weekly session to hold converse with the universal spirit and to discuss matters pertinent to their tenets.

A move of the president's hand summoned an attendant, who applied a match to the 'incense in the vases on the table, and as the meeting progressed the odor of the smoldering fire diffused itself throughout the apartment and imparted a tone of solemnity to the proceedings.

The President read an extract from one of the latest theosophical works in a tone of exact distinctness and great impressiveness. His hearers paid rapt attention to the words as they fell from his mouth, and appeared to lose themselves to their material surroundings as their meaning was conveyed to their minds. After the reading a short space of time, about five minutes, was devoted to silent invocation of the universal spirit, the members retaining their seats, but bowing their heads and covering their eyes with be-

coming reverence. The shence became intense and was broken only by the sounds of the world without, which, by comparison, seemed only to increase the impressive stillness in the half-lighted room.

The subject for general discussion was then proposed by the President. It was "faith," in the abstract, and each member was in turn offered an opportunity to give his definition of the idea, after which each east in his mite of suggestion to the general knowledge, until the subject was exhausted so far as it might be in such a limited time.

The president then read a selection, in the same manner as he had before, from the White Cross Library, a dissertation by Prentice Mulford upon the double nature of the human spirit.

Theosophy is as old as history, but among what the present is pleased to call the civilized people of the earth it never has gained a foothold, being confined chiefly to the Orient. Even there it has during the past few centuries slumbered, and strangely enough it was left to two persons of very different sex, race, creed, and characteristics to revive it in its old home and to propagate it in other nations. They were a New York Tribune reporter and a widowed Russian Countess, H. S. Olcott and Mme, H. P. Blavatsky. The former is now president of the Central Society of the Theosophists of the World, and the latter the General Secretary. The Countess sojourned for awhile at one time during her travels in India. There she became greatly interested in the religious records of the country, and devoted considerable time to their study. When her husband died, she was given a pension of \$5,000 per annum. This, together with the income from her private possessions, she spent in travel. In America, she met a Tribune reporter, Mr. II: S. Olcott. Olcott had devoted much time to the subject of the Indian religious and theosophy, and their mutual knowledge led to mutual regard for one another. founded the Theosophical Society and finally decided to remove the headquarters to India and there revive theosophy. But the Countess was still a subject of the Czar of all the Russias, and if she should go to India as such, the English would refuse her residence there on the ground that she was a spy. To surmount this obstacle the Countess relinquished her pension of \$5,000 and became a naturalized American. The reporter and the

A MARKET CALL TO CARTA

Countess then journeyed to India and fulfilled their object of extending their theosophical knowledge and of reviving the tenets of theosophy. This was about thirteen years ago, and since that time the new-old faith, if it may be so denominated, has had a wonderful growth. The society has 125 different branches in India, as many in Europe and almost as many in the different cities of America. Chicago has two; the Chicago branch, embracing in its membership residents of the North and South sides; and the Ramayana branch, yesterday's meeting of which is described above.

The tenets of theosophy, if described in detail, would fill the Sunday Inter Ocean. In brief they are as follows:

1. To form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed or color. 2. To promote the study of Aryan and other Rastern literature, religions and sciences. 8. To investigate unexplained laws of nature and psychical powers of man.

The Theosophical Society is a secret organization modeled something after the plan of other secret societies in that it has like them a "secret work," grips and passwords, known to none excepting the initiated. Members of both sexes are eligible to membership and most of the branches are composed of nearly equal numbers of men and women. Each new branch is chartered by the parent society, which also gives it its name. The headquarters of the society are at Adyar, India.--Inter Ocean.

WHO CAN TELL US?

The following is an extract from a private letter from an esteemed correspondent who thinks boldly for herself and has the ability to say much in a few words. We would like an answer to her question, for we "give it up." March 10, 1889.

DEAR DR. PHELON:

One question, with me, has been, since early life, an engrossing one, and lately it has presented itself more peremptorily than ever. It is this, why does every little petty clique of religionists spend its time and breath in railing at its little neighbor clique? This question is the puzzle of my life. The very air seems thick and stilling with this unholy rivalry among sects. Sometimes I can't think of a single liberal person, except myself!! (Conceited enough, isn't it?) However, I have to confess that I have never seen a word of this unavailing fault finding in anything proceeding from your pen, or from that of Mrs.

The second second second between the second think that is the title. I ran through it, and not one word of profit could I find in it. In God's name, why cannot religious people leave each other alone? I cannot understand it. Are we not all anxiously seeking for "light! more light?" Each party follows its little path toward the sun. Is it not unac-countable how each strikes out, leaving its legitimate work of getting on toward, the light to annoy and hurry the travelers in the neighboring ways? People are not all constituted alike; and why, in the name of common sense, if for no other reason, can they not leave each other in peace? It seems to me that I would gladly "God speed" every religious sect with which I am acquainted. It fits its followers,—is an outgrowth of their average intelligence and position, and, at the present moment, nothing else will fit their condition. It surpasses all my power of imagination, how one person can set up to be the only authority in these matters. I should never think of throwing away one moment's time or attention on such a person. I am st.uck dumb, sometimes, in the presence of the strange fact that the strongest impulse of the religious world seems continually to be to proselyte; -not to turn people to religion itself, but to their own phase of it. How anyone can read the silly wranglings in the Christian and Mental Science papers, with any patience, is more than I can tell. Of course I should not go on thus, unless I supposed that you and Mrs. Phelon must feel as I do in this matter. What Ancient was it that represented the gods, in their high Olympus, as looking down on men, who, from that height, all seemed on an equality, and all wrangling about something? Also, old Carlyle, passing along a London street, in company with good Mr. Alcott, and listening to the vegetarian scheme of the latter, exclaiming finally: "Out, with your damned potato doctrine, don't you know that ir, and a half dozen successors, will have died, and this street will look just the same as now?" Can it be possible, Dr. Phelon, that it is through this very wrangling, that progress is made? Certainly, motion is better than stagnation. Again, must I cease to rail at my fellow-creatures' disposition to rail at each other? Das Mittel.

A FRAGMENT OUT OF THE ASTRAL LIGHT.

Out upon the deep sea sailing. No billow nor wave ruftles its smooth bosom. Overhead the blue sky, its sapphire tint reflected in the motionless mirror beneath. Listen to the distant sound of sweet music, so faint to the outer ear, but so intense in its call to all the inner perceptions. In dreamy vision, like a great panorama, scene after scene broadens away before you.

· Great lotus blossoms give out their fra: anone a mentle breeze seems to

tenderly sway the tops of the giant palm trees. Then gardens with white walls, and many gates which open and shut without sound. People, ancient and wise in aspect, dwell within. They are moving hither and you upon different paths, winding and covered with pure white sand, but no sound comes to the listening ear from the sandaled feet. Beautifully variegated flowers; fountains throwing up clear, sparkling waters, and over all are seen, in the sky above, the sun and moon and stars. Not a weed nor mente garden, so grand in its silence.

Follow the moving people to a temple at a little distance. Over the arched door, the inscription, "Wisdom and Understanding." Beyond the great gates, upon the altar, burns incense, whose smoke-wreaths curl slowly heavenward. Those within beckon us to enter. The circle of Brotherhood is completed. The candidate and the white-robed priest, whose breastplate of many-colored stones flashes and glistens by their retained light, stand within the circle of protection. The awful words which bind the soul for all ages to come, sob and shiver and thrill, with inaudible force. Out of the Silence they come, and to it they return. The hand of blessing rests upon the head, the finger of restraining caution upon the lips. "To know, and to keep silent." Then a loving hand leads out of the temple through the beautiful gardens. The scene infolds, and, floating away upon the smooth sea, comes consciousness of the external environ-L. M. S. ment.

INTERROGATORY.

Those who have striven to lift the veil which so completely bewilders mortal perception; they who have demonstrated their attainment in that direction, be he Rishi, seer or philosopher, all agree that the Real is the invisible, the Eternal Spirit. All force, all potency, all knowledge, all wisdom are spiritual. The physical is but the creature of a day, having no entity even.

The spirit leaves its body. None of its powers or attributes are impaired thereby. They remain sound and active as before dissolution.

If the spirit controlled and dominated in this plane, why will it not control hereafter?

All there is of the real man lives after death. He is simply freed from the body. He cannot free himself from the Immutable

laws which are not annulled by his death.

Spirit, freed from body, should by all analogy, be able to act more vigorously than before. Why not?

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BOOK NOTICES.

We are in receint of a little brochure whose title page reads, "Ballads and Ballad Singing, Wilton Perkins. A monograph by Rev. II. W. Thomas, D.D., also some notes on Ballad Singers." It is as modest, delicate and attractive in appearance as is the sweet Singer of Scotch ballads, Miss Mary Shelton Woo chead, of whomit speaks. Operatic music may demonstrate the possibilities of music; but nothing manifests its power over the human heart as does ballad sluging. The minor strains of pathos bring back the monories of childhood, home and mother, appealing to all that is purest and horiest in our matures. Whoever hears Miss Woolthead sing once will feethat, like another Mary of olden time, she hath chosen the good purt that shall not be taken from her. No one listens to her sweet read-tions of the quaint Scotch dialect but longs to hear her agan. Her services are constantly in demand, and her address is 468 W. Randolph st., Chicago.

Condensed Thoughts on Christian Science has reached its SixTH THOUSAND within a year. This is a sufficient proof of its merit, and ability to meet the desires of those who hanger and thirst after righteonsness and whose wants it amply fills. Dr. Holcombe has evidently struck a keynote, to which the souls of seekers after truth readily respond. The sixth citition is just out, price 25c. Hermetic Pus. Co., 288 S. Lincoln St., Opicago, Ill.

Patanjalis' Yoga Aphorisms, reprinted by the Path, and edited by William Q. Judge and James Henderson Conneily, is a very valuable addition to the standard cently lites worth the price, \$1.90, many times over. For sale by the Hermiteric Publishing Co., 206 S. Lincoln st., Chicago.

From Kansas Oity comes the first issue of Modern Thought, a sixteen page paper, that aims to express in its fullness all the different lines of aligned and affilated thought, about all that we feel and do. Verily, the wave is rolling Westward.

We have also the Occult Word; The Christian Life; Dr. Foote on Mental Healing; Testimonia; and Life Words and Born Rlind; of each of which we would be glad to speak more fully, if our friends would only give us the room.

All's Dross but Love, is a vivid portrayal of reincarnation and the certain action of Karmie conditions. It is powerfully told, and contains, "between the lines," a large volume.

EXCERPTS FROM MADAME GUYON'S "MYSTIC SENSE OF THE SCRIPTURES."

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Faithfulness in this degree consists not in activities, and in doing much on their own part; but consists only in believing and in trusting to God; in believing that God is all-good, and all-powerful. Allgood, he never forsakes those that abandon themselves to him, as he assures us. He is equally all-powerful to sustain us; "thou shalt know," saith the Lord, "it is I who am the Lord, and all those who trust in me shall not be confounded." The second point in this trust is in never being anxious or concerned about our state, but remitting to God all our needs.

It is an error of the spiritual life, which slips into it even from its commencement, to be desirous of laboring for others unseasonably, and it is only a false favor that leads us to undertake the aiding of others before we have received the talent and vocation to do so successfully. Many fancy themselves capable of conducting in the way of holiness who have scarcely entered therein themselves, and wishing to impart to others the grace that has only been given to them, they lose the fruit and cannot succor others.

Christ remained hidden thirty years in order to teach us to allow all eagerness to assist others to die out, and that we should dwell in repose until the time and moment have arrived when God shall give us his word and command to labor for the salvation of souls and the healing of bodies. This command is only given when the soul has arrived in God with perfect trust imitating Christ's speech, who said: "I can do nothing of myself and I judge according as I hear," and also of the Holy Ghost or spirit, of whom he says, he will speak nothing of himself, but that he will speak that which he hears.

T. S. CONVENTION.

We had hoped to be able to give some account of the third annual convention in Chicago, of the American Branch of Theosophists, but cannot give the room, to say more than that it was harmonious, pleasent, profitable, and very fully attended by the delegates from all parts of the United States. A special delegate from England brought a letter and news from Madam Blavatsky. We will furnish the proceedings when published in pamphlet form, postage free, for 25 cents.

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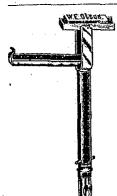




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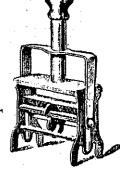
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