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Reincarnation.

[Continued from last number.]

IF THE law be thus general in its application it is also particular, for the whole is composed of its parts. So that a center of conscious force by continual addition to its experiences in different species of the vegetable kingdom would slowly but surely eliminate its possibilities of choice until it would be driven, by the final impossibility of finding a suitable vehicle in this kingdom, to seek an avenue for its widening intelligence in a higher one, or, in this instance, the animal kingdom. Here the same cumulative widening of consciousness would in the course of ages of successive incarnations tend to bring these conscious centers to the same condition; and, indeed, we are told in the Secret Doctrine that some of the higher animals have almost reached the plane of definitely individualized monads—in other words, the lower margin of the human plane.

This inevitable widening of con-

scious area, and consequent individualization of conscious centers, being plainly the necessary corollary of the conservation of conscious Force acting in harmony with, and, indeed, guiding evolution, it will be evident that as a result of this individualization the simpler elements as well as atoms and molecules are of necessity continuously built up and synthesized into higher forms in order to afford expression in form for conscious entities too far progressed to longer use these lower substances. A conception of this truth will go far to elucidate the mysterious relation our own Higher Egos bear to our bodies.

The proof of this synthesizing of lower entities by those higher rests upon the axiomatic proposition that the lesser cannot contain the greater. Hence, if evolution is to proceed at all, its easiest, and indeed necessary, method is for more advanced entities to take lower forms of matter, and, without annulling, superceding or even disturbing the consciousness of entities finding in such lower forms their normal expression, to build up therefrom suitable vehicles for their own higher need. And while so occupying forms composed of hosts, it may be, of lower entities, which they thus in no way disturb, the association must be helpful to the lower "lives," for it necessarily infuses into their essence a faint emanation from that of the

higher synthesizing entity. Because of this bestowing of their own purer and more spiritual essence,—which is also an universal law upon every plane of the Cosmos—it is said in the Secret Doctrine that "Compassion is an attribute of the very Absolute itself."

This synthesizing of matter occupied by less progressed entities into composite bodies suited for the use of those higher, constitutes, together with the fact of their repeated reincarnation in such synthesized forms, the complete key to, and the very process of evolution, as stated at the outset. That it is conscious entities which thus correlate lower into higher forms, is proven by the very fact of any form in any kingdom of nature being repeated at all. For if not so, then every new production of crystal, plant or animal would be practically a new and perfectly fortuitous combination or creation of form, and all method, or necessity for method, would disappear from nature. There is no possible reason, except as the work of an intelligent, conscious (not necessarily self-conscious) entity for the repetition of form and the preservation of species. And variation in form and ultimate extinction of species only mark the gradual expansion of consciousness forcing the evolution of higher types. The agents of it all in the three lower kingdoms are the "elementals," or "nature spirits," from those ensouled in the tiny moss upon its bark to the single, mighty one which builds and informs the giant oak.

Each is an entity; each on the road to the ultimate individualiza-

tion of self-consciousness, and each at a point where it has left those relatively lower eternally behind it in the scale of becoming. The lesser can never contain the greater. Nor can any one cell in the oak or in the man be shown to be so much superior to the others that in it lies the synthesizing power. There is absolutely required a synthesizer. In man, this is a self-conscious center, or soul; in the plants and animals, a sub-conscious center, or "elemental."

In the manifested Cosmos there can be no exception to this universal law of the synthesis of lower by higher entities. Worlds are but the garments composed of myriads of lower elemental hosts synthesized by their chief "Rector." Men are but units in a thinking body which we term humanity, and which, by all the laws of analogy, is synthesized in some grand, incomprehensible (to us) Hierarchical whole. That we do not realize this consciously, is because our consciousness is upon a plane so far beneath that of the synthesizing Host; just as the cells of our body, although so plainly an organism to our consciousness, are unable to comprehend that they are such an organism, or to conceive of the intelligence which can use and direct a complex whole, formed of such countless and diverse units.

It may be claimed that as all organisms develop from a germ, or "seed," that in this is to be found the reason for the exact reproduction of form and conscious function. But this is one of those half-truths; dangerous because it

is half true. The seed only furnishes the material element and basis for the reincarnating elemental or soul. And having within it of necessity certain cells which have never "died" since the first appearance of organic life upon this planet, these cells have the impress of previous forms associations upon them, and, hence, when they are again revived, the line of least resistance for the returning entity would be in the direction of or tendency towards the reproduction of the old form. But if this were the sole source of the reproduction of specific forms, then variation would be impossible. Exact reproduction of that form preserved in the records of the seed would be inevitable, whereas variation is as much a law and a necessity in evolution as is its opposite. To account for variation there must enter the higher conscious factor, exactly as the same factor must be postulated in the production of the very first cell or plant, which originated of necessity without the aid of any material seed. Sir. Wm. Thompson's hypothesis of "seeds" having been brought to the earth by some comet only removes the materialistic enigma to still more difficult grounds; it does not solve it. It were wiser and infinitely more logical for all materialists to admit, with Haeckel, Huxley, Bain, and others, the fact of "spontaneous generation," and face the problems involved in this fairly. Their unwillingness to do so is easily explained, for, if admitted, it will be apparent that the conscious or spiritual factor must be recognized as at the base of any and all "spon-

taneous generation" or evolution of form. "Blind" Force taking the direction of the least resistance will not stand the light of logical analysis, for it neither could nor would take this direction were it "blind." The power to recognize the line of least resistance is a conscious one, and never was nor can be exercised unconsciously or blindly.

It is thus seen how completely the law of the conservation of force—necessarily conscious though not necessarily *self-conscious*—and the facts of evolution establish the truth of reincarnation as an universal process in nature; and that the ebbing and flowing of force includes also the ebbing and flowing of consciousness, and explains the orderly appearance of an Universe out of apparent nothingness. For that which appears to us as Non-being is but the subjective arc of Being which equally with its objective arc is included in the complete circle and cycle of Reincarnation. By the latter is also explained the appearance of any type of form-building by entities upon any plane of being, whether that type be the ponderous mass of the elephant or the humble vestment of a lichen. For the "spontaneous generation" of the materialist is but the returning entity building for itself the form necessary for the objective arc of its existence. Recognizing this, the seeming mysteries of both birth and death stand unveiled. They are but the objective and subjective arcs of the One Life, as expressed in the countless crores of (seemingly) separate existences.

The truth of the first postulate

being thus unequivocally established, it only remains to examine the the second, which is, that the human soul, thus individualized, does reincarnate in successive bodies as a distinct, self-conscious center of consciousness.

It has already been shown that the process of individualizing centers of consciousness begins at the very dawn of differentiation; that every experience in matter imposes a widening of conscious area and limitation as to choice of material vehicles, which gradually forces not only a farther differentiation in its own kingdom but also compels the individualized entity to at length seek a higher one. Therefore it must not be supposed that until man there is no specific reincarnation. Nature never leaps. The centers of consciousness, or "elemental souls," in all the kingdoms below the human must reincarnate; that is, each specific repetition of form in any kingdom is the reincarnation of an "elemental" center of consciousness which has received this definite stamp as the result of conscious experiences in its evolutionary past. Such centers do not have subjective cycles of the same nature as the human soul because they are below the plane of self-consciousness. Therefore, their subjective arcs are passed in latency—a bare potentiality of again manifesting the same form when their subjective arc is completed and environing conditions permit.

That there is an actual re-clothing of the same entity, is proven by the repetition of the exact form, leafage and flowering of plants from roots, rhizomes or bulbs, for

here the entity has plainly never abandoned its hold upon the material plane. So that when we speak of the reproduction of a plant from a dried, withered bulb as a "growth," we are but hiding our ignorance of what has actually occurred behind technical phraseology. The plant has not been dead; it has been living in this bulb, which gave no evidence of its presence, the subjective arc of its life cycle.

Similarly, in the metamorphosis of insects, a caterpillar, for instance, passes through a complete cycle of subjectivity to reemerge as the same entity clothed in the same physical molecules—these having never been dispersed—but with an entirely different form, functions and habits. If the inner, elemental force can bring about so complete and wonderful a change without abandoning the old material, it is sheer unreason not to recognize that, when the butterfly existence is ended, the same entity is amply able to rebuild the old caterpillar form from an egg after the close of the subjective arc between the butterfly and caterpillar stages.

If, therefore, we find that throughout all the kingdoms below man there is a plain leading up to and preparation for self-conscious reincarnation; that the self-conscious subjective arcs in the human kingdom are a natural sequence and corollary of sub-conscious or "latent" arcs in the lower ones; and that, further, all evolution is but the process of reincarnation, we may assume this as a reasonable working hypothesis in explanation of the phenomena of human ex-

istence. And, logically, if we show the absolute necessity for the presence of a certain law in the Cosmos in order to rationalize otherwise inexplicable phenomena, we prove the existence of that law, although we may not fully comprehend its real nature nor mode of operation. Thus ether has never been demonstrated other than by the necessity for such a medium in order to explain certain natural phenomena, yet no one doubts nor disputes its existence. Similarly, if as has been pointed out, we find that every process in nature tends towards and leads up to the rebirth of individualized human souls, we have a scientific right to assume that rebirth or reincarnation is a natural and therefore universal law. And if we further find that in the human kingdom itself there are numerous phenomena which can only be explained by such a law, its existence passes into the domain of certitude and exact knowledge; while if we still further find that the very highest and most philosophic conceptions of life and of the universe require it; if, as has been shown, the grandest generalizations of modern science—the conservation of force, the indestructibility of matter and the process of evolution—demand it, we shall be but blind followers—not leaders—of the blind, if we do not accept the divine truth which it reveals.

(To be continued.)

Even if thou wert the greatest of sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge.—*Bhagavad-Gita*.

Aphorisms on Karma.

[Continued from last number.]

16 WHILE a man is experiencing Karma in the instrument provided, his other unexpended Karma is not exhausted through other beings or means, but is held reserved for future operation; and lapse of time during which no operation of that Karma is felt causes no deterioration in its force or change in its nature.

(17) The appropriateness of an instrument for the operation of Karma consists in the exact connection and relation of the Karma with the body, mind, intellectual and physical nature acquired for use by the Ego in any life.

(18) Every instrument used by any Ego in any life is appropriate to the Karma operating through it.

(19) Changes may occur in the instrument during one life so as to make it appropriate for a new class of Karma, and this may take place in two ways: (a) through intensity of thought and the power of a vow, and (b) through natural alterations due to complete exhaustion of old causes.

(20) As body and mind and soul have each a power of independent action, any one of these may exhaust, independently of the others, some Karmic causes more remote from or nearer to the time of their inception than those operating through other channels.

(21) Karma is both merciful and just. Mercy and Justice are only opposite poles of a single whole; and Mercy without Justice is not possible in the operations of Karma. That which man calls

Mercy and Justice is defective, errant, and impure.

(22) Karma may be of three sorts: (a) Presently operative in this life through the appropriate instruments; (b) that which is being made or stored up to be exhausted in the future; (c) Karma held over from past life or lives and not operating yet because inhibited by inappropriateness of the instrument in use by the Ego, or by the force of Karma now operating.

(23) Three fields of operation are used in each being by Karma: (a) the body and the circumstances; (b) the mind and intellect; (c) the psychic and astral planes.

(24) Held-over Karma or present Karma may each, or both at once, operate in all of the three fields of Karmic operation at once, or, in either of those fields a different class of Karma from that using the others may operate at the same time.

(25) Birth into any sort of body and to obtain the fruits of any sort of Karma is due to the preponderance of the line of Karmic tendency.

(26) The sway of Karmic tendency will influence the incarnation of an Ego, or any family of Egos, for three lives at least, when measures of repression, elimination, or counteraction are not adopted.

(27) Measures taken by an Ego to repress tendency, eliminate defects, and to counteract by setting up different causes, will alter the sway of Karmic tendency and shorten its influence in accordance with the strength or weakness of the efforts expended

in carrying out the measures adopted.

(28) No man but a sage or true seer can judge another's Karma. Hence while each receives his deserts appearances may deceive, and birth into poverty or heavy trial may not be punishment for bad Karma, for Egos continually incarnate into poor surroundings where they experience difficulties and trials which are for the discipline of the Ego and results in strength, fortitude and sympathy.

(29) Race-Karma influences each unit in the race through the law of Distribution. National Karma operates on the members of the nation by the same law more concentrated. Family Karma governs only with a nation where families have been kept pure and distinct; for in any nation where there is a mixture of family—as obtains in each Kaliyuga period—family Karma is in general distributed over a nation. But even at such periods some families remain coherent for long periods, and then the members feel the sway of family Karma. The word "family" may include several smaller families.

(30) Karma operates to produce cataclysms of nature by concatenation through the mental and astral planes of being. A cataclysm may be traced to an immediate physical cause such as internal fire and atmospheric disturbance, but these have been brought on by the disturbance created through the dynamic power of human thought.

(31) Egos who have no Karmic connection with a portion of

the globe where a cataclysm is coming on are kept without the latter's operation in two ways: (a) by repulsion acting on their inner nature, and (b) by being called and warned by those who watch the progress of the world.

Wm. Q. Judge, F. T. S.

Letters to a Student.—No. 5.

Dear Sir and Comrade:

YOUR favor of May 13th, I am sorry to see that you have met with a reverse which must naturally try your patience.

We are *all* channels through which Ishwara flows, and if we live up to the light we have, no more is asked.

Many are the Karmic tests, and one lesson we have to learn, and a hard one, is that "They also serve who only stand and wait." While waiting we can purify the mind and heart from error; such purification alone will make us useful to our fellow men.

I think we often miss little things near by which we might do, by looking further off for great things which the law has not yet set as tasks for us.

"Pure devotion if persistent will always bring knowledge in time" as I understand the matter. But a certain amount of Karma must first be exhausted. "Great is the slayer of desire." Here "great" is used in the sense of real greatness. Only the selfless man is truly great, and hence truly useful. "Sow with seeds of merit, etc." These seeds are elsewhere shown to be patience, submission to the

law and so on. *No* Karmic law condemns us to inability to sow.

We have brought about our own present ignorance and helplessness, but we can still sow seeds of patience, and of right thought, and it is only by accepting whatever comes as best for us at that time that we can progress in the least. Instead, then, of bemoaning our present locked-up condition, we should take it as a thing to be borne with, studied, understood and even used. I say this for myself as much as for you, for like all, I too am in darkness and long to serve more than ignorance and circumstance now permit. The Buddhi principle lives on a plane beyond our knowledge; I mean our mere brain knowledge. Man can "break the walls" and "invite its action," and by will power it is done.

But that man must be far more selfless than we are; his consciousness must center *within*, so that he may know his own powers. None of us are fit yet for more than an intellectual appreciation of these things and, could we awaken the power it might kill the body through an ignorant misdirection of it. The really selfless man is he in whom the sense of personality is really killed, and not one who says in sentiment or heart "I am one with all." The selfless man has another consciousness from ours. These things are *away beyond* as yet; but we may hear them and meditate on them, and await our turn. The real "Will Power" meant is a force we do not yet develop in us.

We may think we open our hearts to the divine Power but we mistake; we do so in sentiment

only; we have not done so in actuality until the sense of personality can be paralyzed in both bodies; until then, our heart, in fact clings to egoism and personality. To feel an emotion is *not* to be that thing its real self. The Eternal is all powerful. It is we who are weak.

We must win the Divine for ourselves, each into his own centre, but it helps. It does not do all because to make it truly our own we must work towards it; and in reality, we go to it, and then it does all. Our *whole* being does *not* wish to commune with the Higher Self. If it did, the thing were done, the bond established. It is precisely because parts of our nature yet to be conquered do not wish for it, but incline to material life, that the communion is not established. We have our moments of mental wish for it but that does not suffice.

We need to conquer every organ, every cell and fill each with that wish. Brother, you under-rate the task. It is one of ages. We cannot look for much now, but we can learn patience and we can work for the rest. Such work can be done by study.

I know well the condition you speak of "than which death is more desirable." I have no panacea for it; I seek one. I find help only in stern disregard of all my lower mind says, and in going on as best I can. The best is lame enough. If the soul within desired to quit material life we should die in this body at once. So it is only the lower mind which desires it. That mind each must

fight. Our own thoughts are our worst foes.

We have to learn not to accept our mind as judge and umpire, but to look aloft to intuitive faith. Mind suggests all these doubts and fears. We want silence then with the cry "alls well." You look for too great results, and so you despond. Well, I have done it too.

Self control is the first great step. It is the only step for, when it is complete, we know all.

I also think the "Voice" more to the point, as we at present stand, and its teachings of submission and devotion are for all.

Not so easy either, and, till we learn them, progress is barred. We have to comply with inner conditions before we can do much with self.

I think the word "lost" in relation to him who "knows not the hidden powers of self" refers to that disciple who should undertake to awaken their forces without knowledge and due preparation of and for them. I mean they can destroy the body of the rash seeker who knows not how to guide them and has not purified his whole heart. That is—it means this to *my* mind. Disinterested workers are much needed always. Bear patiently, as you have, with the present silence. The Light will shine again. Our doubts, our sad hearts, obscure it and then we wonder it does not shine, above us, it *is*, in endless splendor. All your efforts and your aspirations are known, are registered and must prevail, and our unseen comrades are ever near us with hearts full of sympathy and courage.

Thanking you always for your confidence and in belief that you will soon find a way station of more peace, I am,

Faternally Yours,
Jasper Niemand.

What is Theosophy?

THE word Theosophy is derived from the Greek *Theos*, God, and *Sophia*, wisdom; hence, divine wisdom, the Wisdom Religion. It is the basis of all the great religions of the world. Divest any of the creeds of history of the bigotry, ignorance and superstition in which they have been clothed by time and theology, and you have the truth which we call Theosophy.

The first record we have of this Wisdom Religion dates back to Pot-Amun, an Egyptian priest who lived under the earlier Ptolemies. Before his time, it was known only to the priesthood. Later, it crept out in the school of Ammonius Saccas, a philosopher who lived about the second century after Christ; and we can see tracings of Theosophy in the writings of Jacob Boehme and Paracelsus. And, in our own times, this great Wisdom Religion was revived by a woman, to-day known and honored by every member of the Theosophical Society.

It may be well to divide the question, "What is Theosophy?" into two parts: 1st, As to the Universe; 2nd, As to Man. For man is but the microcosm of the macrocosm. If we look about us, we shall soon perceive that there is a certain rhythm in Nature; that

everything moves by slow, unchanging law. Some one has said that the Universe is the manifestation of Divine Thought, the manifestation of the One Eternal Life; a continual out-breathing and in-breathing, as it were, of this one Life. But, to say it is Life would be wrong; for Life is but one aspect of the Unknowable. We cannot call it Intelligence, nor can we call it Consciousness; for these are but other aspects of the Absolute.

As to Man, Theosophy teaches that he is a seven-fold being having seven Principles which correspond to those in Nature.

In our study of Theosophy, there are four points which appeal strongly to us, viz.: The doctrine of Evolution, the Unity of Consciousness, the law of Karma, and Re-incarnation. As to the first, the law of Evolution, Theosophy takes us further than does Darwin, whose theory is incomplete.

The doctrine of the Unity of Consciousness appeals to the human heart and mind at once. While it is taught by Christianity and embodied in the Golden Rule, Theosophy gives the scientific reason for it, for it shows us that there is no such thing as separateness in the Universe. We are all units in a Unity, and, without this teaching, we could not understand or realize Universal Brotherhood. This Universal Brotherhood will tend to establish and carry out the future progress of the race, raising man above his present state of ignorance and barbarism, to a higher, intellectual plane. Nature intends that man shall progress, and, in that progress, we must contact—we must give and take.

The rule of master and servant must exist intellectually. We, as individuals, have now to take this law which we have heretofore been blindly following, into our own hands, and agree to disagree for the benefit of one another.

Even a little knowledge of Theosophy teaches us that there is something in our nature akin to the divine, the Absolute, and that, by continual effort and aspiration, we shall one day be able to function on a higher plane than the material, and there manifest our true Selves. This can only be done by subduing the lower animal nature. Thus, we are taught to practice unselfishness and renunciation, even in the little things of life. Because Theosophy teaches us the Unity of All, it develops in us a feeling of sympathy and kindness for all our fellow creatures, for we know that the suffering of one affects all. To be a Theosophist is to try to help our fellows every hour of the day—if in no other way, by throwing out kindly thoughts to them. Meet that brother who is sinking into the depths of vice or despair, with gentle, loving sympathy, and he will soon regain faith in himself. Give to the weak, discouraged one a word or smile of cheer to lighten his pathway.

Karma, though a strange word from a strange tongue, expresses the thought far better than does our English cause and effect. This Law of Karma is the most potent lever for right living, and prevents us from casting our burdens on innocent shoulders. It shows us that each must work out his own salvation. This law we

cannot escape by fleeing into solitude, away from the cares and trials of life, but must face calmly, wherever we may be, taking care to set up no new causes, except those which are good.

The doctrine of Re-incarnation, though seeming to us at first blush a very singular doctrine, can be proved by logical demonstration. It seems the only reasonable explanation of the problems of life. Just as the infant, when it wakes in the morning, is unconscious of the events of the day before; so we, being as yet only in our infancy, are not now awakened to a realization of our former lives. But we shall grow to it. And we shall then, like the nurse who washes and dresses the infant, be able to assist those who are not so old as we. Such, we believe, are the Masters now.

Theosophy teaches us that that duty which we owe to the world should not be neglected; and that we owe to ourselves and others the duty of keeping our thoughts pure and good, and burdened with sympathy and kindness. To be a member of the Theosophical Society, one must be inclined to lead a moral life—to live up to his highest ideal. The study of Theosophy, in itself, has a tendency to keep one above low and debasing thoughts; and the companionship of others who are striving to reach a high ideal is, of course, elevating.

Theosophy is the clear, concise analysis of the laws of Nature, both physical and spiritual. By a knowledge of these laws, we can control ourselves and the corresponding Principles in Nature. It

is this knowledge which makes the difference between the Hottentot and the American citizen.

Every man is limited by the sphere of his consciousness, and to expand that sphere is the real object of evolution, from atom to man, and from man to God. This will only come from experience. But, just as we would prepare ourselves for a trip through Europe by a study of the history of her people, a map and guide-books, so, in the journey of life, we can take the teaching which Theosophy gives us as a guide to the unknown.

Theosophy puts into clear and comprehensive form what is vaguely hinted in all the old religions and mythologies, and gives us a correct chart of the country we are to travel over, enabling us to recognize our experiences when they come, what they indicate, and the cause. Thus, Theosophy is a training, a school, for the practical experiences of life, enabling us more completely to govern and guide our evolution through this life and that which lies beyond.

And, just as in the days of ancient Greece, the scholars and philosophers consulted that "Voice" which was called the Delphic Oracle, that they might be helped in their effort to study out the problems of Nature, so, to-day, we of the West have the Voice from the East, helping and guiding us in our efforts to reach the truth, and this "Voice" we call Theosophy.—*Synopsis of an H. P. B. Class Study.*

March 31st, 1893.

To live to benefit mankind is the first step.—*Voice of the Silence.*

Cautions in Paragraphs.

DO NOT fancy that because ours is called a brotherhood any exclusion of woman is inferred. English is not the only language on earth, and in many others the same term describes both feminine and masculine. Theosophy does not concern sex distinctions, and talks more of souls, which are sexless, than it does of the bodies they inhabit.

LET not sentimentality make you fear to bring forward what you believe to be theosophy, even though some persons threaten to leave the ranks because their own fad seems endangered by the strength of your theory, but beware you do not mistake self-assertion in yourself for the strength of your theories.

PAY the highest respect to the sermons of Jesus, from the remembrance of the fact that in his discourses he but gave forth once again the old doctrine taught to him by the ancient theosophists of whom he was a disciple.—*Rodriguez Undian, in The Path.*

I am that which has been, which is, which will be, and no one has yet lifted the veil that covers me. The knowledge of it is Divine Silence; the rest of all the senses. Shining steadily on and around about the mind, it enlighteneth all the soul, and changeth it wholly into the essence of God. Man is a mortal God. He dwelleth above yet leaveth not the earth, so great is the greatness of his nature.—*Book of Hermes.*

Editorial.

The Masters as Ideals.

IT is a truism that no man nor no body of men or nation can rise above his or their highest ideal. That man who places before himself a high ideal may fail; he with a low one, courts inevitable failure. It is for this reason that a proper conception of our MASTERS as living men and as ideals becomes of so much importance in furthering the advancement of the Theosophical Society. A belief in Them, a reverence for Them, and a strenuous insistence upon Their existence in our public utterances, is of almost, or perhaps of fully, as much importance as the teachings of Reincarnation and Karma.

Of course, in making this statement, one can almost hear the echo, "dogma, beware!" But there is no dogma, nor can be none, in stating in plain language demonstrable facts in, or laws of, nature. The MASTERS fall under both categories. Their existence as men has been and can be at any time fully proven, and the fact that They are possessed of spiritual knowledge and powers which show that They have far transcended the stage of evolution at which ordinary humanity has arrived, is also easily capable of proof. On the other hand, unless the theory of evolution is false, or unless the egotism of the modern coin accumulator and railroad builder causes him to look upon himself as the acme of all that nature can do in intellectual and spiritual unfoldment, then the MASTERS are absolutely necessary as a perfectly normal product of evolution, carried a step beyond money-grasping and Shylockism.

It is therefore the privilege and the right of every member of the Theosophical Society to proclaim his belief in the MASTERS, from the housetops, if he chooses; and, once he is fully convinced of Their existence, it is his bounden duty so to do. Whether he be the President of the Society, or like the present writer, but an humble armor bearer in its ranks, cuts no figure; the one has no

rights which the other has not also. As one works along Theosophic lines, as his years of service to humanity grow in number, and, especially, as his fitness and faithfulness to that work cause him to rise high in the ranks of the Society, will the evidence of such Beings and their active efforts in behalf of mankind accumulate. Because such a tried and faithful one, even if the very President of the Society, has personal knowledge of the MASTERS, and proclaims it, are the members to construe this as an attempt to establish a dogma? Must that old veteran and Founder, Col. Olcott, suppress his "Diary Leaves" composed largely of accounts of his personal dealings with Them, lest some timid soul should fear that a belief in Them might thus be promulgated, and a disastrous "dogma" result?

Yielding to such timidity would bring about the very thing which that timidity sought to avoid—a dogma that such and such facts must be made subservient to a mistaken policy of concealment. The Theosophical Society as a Society has no policy—except the insistence upon Human Brotherhood and perfect freedom of speech be a policy. Beyond this, it is a body of students searching for light upon the problems of human existence, wherein each is free to believe anything he pleases so long as free speech and human brotherhood be accepted. If in the study of these problems, one has discovered evidences of the existence of exalted Beings, either from philosophical necessity or from personal contact, his declaration of such fact is not only his right and privilege but his duty to his fellow-men and, especially, to his fellow students, and no position, nor lack of position, in the Society can bar him from this right, or make his utterances dogmas.

The importance of an insistence upon the existence of MASTERS consists in its gradually awakening in the minds of men the knowledge that they also have within them the possibilities which these now possess. To inculcate an idea, the public must be first familiarized with it;

then, if it be true, its acceptance is only a matter of time. Ideas can not be driven into men's minds with pile drivers. They must be implanted, and grow gradually, as plants do. Who now—in all America, at least—laughs at Reincarnation and Karma? How was it but a few years since? What has caused this favorable change except a continual assertion by members of the Society that these are truths? thus in the face of the greatest difficulties preparing the soil of men's minds for the wider growth which has since occurred. Not that all or even but few in America accept these as truths—they do not; but they do accept them as reasonable, philosophical hypotheses which can no longer be “laughed out of court.” They have assumed a permanent place in modern thought. Would this have been the case had the attempt to teach these been cried down as dogma?

Brothers, let us set our ideals high, and struggle upward towards them. Whether that ideal be Jesus of Nazareth, Buddha, or those high, holy, pure, compassionate MASTERS whom we in the West revere and serve, matters little, if the motive in the choice be unselfish. But the Theosophical Society will advance most surely by taking as its Ideals these, the Christs of our time, living in flesh among us, truly “men of sorrow,” who are in touch with us to-day, whom we can touch and contact. No dreary lapse of two or three thousand years divides us from Them—They are personal Leaders, Counsellors, and Helpers who are with us now. Therefore, let each member who truly desires to one day become also a worker with Them and of Them consecrate one chamber of his heart to Their service, dream about Them, think about Them, *speaking* about Them in all proper times and places.

Mr. T. S. Solomons, of San Francisco Branch, is now in Chicago, as Special Correspondent for the *Call*, *Post* and *Wave*, of this city. He has been visiting the branches in Chicago, and sends encouraging reports.

Notes and Items.

BROTHER D. J. LAMOREE of Golden Gate Branch, leaves San Francisco August 8th, to visit the Branches throughout the East. We bespeak for him fraternal consideration and courtesy.

Olympia Branch has passed very eulogistic but well-deserved resolutions in accepting Mrs. M. A. Whitney's resignation as the Branch Secretary on account of her removal from Tacoma.

Dr. Anderson leaves on the 28th for Chicago, in order to attend the World's Congress of Religions. He has been assigned the topic of Reincarnation. During his absence, THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST will be in the editorial charge of the H. P. B. Training Class.

In a private letter Claude E. Wright writes of the work in the East: “Here we are, rushing ahead. Judge has just come back, and so work presses. The Branches are all very full, notwithstanding the season of the year, and the winter must be trebly full. You would be surprised if you could know the number of speakers we are developing. No less than thirteen new lights in the last few months.”

A cablegram to Brother Rambo announces the bad news that Mrs. Besant can not come to the Coast on her way to India, because of not being able to reach that country in time for the Adyar Convention. This cablegram was necessary on account of her having to decline a very handsome offer for a series of lectures from a prominent lecture manager in San Francisco.

The Puget Sound League of T. S. Workers are leading the Coast in Theosophic work at present. Read the Report of League Work in this issue. Bro. Schwagerl, the efficient Manager, suggests publishing leaflets in THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST, making the edition 10,000, and distributing them, in lieu of loose

leaflets—an excellent plan. In a neat form and cover, such as THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST'S latest incarnation, such literature is preserved, and reaches a dozen times more readers than by the transient method. A loose leaflet is thrown away even if read; a bound magazine, not so—at least, this was the experience of the present editor while publishing the *New Californian*, and was the chief reason for the change of form of this journal.

Brother Judge is contemplating a visit to the Coast after the Chicago Convention.

Among the Coast Branches.

Aurora Branch, Oakland, Cal.

SEC. H. BOWMAN writes:

Ⓐ Aurora Branch T. S., Oakland, still continues the active propaganda work which was inaugurated immediately after its organization, nearly four years ago. Open meetings for lectures are held every Sunday evening, and Branch meetings every week, besides a "Children's Hour" and adult class every Sunday morning. Five new members have recently been admitted and a new impulse seems to have been given to the work within a few months, partly by the methods adopted in the conduct of the Branch meetings, and partly by the free admission of visitors to them and the formation of the adult class on Sundays. The Branch has been particularly favored and has great reason to be thankful for the aid that has been given to it, without stint, by that pioneer in Theosophic work, Mrs. Sarah A. Harris, an untiring and thorough student and teacher of Theosophy. And during the first two years of our existence Miss M. A. Walsh, the well-known and enthusiastic pleader for Theosophy, added greatly to the interest of both our Branch meetings and public lectures. We are also largely indebted to members of the Golden Gate Branch for their kind and liberal assistance in carrying on the work of the pub-

lic lectures. All these meetings are well attended, and three of our younger members have recently read acceptable papers both here and to San Francisco audiences. Several thousand leaflets have been distributed in the hall, and our free circulating library of 150 volumes has had over 200 readers, 1,250 books having been drawn since it was opened. No special effort has been made to induce members to join and while our actual membership is small, numbering only 29 at present, it is no measure of the work that has been accomplished in the community.

Los Angeles Branch.

Dr. G. F. Mohn, Sec., writes:

During the month of July, Los Angeles Branch held four public meetings at Lawrence Hall, Sunday evenings, and four Branch meetings. At the public meetings, the following lectures were given: "Hypnotism and Mesmerism," by G. F. Mohn; "Reincarnation," F. Neubauer; "The Three Lower Planes of Consciousness," Mrs. L. F. Giese; "Pre-historic Races and Continents," G. F. Mohn. Leaflets were distributed at the meetings, and much interest evinced in the lectures. Numerous questions were handed in. The Branch meetings, at which original papers were read by members, were well attended. We shall move to our new Headquarters next week, and I hope, next month, to be able to send you a full report. We shall then give up our hall, which is not well located, and hold all meetings in our own rooms, where we can seat about a hundred people. These rooms are located in the business portion, on Spring street. Here we expect to do more extended work, and also to aid suburban districts. More willingness is developing among our members, and we are conscious of the fact that those who are with the Masters will always have the Masters with them, and who knows but that, ere long, Karma will send some energetic worker into our midst? Mrs. L. E. Giese has had two articles published in the *Daily Ex-*

press during July, on "Theosophy at the World's Fair."

Willamette Branch, Portland, Oregon.

Sec. Laura D. Bunker reports:

Our Branch continues, highly encouraged by its series of open meetings, the Hall usually having been full, and sometimes overflowing. Earnest inquirers, and earnest members have likewise filled the Branch Meetings. Membership during July was increased by two.

Five Sunday evening lectures were given: "*Theosophy in Daily Life*," J. Emmet Smith; "*Theosophy and Selfishness*," A. R. Read; "*Bible Evolution or Creation*," and "*Bible Evolution and Fall of Man*," J. H. Scotford; "*Theosophy not Anti-Christian*," Mrs. A. R. Read. In addition to these, a highly appreciative audience listened to a lecture, on the evening of July 18th, by that efficient worker, Dr. W. E. Copeland, who will utilize his Summer vacation in visiting, with his family, the Puget Sound cities, also Victoria, B. C., lecturing at those points in the interest of Theosophy. We received a welcome visit from Dr. Griffiths, July 25, but had no lecture at that time, as he immediately entered upon his previously contemplated course of lectures in the Willamette Valley towns, which were intercepted, for one month, by the illness of his little daughter.

Pleiades' Lodge, Soquel, Cal.

Mrs. M. R. Watson writes:

The number of our members remains the same—eight. We hold our meetings on Sundays at eleven A. M., and, at present, are studying Reincarnation in Dr. J. A. Anderson's lately published book. In the absence of visitors questions are submitted in writing, on the text, and answered by the one drawing that question, and the views of other members are also in order. This keeps the meeting lively and has a tendency to remind us how much we have to learn.

Lucifer, The Path, The Californian and THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST are ta-

ken, and furnish matter, frequently, for discussion.

Narada Branch, Tacoma, Washington.

Mrs. Fannie Sheffield, Sec., writes:

The Branch work has been kept up well. The rooms are kept open and there is a continual increase of interest in reading matter. A good amount of leaflets have been asked for by strangers and also distributed by the League members. We have had a number of new books added to our library, yet the demand for primary reading matter exceeds the supply. Both the Branch and public meetings are well attended, necessitating our purchasing more chairs. Each alternate Sunday we exchange a lecture with Seattle. Bro's Blodgett, Schwagerl, Barnes and Dr. Turner have given us good lectures. From Tacoma we have sent Rev. Mr. Copeland, Bro. Gibson, Mrs. Wiersmuller, Miss Wright and myself. Bro. Copeland is with us for the Summer and we shall have him on Thursdays for five lectures. All of these are well attended and interest is manifest in the number of questions asked. The League workers have held meetings at Duwamish, Edison and Puyallup—Rev. Copeland lecturing twice in Edison. Upon the whole, Narada Branch has made good progress, and works in unity and harmony.

San Francisco Branch.

Recent lectures in San Francisco have been, "Yogas, Chelas and Adepts," by Miss Tuttle of Oakland; "Yoga, the Science of the Soul," by Prof. Oettle of the same place; "From Man to God," by Mrs. Schoultiss; and "Wars in Heaven," by Dr. Anderson.

San Francisco Branch recently added five members at one meeting. Attendance in both branches steadily increases.

The H. P. B. Training Class continues its good work, and some of the members show a marked improvement in speaking upon Theosophical subjects.

Puget Sound League.

The Puget Sound League of Theosophical Workers reports the following members as having given lectures to date, (Aug. 7) viz: Mrs. Vera S. Beane, 5 lectures; Dr. T. H. Turner, 5; E. O. Schwagerl, 8; Thos. A. Barnes, 5; H. A. Gibson, 2; Ida Wright, 2; F. I. Blodgett, 4; Mrs. F. L. Wiersmuller, 2; Fannie A. Sheffield, 2; Rev. W. E. Copeland, 3. These lectures have been given in Seattle, Tacoma, Edison, Chico, Ballard, Port Townsend, Olympia, Columbia, Duwamish and Puyallup. Arrangements are in progress for lectures in Cosmopolis, South Prairie, Teabeck, Union City, Georgetown, Sydney and Victoria. Cost of leaflets distributed, \$35.00; number of persons present at lectures, 1,040; books distributed: Reincarnation, by Dr. Anderson, 2; Ocean of Theosophy, 2; Occult World, 1; Esoteric Buddhism, 6; Letters That Have Helped Me, 2; Key to Theosophy, 3; Seven Principles of Man, 2; besides others. It goes without saying that good missionary work is accomplished besides the lectures.

Excelsior Branch, San Jose.

Miss Lizzie S. Morgan writes:

During the past two months we have had the kind assistance of Mr. Edward B. Rambo of San Francisco, and Mrs. Sarah A. Harris of Berkeley. Mr. Rambo gave a lecture upon "The Masters," which was well received by an attentive audience. Many questions were asked, and the answers given were clear and concise. Mrs. Harris lectured upon "The Ways of Providence," and again upon the subject "Mediums, Psychics and Adepts." Both the lectures were listened to with earnest attention. She has given, also, several parlor talks upon Theosophical subjects. Our usual vacation has been postponed on account of the interest manifested.

Miss M. A. Walsh has also been of very great help to us during the past year. Quite an interest in Theosophy is being developed, reading matter asked for and distributed.

VICTORIA BRANCH, VICTORIA, B.C.

Sec. H. W. Graves, writes:

At present Bro. Leitch of Los Angeles, is with us and does a good deal to enliven our meetings. Since Mrs. V. M. Beane lectured here we have met regularly on Sunday, as well as Wednesday, and are now expecting much from the visit of Dr. Copeland. Our library contains, now, something like 75 volumes and is steadily gaining additions. We are much interested in the writings of Jasper Niemand and greatly wonder who he is. Can you tell us?

Bandhu Branch, Santa Cruz.

Mrs. L. A. Russell, Secretary, writes:

THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST arrived, and presents a very enticing appearance. Our Branch is in an exceedingly thrifty condition. Our Sunday evening meetings are well attended, and if they increase at the same ratio for another quarter, Bandhu will have to be looking for larger rooms. Mrs. A. J. Patterson of Oakland, recently read a paper here on "The Mythology and Myths of the Norsemen."

Olympia Branch, Olympia, Washington.

Hattie E. Ogden, Sec., writes:

Since Mrs. Whitney's departure we have been forced to abandon public meetings, but we hope to resume them before long. We were greatly disappointed that Dr. Griffiths did not come our way, and our sympathy went out to him in his recent trouble.

Pacific Coast Lecturer's Movements

DR. GRIFFITHS gave a general lecture on Theosophy in Forest Grove, Oregon, July 28th. D. C. Stewart, Secretary of the Oregon State Secular Union, and other Secularists, attended. After the lecture, Mr. Stewart introduced himself and others to Dr. Griffiths, and invited him to his residence. The invitation was accepted. Others were present and considerable interest in Theosophy evinced. The lecturer was cordially invited to return to Forest Grove, and offers made to get out a large audience, should he do so.