

# THE MORNING STAR:

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF  
MYSTICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH.

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*"A Chronicle of Strange, Sacred, Secret, and Forgotten Things."*—SHELLEY.

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VOL. I. No. 9.]

JANUARY, 1893.

[PRICE FIVE CENTS.]

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## FRAGMENTARY MEMOIRS OF THE CHRIST.

### PART V.

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"The Soul of the Messiah, by his perseverance in the Divine Love, came to a strict Union with the pure Godhead, and was deservedly advanced to be the King, the Head, and Guide of all spirits."

Rittangelius. *Mercav. Expos.*

JESUS passed a series of years amongst the Essenes. He submitted to their discipline, he studied with them the secrets of Nature, and practiced Occult Therapeutics, or Healing. He subdued his passions entirely in order to develop his Spirit. No day passed without his having examined himself and meditated upon the destiny of humanity. There was one memorable night in the Order of the Essenes for the new Adept, who was then accepted under the most profound secrecy to the Supreme Initiation of the Fourth Degree, that which was accorded only to those who had a special Prophetic Mission to fulfil; it was wanted by the Brother, and it was confirmed by the Ancients. They assembled together in a crypt which was hewn in the bowels of the mountain, a vast hall, having an altar and seats of stone. The Chief of the Order was there along with several Ancients. Sometimes two or three female Essenes—Initiated Prophetesses—were alike admitted to the mysterious ceremony. Carrying torches and palms, they saluted the new Initiate clothed in white linen, as the

"Husband and King," whom they had a foreboding of, and whom they saw perhaps for the last time! Afterwards, the Chief of the Order, who was usually an old man, a centenarian (Josephus tells us that the Essenes lived to a great age) presented to him the *Golden Chalice*—symbol of Supreme Initiation—which contained the "Wine of the Lord's Vineyard," symbol of Divine Inspiration. Several authors state that Moses had drunk of this along with the seventy, others place this sacred ceremony as far back as the days of Abraham, who received from Melchisedek this same Initiation, under the form of Bread and Wine (See *Gen.* xiv, 18). The Ancient never presented the Cup but to a man in whom he had with certainty recognised the signs of a Prophetic Mission. But that mission no person could define to him; he must discover it for himself. Such is the law of the Initiates: nothing from the outside, all from *within*. Henceforth he was free, master of his actions, set free by the Order, a Hierophant himself, liberated by the breath of the Spirit, which could throw him into the whirlpool of souls or carry him away to the summits, above the zone of torments and giddiness.

Immediately after the Hymn, Prayers, and Sacramental words of the Ancient, the Naziræne seized the cup, a wan ray of the dawn glanced over it through a fracture in the mountain, it glittered and trembled upon the torches and the long white garments of the young Essenes. They also shook when it fell upon the pale Galilean, for a sad melancholy appeared upon his handsome countenance. Did his bewildered look go forth to the sick and afflicted sufferers of Siloam, and to the foundation of that sorrow always present; did he already have a glimpse of the path he had to tread?

At this time, John the Baptist preached by the Jordan. He was not an Essene, but a popular Prophet of the powerful race of Judah. Impelled to the desert by a vehement piety, he led therein a very laborious life, in prayers, fasts and mortifications. Over his naked body, tanned by the Sun, he wore a garment woven of camel's hair, as a sign of penitence which he wished to impose upon himself and his people, for he felt profoundly the distress of Israel, and he expected its deliverance.

According to the Jewish idea, he imagined that the Messiah would come soon as an avenger and justiciary, that, as a new Maccabeus, he would elevate the people, chase the Romans, chastise all the guilty, and then enter triumphantly into Jerusalem and restore the Kingdom of Israel above all other nations to peace and justice. He announced to the multitudes the ap-

proaching Advent of the Messiah; he added that it was necessary for them to prepare themselves by heart-felt repentance. Borrowing from the Essenes the custom of purifications, transforming it to his own idea, he imagined Baptism in the Jordan to be a visible symbol, a public accomplishment of that interior purification which he required. That very ceremony, that retirement and preaching before immense crowds in the midst of the desert, in front of the sacred waters of the Jordan, between the wild mountains of Judea and Perea, seized upon the imagination of the people and attracted multitudes. It recalled the glorious days of the Prophets; it gave to the people that which they could not find in the Temple—the interior shock, and after the terrors of repentance a vague and marvellous hope. They gathered from all corners of Palestine and even from afar, to hear the Saint of the desert who announced the Messiah. The populace, attracted by his voice, remained encamped there for weeks to listen to him every day, wishing no more to go away, waiting until the Messiah would appear. Many wished only to take arms under his command to recommence the holy war. Herod Antipas and the Priests of Jerusalem began to feel disquieted at this popular movement. In addition to this, the signs of the times were very grave. Tiberias, aged seventy four years, completed his old age in debauchery at Caprea; Pontius Pilate redoubled his violence against the Jews; in Egypt the Phœnix had been announced, and was about to be re-born from its ashes. (See Tacitus, *Annals*, vi, 28, 31).

Jesus felt interiorly his prophetic vocation increase, he still searched for the windings of the pathway of his life, he thought it well to visit the Baptist in the desert of the Jordan, along with several Essenian Brothers who already followed him as a Master. He wanted to see the Baptist, to listen to him, and to submit himself to public Baptism. He desired to enter into the scene by an act of humility and respect towards the Prophet, he who ventured to raise his voice against the ruling powers, and to awake the soul of Israel from its deep sleep.

He saw the rough ascetic—long-haired and hairy, with the head of a visionary lion—standing in a wooden pulpit under a rustic tabernacle covered with boughs and skins of she-goats. Around him, amidst the dwarf shrubs of the desert, there was an immense crowd encamped; tax-gatherers, soldiers of Herod, Samaritans, Levites of Jerusalem, Idumeans with their flocks of sheep. The Arabs even rested there with their camels, tents, and caravans, they hearkened to "the voice which resounded in the wilderness," and that thundering voice rolled in volumes

of energy upon the multitude. He said :—"Amend yourselves, prepare the ways of the Lord, make straight his paths." He called the Pharisees and Sadducees "a race of vipers," he added that "the axe was laid at the root of the trees," and he said of the Messiah :—"I indeed baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with fire." Afterwards, towards sunset, Jesus saw the popular masses crowd themselves towards a creek, on the banks of the Jordan, and the Mercenaries of Herod, brigands, etc., bend down their rough backs under the water which the Baptist poured upon them. He drew nearer. At first John did not notice Jesus in particular, but soon afterwards he recognised the Essene by his linen robe. He saw him, he became lost in the crowd, he descended into the water up to the waist and bent himself humbly to receive the aspersion. When the Neophyte rose up again the redoubtable gaze of the tawny preacher met the look of the Galilean. The man of the desert trembled under this ray of marvellous mildness, and these words involuntarily escaped from him :—"Art thou the Messiah?"\* The mysterious Essene replied not, but pensively inclining his head and crossing his hands upon his breast, he demanded a benediction from the Baptist. John knew that silence was a law amongst the Essenian novitiates. He solemnly extended both his hands; then the Nazarene disappeared with his companions amongst the reeds of the river.

The Baptist saw him depart with a feeling of doubt, of secret joy, yet profound melancholy. What was this knowledge and prophetic hope which impressed him so strongly; what was that strange light that he perceived in the eyes of the Unknown one, a light which seemed to illuminate all his very being? Ah! what if the young and handsome Galilean was the Messiah, if so, he had seen the joy of his days! Why, his part was almost played, his voice was about to be silent. From that day forward he began to preach in a voice more profound and affected, upon this melancholy topic :—"He must increase, but I must decrease." He began to experience that lassitude and dulness such as old lions are subject to, who are fatigued with roaring, and who lay themselves down in silence awaiting death.

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\*We know that according to the Gospels, John immediately recognised Jesus as the Messiah, and baptised him as such. Their recital upon this point is quite contradictory, for a little later, John, prisoner of Antipas at Makerous, demands of Jesus :—"Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" (*Matt. xi, 3*). This tardy doubt proves that if the Baptist had suspected the Messiah as Jesus, yet that he was not convinced. But the first writers of the Gospels, being Jews, took care to represent Jesus as having received his mission and consecration from John the Baptist, the Jewish popular Prophet.

Could he be the Messiah? The question of the Baptist resounded also in the soul of Jesus. Since the quickening of his conscience, he had found God in himself, and the certainty of the Kingdom of Heaven in the radiant beauty of his visions. Afterwards, human suffering had thrown the terrible cry of its tribulation into the inmost recesses of his heart. The Essenian Sages had taught him the secret of Religions, the science of the Mysteries; they had demonstrated to him the spiritual "Fall" of humanity, and their expectation of a Saviour. But how was it possible for him to find the strength to drag himself from the abyss? This was the direct appeal to him of John the Baptist, sunk in the silence of his meditation as the thunder of Sinai—Was he the Messiah?

Jesus was unable to respond to this question which wrapt itself up in the profoundest depth of his soul. In that retreat, that fast of forty days which *Matthew* summarises under the form of a symbolical legend, "*The Temptation*," came the real representation in the life of Jesus, of that great crisis, and that supreme vision of truth, through which all the Prophets, and all the religious Initiates had to pass before commencing their work.

## MAN, KNOW THYSELF.

### CHAP. II.

"The Soul makes the Body for itself, that is to say, that it not only governs and animates it, but that it fashions it."—*Porphyry*.

"He who in his lifetime recovers the memory of all that his Soul has learnt, is already a God."—*Hindu Scriptures*.

"I have had many Births, and thou also, Arjuna, I know them all, but thou, Hero! knowest them not," says the Heavenly Messenger.—

*Bhagavad Gita.*

THE new—but old, old and valuable—light that is beginning to be again thrown from "Beyond the Veil," on the order of our earthly life, explains and confirms in regard to that order, the statement of the Apostle Paul, that the natural is first and then the spiritual. The education of the Human Race is carried on through the alternate sojourn of its members in the *two* spheres of Planetary life, in other words, the materialised Soul by living first in the natural, or surface-sphere of a Planet, clothed in an outer garment, or body composed of the material elements of that sphere; and next after the death of the earthly body,



by living in the spirit-zone, or sphere of the same Planet, clothed in an outer garment, or body of a different order, composed of the elements appropriate to that other sphere. Properly speaking, the Soul does not "enter into" or "take possession of" the bodies it successively animates; but it constructs for itself, at each period of its career, the new body which corresponds to its state at that particular period, which will be the organ of its activity and its instrument of progress, in its new phase of existence. The Soul constructs these various bodies by the same natural action—*unconscious* to us but none the less *real*—by which we in our everyday life, unconsciously build up for ourselves, in the course of every month, *an entirely new body*.

Every perfect man is re-generate or twice-born, he derives his origin each time from the centre of the *Cross*, or from the Union of the male and female; *materially* at first by taking root below, and drawing from the earth the necessary materials for the formation and nourishment of his body; next from the vital atmosphere he draws his vitality which gives him life, and from this he constructs the Astral Form which exists before the exterior body becomes visible. Every molecule of matter, however small it may be, possesses a vital spirit, or particle of this Electro-Vital Principle, which is by no means the same as the Divine Spirit of Man, or the Seventh Principle which is God. Without the *Third Principle*—the Astral Form—which animals possess as well as man, there would be no external body, for it is evident that the particles or atoms of matter could never of themselves construct a dwelling without having a form, or model upon which to build. How well did the Initiated Apostle, Paul, know this, when he tells us so forcibly:—"And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, *and to every seed its own body*. There is a *natural (animal)* body, and there is a *spiritual* body. . . . The first man Adam was of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from Heaven. . . . Howbeit that was not first, which is *spiritual*, but that which is *natural (animal)*; and afterwards that which is *spiritual*." (*I Cor.* xv, 37, 38, 44, 46, 47).

Thus it will be seen that the Third Principle is the same for all, for the particles of matter require the model or form of a man or animal: for every seed its proper body, and in Man "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her *seven pillars*," or Principles. (*Proverbs* ix, 1). In order to become

spiritual, or the "Lord from Heaven," man must be born a second time, again born from the centre of the Cross, from Love, from the Union of the Male and Female Principles, but this time he must be born from a Spiritual Union of the Principles in his proper nature. It is within the womb of the Virgin—our Fifth Principle (Spiritual Body) that the Holy Spirit must be directly conceived. This is the "*seed of the woman*," or the Feminine Principle in man, which is destined to "bruise the head of the serpent," in other words, we must rise above materiality through spirituality. When this Virgin Soul is ready to receive it, the seed will take root and germinate. Then the Son of Man will be "raised," and, like the Tree of Life whose branches are directed towards Heaven, he will draw his nourishment from above, from the spiritual light shed by the Universal Soul and bestowed by the Divine Spirit, our Eternal Father-Mother—God—the Divine Mother and Father, the inseparable Duality in Unity.

"Invisible things," says the same Apostle, "are understood by the things that are seen;" and accordingly just as each of our past existences consists of an alternation of sleeping and waking, of nights and days, so the course of our educational career upon any given planet consists of a corresponding alternation of sojourns in the two spheres of existence furnished by its natural and spiritual zones, for the Astral Light varies upon every sphere. The short phase of our material existence and the longer phase of spirit-life that follows and completes it, constitutes the "evening" and "morning" which together make up such a successive "day," or step of our educational journey. The Scriptural declaration that "the Almighty instructs men in dreams, in visions upon their beds," is an allusion not only to the psychic intercourse during semi-conscious sleep, but also to the Providential order of human life, which restricts our acquisition of new ideas to the period of our sojourn in the natural or evening-life of planetary existence. The special benefits which accrue to us from our returns to the spirit-zone of the planet are the corrections and further developments of the ideas already acquired by us, whereby we derive the power to work out a better and more fruitful life as the result of this further development.

As we all began our essay of individualised existence in that higher mode of being in the soul-worlds, we have all attained at some former period of our existence a higher point of development than that at which we now find ourselves: and therefore, the process of human development is not really a process of

*learning*, but is the *re-learning*, in connection with a new order of organisation, and under new conditions, of lessons that have been already learned by us in connection with our organisation, and under conditions of another and happier order. By the continual operation of the Divine Spirit, and the enhancement it effects in the intuitions of the Soul—enabling it to convert its knowledge into wisdom—the human race has been from age to age constantly carried up to higher levels of its evolution, and will in due course be enabled to be all that in the past it had known and desired of perfection. The Talmud tells us that “Ezra could not have received the word, if Moses had not first declared it.” According to history, Esdras or Ezra lived at the time of the Captivity, and that he recovered *Genesis* and the other writings by Intuition Memory.\* “My heart,” says he, “uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast; for the Spirit strengthened my memory.” Ezra must certainly have been Initiated into the ancient tradition, for no *memory* could ever have enabled him to recover that which he had never known. “But (says Cebes, interrupting Socrates), according to that doctrine, Socrates, which you are frequently accustomed to employ (if it is true), that learning with respect to us is nothing else than reminiscence; according to this, it is necessary that we must have learned the things which we now call to mind in some former period of time. But this is impossible, unless our soul subsisted somewhere before it took up its residence in the human form; so that from hence the soul will appear to be of a certain immortal nature.” (Plato’s *Phædo*).

When Re-generation takes place in man he recovers his Divine Memory. The Guardian does not directly teach a man, for it can tell him nothing that the soul knows not, for all that the soul receives is already hers: it *illuminates* but instructs not. In the recovery of what may be called our *Divine Memory*, and remembering again that remote past—the abode of the Celestial Man—the mind is able to look forward as well as backward, and to behold the complete subsequent period of the world’s course, the sicknesses, the sufferings, which the various races through their own fault, have entailed upon themselves. In those hyper-lucid moments it is made to appear to us as undeniable and self-evident facts, that just as it has been possible for us to live healthily and happily in the past, so will it be again possible for us to do so in the future. When the Divine Soul is perfected she indraws all her *past selves*, she

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\*See *Book of Light and Life*, page, 190.



possesses herself of all the meritorious portions of their memories, of such portions in fact as will never disturb her mental tranquillity. In her various and innumerable peregrinations, or incarnations, throughout the planetary realms, the soul *forgets*, but when she returns to her "Solar Centre," she *remembers*, for :—"The righteous shall be in *everlasting remembrance*," the King Psalmist tells us, (*Psalms*, cxii, 6), and Jesus informs us that :—"He (the Comforter, Holy Spirit) shall teach you all things, and *bring all things to your remembrance*." (*John*, xiv. 26). Before man can recover the memory of his past lives he must have accomplished his Re-generation and become a Son of God. Gautama Buddha, according to Oriental legend, had found the thread of his past existences, Pythagoras, by a special favour of the Gods, had been enabled to remember several of his former existences, and why not others as well?

What may be called the normal life of the humanised Soul is not its brief plunges into material life, but its much more prolonged sojourns in the soul-spheres of planetary existence; yet both are equally important. Each life is specially arranged for the purpose of teaching us some new lesson, rule, or principle, which we study more deeply, elucidate more clearly, and develop more fully in the following period of our existence. Upon the one hand, the result of each of our existences determines the amount of progress that can be made by the Soul in the following period, whilst upon the other hand, the progress made in one life, determines in its turn the character and possibilities of the Soul's next existence. It follows, therefore, that every mental or moral gain, however slight, returns with the Soul, and constitutes for it a proportionally higher starting-point from which to commence its next experiment. Each life accomplishes a greater or less amount of improvement for the Soul, and this improvement enables it to make a greater advance, a better material existence. Through this alternation of its experiences in the two realms of planetary existence, the most perverted soul is gradually led to "work out its own salvation," a task which it will accomplish more or less rapidly, according to the degree of effort which it voluntarily puts forth for its own amendment.

Our life is eternal, but it is composed of an eternity of existences or manifestations, through which runs the thread of the ONE LIFE. In order to be truly happy, we must endeavour to render ourselves worthy of our condition and perpetual changes. Then will we learn to live in the Now and to understand that time does not belong to us, for we are only the Children of the

Eternal, in whose eyes "a thousand years are but as one day, and one day as a thousand years." The present is infinite and the infinite is our present, a future would be limited, consequently day remains eternally, it belongs to us now and will belong to us always, for it is an eternal Now. In the meanwhile we ourselves and all things change perpetually. From one moment to the other we are constantly changing, never the same, every respiration, every aspiration of our breath changes us physically, as well as every line that we read, every thought that traverses our brain, changes us mentally. In reality, at the termination of every day, we are neither morally nor physically the same as we were at the commencement; but if we know how to utilise the Now which is in us, this change will lead us from glory to glory. Up till the period when the first substances are organised man exists not, so far as personality is concerned; consequently he is in the first place born physically, and his inferior Principles derive their material subsistence from the earth, and take root below. It is necessary therefore that he be "*born again*" spiritually: The spiritual existence must take root from the centre of Love, and through goodness and wisdom universal love must take the place of *selfish* love; we must elevate ourselves towards heaven, we must draw our intellectual nourishment from the understanding, and the nourishment of our heart from that Spiritual Source which can never mislead us.

Thus each life has its value from the lesson that it teaches us, from the impulse which it gives us to advance and elevate ourselves, if it is well understood and utilised. But we must not imagine that the sorrow and agony, which we so often experience from the troubles and disappointments that we encounter upon our various life-journeys, *must inevitably* cause our eternal misery. We forget that the next movement of the lens, which incessantly turns, will change the design upon our Kaleidoscope, and that all the colours will find their true place, and will harmonise, upon the Eternal Triangle which serves them for a basis. Every turn of the glass will result in the production of a form more complete than the last, or in other words, it will add a pearl probably purer and whiter upon our Rosary of Life.

There is a Ladder of Seven steps which indicates the ascension from earth to heaven. Jacob's Ladder occupies an important position in Free-Masonry and its veritable origin is lost amidst the worshippers of pagan rites, nevertheless the symbol yet remains. In the Persian Mysteries of Mithras, the Ladder

with Seven steps was the symbol of the approach of the Soul towards perfection. These steps were called "Gates," or "Doorways," and in allusion to this, the candidate had to pass through seven sombre and winding caverns, which was termed the "Ascent of the Ladder of Perfection." Each of those caverns represented a state of existence through which the Soul was supposed to pass in its progressive journey towards the realm of verity. Every round of the Ladder was reputed to be formed of a Metal consecutively purer and corresponding with its Planetary Principle.

In reference to the spiritual state of man immediately after death, Hermetic Science teaches us that the Three inferior Principles which belong to man, viz., the Body, the Electro-Vital Principle, and the Astral Body, are abandoned and return to the earth, from which they proceeded and to which they belong. That which constitutes the real man, or the Four superior Principles, viz., the Animal Soul, the Spiritual Body, the Spiritual Soul, and the Divine Spirit pass into the spiritual world which immediately surrounds ours, and which is in fact the *Astral Plane*, the *Purgatory* of the Catholic Church, or the Sanskrit *Kama-Loka*. Here a separation takes place; upon the one hand the two higher Principles carry away the Fifth (the Spiritual Soul)—the veritable personality—in a superior direction, although the Fourth (the Animal Soul) attracts it towards the earth. The purest, most elevated and spiritual portions of the Fifth Principle remain attached to the Sixth and are elevated by it; its inferior instincts, impulses, and remembrances adhere to the Fourth Principle, and remain in *Kama-Loka*, *Purgatory*, or the *Astral Sphere* which immediately surrounds our earth. It will thus be seen that the better elements, or the veritable essences of the last personality, are elevated to a higher state of existence—*Devachan*—which in one sense corresponds with our idea of heaven, but this must not be confounded with the Kingdom of Heaven, the superior and absolute *Nirvana*, the centre of all religions, Christianity as well as Buddhism. In short the grand purpose of this inevitable evolution of humanity is to develop human souls, to render them fit for that condition which we have but little conception of, for:—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," (*I Cor. ii, 9*), things which can only take place when man will be "perfect as his Heavenly Father is perfect," when the Son of Man will have become the Son of God. This state can only be attained through innumer-

able incarnations, where the individual Entity progresses<sup>f</sup> in traversing the Seven Planetary Rounds. Thus the eternal Wisdom-Religion confirms the words of Christ and teaches us, according to eternal Love and Intelligence, to pardon our enemies and to give them the chance of making amends for their wrongs, even until the mystical "Seventy-times-seven."

"Agree with thine *adversary* quickly, while thou art *in the way* with him," says Jesus the Christ, (*Matt.* v. 25), and this is an expansion of that precious lesson conveyed under the symbol of John's "Baptism of Repentance." In the first place, it implies the importance of our mundane earthly life, as the period appropriated to our self-deliverance from the liabilities of suffering constituted for us by the imperfections that are our real "adversary"—a deliverance only to be effected through our present existence, which brings us "into the way" with that "adversary" by rousing these latent imperfections into activity. Such a means then would give us the opportunity of resisting and freeing ourselves from them, or "overcoming," figuratively represented as "coming to an agreement with our adversary." In the next place the retributive spheres of "Purgatory," symbolised by our being "cast into prison," which we entail upon ourselves by our failure in making a right use of the life of earth, but which a wise use of this life would have enabled us to avoid. The declaration:—"Ye shall not come out thence *until* ye have paid the uttermost farthing" implies that *when we have paid our debt* to the Divine Justice, by learning the lesson of that chastening which we have brought upon ourselves, we shall "come out from thence." This plainly and unmistakably proclaims the *limited* nature of the purification, or punishment alluded to, a doctrine implied in the whole teaching of Christ, as interpreted by the light of the great doctrine we are now very briefly considering. The statement (*Mark*, xii, 10: *Luke*, xx, 47), that some "shall receive greater damnation," shews surely that there are *degrees* in the *condemnation* referred to (improperly translated *damnation*), which if *proportional* must be regarded as *remedial*, and therefore as being neither *wholesale* nor *final*. In the saying that "God will reward every man according to his works" there is the same meaning implied, and to the same effect is the declaration (*Luke*, xii. 47, 48), that while "the servant who *knew* his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with *many* stripes," the servant, who, not knowing that will, has failed to do it, "shall be beaten with *few* stripes." For if we are not exempted from undergoing the correspondential punishment of our failures,

even when those failures have been simply the result of our ignorance, and void of evil intention, it is evident that the aim of our Almighty Father, in compelling us to undergo that punishment, can only be *educational*, notwithstanding the violent and revengeful appearances so frequent in the "dead-letter" of the Jewish Scriptures. It is equally evident that as the measure of our self-inflicted punishment is declared to be regulated by the measure of our wrong-doing, our *finite* errors can only bring upon us as *finite* beings the *finite* (and therefore *terminable*) punishment proportioned to the *finite* nature of our offence.

"It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins," (*II Machabees*, xiv, 46). The King Psalmist tells us that "God will not always chide, neither will He keep His anger *for ever*," and that:—"As the heaven is higher above the earth, so great is His mercy towards them that fear Him," (*Psalms*, ciii, 9, 11), and the Prophet Micah states:—"Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger *for ever*, because He delighteth in mercy," (*Micah*, vii, 18), and Jesus informs Mary that "her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." (*Luke*, vii, 47). The seemingly dark and tangled web of earthly existence, contemplated from this—the Hermetic—point of view, brightens into the aspect of a vast and beneficent plan, to the working out of which not only all the Powers of Nature, but the very crimes and follies of life, are seen to be subservient, and whose scope includes the purification and happiness of every humanised soul; a Divine scheme wherein the labours, short comings, and sorrows of our individual lives are seen to be only "light afflictions, enduring for a moment," and working out for us through their results a "weight of glory" altogether exceeding not only our present powers of computation, but even our present faculties of comprehension. We struggle on "that the *life* also of Jesus might be *made manifest in our body*. . . . For which cause we faint not; but though our *outward man* may perish, yet the *inward man* is renewed day by day." (*II Cor.* iv, 10, 16, 17).

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ORIENTALS believe that the great Crisis of the Occidental Race is close upon us, and that the Nirmanakaya (Arch-angelic Ancestor, Coming Reformer) is about to come with his new revelation to the world.



## SALUTATORY.

IN closing our labours for the past year, we heartily thank our Readers and Correspondents for their kind support in the cause of SACRED TRUTH. Although we are deeply grateful to those who have sent in their names as Subscribers, yet we cannot fail in realising that our List ought to be far more extensive than it is, for the most fastidious of our Readers even have been quite astonished, not at the *quantity* of literary matter, but at the *intrinsic value* of the information, unobtainable otherwise, which is condensed into such a small compass. Our little Monthly already finds its way into Brazil, Tasmania, Australia, New Zealand, India, Greece, Italy, Germany, France, Spain, Palestine, Great Britain, etc. From each of those countries we now and again receive the most hearty congratulations, and where we have one well-wisher now, we expect to have twenty ere another year comes round again.

The way to hasten this good work is not to lay too much stress upon every little error of judgment or taste which may manifest itself in our columns, but to encourage our honest efforts at TRUTH, eliminating all that is false, and trying to assist us as much as possible by extending our Circulation. We have many valuable articles in hand which we would fain see published to the world.

And now a few words upon the dying year. The beautiful mantle that once draped Spring's vestal, laughing form, has passed away for the more brilliant and gorgeous array of the Summer, and as time has moved on, this too has been discarded for the well-developed and matured robes of Autumn, bringing out all the wealth that Nature, through her harmonious workings, could bestow upon man. The year has passed through the chain of its own natural laws, it has shone by its own light, and now that Winter has come upon us, bearing beneath its leaden sky the snowy pall to drape the body of the year, when it shall have given up its spirit and sobbed its last sigh over the withered flowers of its Summer prime, have you, Reader, any reflections? Have you laboured with impatient resolution for TRUTH, and for the welfare of others? Have you cultivated that BROTHERLY LOVE, that Divine spirit which shone in the Nazarene, which blends energy and sweetness, which gives you the power of thoroughly understanding *yourself*, through your own *merits* and studies in the SACRED SCIENCE, until through your *work* you see clearly the great truth of *Immortal Life*, and your hope is strengthened by evidence given in all that you have found in Nature? But as the December gales sing us a

requiem, sounding their weird and solemn notes through the skeleton branches of the woodlands, and the withered leaves scattered over the barren earth, we can slightly lift the pall that hides its cold and time-worn face. Deep trials and troubles, sorrow and humiliation are plainly written there, earnest hopes temporarily blighted, but those who are lifted by faith and spiritual truth out of darkness and uncertainty into the light of surety, are better able to bear the burdens than those who have no resurrection out of the wintry chill of closing life, who see no spring-tide sunshine under the frozen hand of winter's cold and icy grasp.

Let us—as heretofore remarked—slightly lift the pall, and beneath the trials of the past, find the beautiful spirit that gives the cause of law and effect, and with stedfast purpose, let us push on, rolling on the car of progression, and through good deeds done, lift the little burdens that year after year fall to those who are pioneers in the work of reform. No one is perfect, and we could easily find amidst the lesser shades of character, lines made by our own shortcomings, lines that would speak plainly to us of minor mistakes made as the year rolled on, but we must consider that the brightest diadems that are worn in the next state of existence are those which have been tried, smelted, polished, and glorified, through the fiery furnace of tribulation. Purification may not come until after death, for the laws of recompense must be satisfied, but it *will* come, and those who have acted wrongly will be lifted out of their lines of error into light that will bring them into the spring-time of a new existence. Let us ever remember that through all the vast area of Heaven, no Angel breathes a word of scorn, or contumely, or hatred, but only the one voice of conscience, that like a consuming fire, sweeps through the Soul, and convinces it of its own unworthiness.

Let Love and Hope fill our spirits—let us by good deeds aid in lifting the shroud from wintry hearts—let us look for the life that even under the frozen stream still lives, and but waits the warm rays of human sympathy to burst the frozen pall that hides it: then let every dawn of another morning be to us as the very beginning of life, and every setting of the sun be to us as its close; and let every one of those short lives leave its sure record of some goodly strength, or knowledge gained for ourselves, for even as the spring-time renews the buds and flowers that appear dead in winter, so through Death does the Soul renew its Life and add to its vitality the garments of Eternity. To each of our Readers, then, do we sincerely wish

A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- T. W. W., LONDON. THEOSOPHICAL ABUSE.—The malicious falsehoods you refer to in the p. p. of "*Theosophist*" are utterly beneath our notice. Universal Brotherhood—Universal Fiddlesticks!! That remarkably learned and gifted French Author, "*L'opus*," speaks in a very friendly—but much too eulogistic—manner of your humble and ignorant servant, the Editor of this Magazine. Upon page 1039 of his distinguished work, "*Traite Methodique de Science Occulte*," he says:—"Des Societes vraiment Occultes existent pourtant qui possedent encore la tradition integrale, j'en appelle l'un des plus savants parmi les Adeptes Occidentaux, a mon Maitre en Pratique, Peter Davidson." But enough.
- GERMAN STUDENT, N. Y. SOCRATES.—Read the *Phædo* of Plato. *Phædo* gives his friend an account of the condition in which he saw Socrates at the time of his death. "He quitted life," says he "with a serene joy, and a noble intrepidity." His friends asking him the reason of it, "I hope," says Socrates in his answer, "to be reunited to the good and perfect Gods, and to be associated with better men than those I leave upon earth."
- L. E. F., BOSTON, MASS. PYTHAGOREAN DOCTRINE.—Not at all, the Pythagorean doctrine is by no means idolatrous; it is the *very opposite*, and is deservedly spoken of by many Fathers of the Church. Here is what St. Cyril says. "We see plainly," says this Father, "that Pythagoras maintained that there was but one God, the original and cause of all things, who enlightens every thing, animates every thing, and from whom every thing proceeds, who has given being to all things, and is the source of all motion." (*S. Cyril contra Julian, Lib. I.*) Plutarch, speaking of the opinions of the Pythagoreans, says on page 67 of the first volume of his works:—"Pythagoras believed that the Earth moved and did not occupy the centre of the world, but that it had a circular motion around the Sun, (the region of Fire) and formed thus the days and nights." See also upon this subject Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* l. v, and Aristotle, *Cælo*, l. ii, c. xiii, and xiv, Philolaus, Timæus the Locrian, Aristarchus and Seleucus taught equally the same opinion. You will find the Greek and Latin texts relative to this upon pages 197 and 198 of the first edition of the work of Dutens.
- LEO, TEXAS. MELCHISEDEK.—The position of Chief of the Order Dorians of Chaldea before Melchisedek, King of Justice, is that of an Initiate before an Initiator, of a Disciple before a Master; of a Member of the Council of the Gods before a representative of the Supreme Council of God. Here are the texts you refer to, as well as the sense "In the royal valley, the King of Justice of Salem brought forth bread and wine; for he was a Priest of El-Helion. He blessed them and said: Blessed be Neo-Ramism of El-Helion, through God, Supreme Male Generator, who moves (Kouneh) the Heavens and the Earth, and blessed be God, the Supreme Male Generator, who has put the contraries under your power. And the Order of the Abramites gave to the King of Justice the tenth of all." (*Gen. xiv, 18, 19, 20*).
- REV. X. X., SCOTLAND. HIEROGLYPHICS.—The Egyptian Sacerdote employed several kinds of writing corresponding to the various Degrees of the Mysteries, such hieroglyphics being a sort of Scriptural algebra, the most secret corresponding with a very ancient phonetic language. It is thus that the first word of the *Genesis* of Moses—*Be-resh-ith*—signifies *Principle* for the Sage, but *Origin*, or *Beginning* for the ignorant.