

# The ♪ Pacific ♪ Theosophist.

Vol. V.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., DECEMBER, 1894.

No. 5.

## The Pacific Theosophist.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY

THE LOTUS PUBLISHING COMPANY,

1170 Market Street,

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

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SUBSCRIPTION, \$1.00 PER YEAR.

### Karma.

[Read before the Eighth Annual Convention of the American Section of the Theosophical Society, San Francisco, Cal., April 23, 1894.]

**T**HE simple and natural law which forms the topic of our present study has no word in the English language to express it. Universal as the law is, it is impossible to express it in our language save by two or three inconvenient sentences, such as "Action and re-action," the "Law of Cause and Effect." All these ideas, and much more, our old Aryan forefathers summed up in the one simple word "Karma." In the "*Key to Theosophy*" it is said: "Karma is the ultimate law of the Universe; the source, origin and fount of all other laws which exist throughout Nature. It is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause, on the physical, mental and spiritual planes of being. No cause remains without its due effect, from a cosmic disturbance down to the movement of your hand; and Karma is the unseen and unknown law which adjusts wisely, intelligently and equitably each effect to

its cause, tracing the cause back to its producer. As a stone thrown into a pond of water creates disturbing waves, which oscillate backwards and forwards, until at last, owing to what physicists call the dissipation of energy, they are brought to rest, and the water returns to its condition of calm tranquility, so all action, on every plane, produces disturbance in the balanced harmony of the Universe, and the vibrations so produced will continue to roll backwards and forwards, if its area is limited, till equilibrium is restored. Since each disturbance starts from some particular point, it is clear that equilibrium and harmony can only be restored by the reconverging to that same point of all the forces which were set in motion from it. And here you have proof that the consequences of a man's deeds, thoughts, etc., must all return upon himself with the same force with which they were set in motion."

Every thought, or act, of man sets in motion causes—or Karma—which will act and react upon himself and others, until it has raised or lowered the condition of the race. Thus the aggregate of individual Karma is the Karma of the race; and the aggregate Karma of Nations is the Karma of the World. To lift this Karma, we must lift the minds and thoughts of men. On the Spiritual and moral planes of Nature, the causes with

which we have to deal are thoughts, and before we can go very far in the study of Karma we shall have to realize the fact, which ancient science knew, but which modern science is just beginning to grasp, that "thoughts are things." "With every thought of our daily lives we are making thought-forms, every one of which is a cause, and every one of which must persist until it is neutralized by its proper effect, or is negated by a thought-form of equal power and opposite tendency. Just as no force can be checked, save by bringing it into contact with something having an equal power of resistance, so thought once created remains unchanged until it can work out its proper effect

We are all surrounded by a perfect cloud of thought-forms of our own making. It is these thought-forms, or "mental deposits," which cling to man during life, and which, after death, make the character of his heaven; and, when the time of Reincarnation comes, they form the pattern or model on which the new personality is built. They are the Karma, which form not only the physical environment, but especially the disposition, temperament and natural ability of the person. An individual who has devoted much attention to one class of study, or to one branch of thought, during one incarnation, will start life in the next with a "natural talent" or "genius" for that subject. So of purely spiritual attainments. The individual who, in this life, sinks the idea of self, controls his lower nature, and lives for the good of others, so far as his circumstances will permit,

will enter the next life with a strengthened power of self-control, and with a nature more pure, more spiritual, and more powerful for good. It has been said that:

"Sow a thought and you reap an act;  
Sow an act and you reap a habit;  
Sow a habit and you reap a character;  
Sow a character and you reap a destiny."

So it is that we make our fortunes, though we call them fate. Though Karma is the simplest and most universal of Nature's laws, yet, as it adjusts the effect of every cause set in motion by each separate unit of the Universe, its action is infinitely complex. The infinity of its correlations render its details inscrutable; but its action as a law is perfectly apparent, being simply the first law of force which, as formulated by Sir Isaac Newton, its "Action and Reaction are equal, and in opposite directions." On the moral plane this is the law of Retributive Justice. Not either reward or punishment, but simply retribution, returning to man the exact natural consequences of his acts. It is thus the perfection of justice, equity and harmony.

Karma is "that law of readjustment which ever tends to restore disturbed equilibrium in the physical, and broken harmony, in the moral world." Its action is such as to preserve that harmony and equilibrium without which the cosmos would return to chaos, and orderly, progressive evolution be reduced to an infinite Bedlam. It is in incessant operation, restoring harmony throughout nature, as disturbed water seeks its level and re-assumes tranquility. Causes set in motion in the past react upon or through the centers from which they emanate, with accompanying

pain or pleasure during the process of readjustment. Being subject to the other laws of force, Karmic causes often lie latent, during which justice seems to slumber, while vice rides triumphant over virtue. Yet Karmic nature being the "Mill of the Gods," grinds exceeding sure. Force is undiminished by its latency, and when the restraining circumstances are removed, bursts forth wreaking disaster and destruction on the evil doer; while truth and virtue, being in harmony with Nature's laws, are borne onward and upward, rising triumphant over all. "Evil" is contravention of Nature's progressive law, while what we call "good," is simply conformity to that law, and comprises all things pleasing to the Higher Self. Perfect conformity would require perfect knowledge of Nature's law, which, of course, we do not yet possess; meanwhile our best guide is the silent voice of conscience, by which our higher Ego, taking cognizance of all our unseen Karma, pilots the ship of life accordingly. Conscience is the Divine Polar Star. Mind is often the dark and stormy sky shutting out its light. But the Higher nature can be made to illuminate the darkest hour and to guide through the greatest trial. This may be done through a clean life, purity of mind, and an intense aspiration. This intense aspiration has a wonderful influence upon the Karma of the aspirant. It invokes the Higher powers; calls into active germination the Karmic seeds of a spiritual kind; and is the first vague step on the ladder of Occultism, which leads to the heights of human evolution.

Constant aspiration and determination is a duty of every man who would reach a higher life. The life of a chela is one long continued prayer. But prayer to escape the consequences of sin is like screaming to escape the wetness of the water. Cause and effect, sin and its consequences, are inseparable; the only escape is to "quit sinning." Do right, and righteousness shall follow; seek truth, and enlightenment shall be attained; aspire to God, and God-like Wisdom shall be yours.

The law of Karma is as certain and inexorable in moral and spiritual things as in physical, and leaves no room for vicarious atonement. Nature knows no such thing as vicarious progress. In the domain of evolution, man must progress by his own efforts. And in order for the soul to progress until perfection is reached many incarnations are needed.

"Reincarnation" (as defined in the *Glossary*) "is the work of spiritual progression and soul discipline, by which the haughty oppressor returns to earth a slave; the pampered sensualist, a beggar; and the selfish woman of fashion, a seamstress. A turn of the wheel of rebirth gives a chance for the development of neglected and abused intellect and feeling. Thus the expurgation of evil is gradually, but certainly accomplished."

Reincarnation gives assurance of the ultimate perfectability of the soul. It gives time to correct errors; to grow out of folly; to acquire Wisdom through the accumulation of experiences; to pay off every debt; to gain purification under suffering; and at last, when

strength is developed, wisdom acquired, and purity attained, it puts before the triumphant Pilgrim of Eternity the Great Choice of entering the glorious state of pure spirit, or of renouncing it and taking the Immortal vow; "Neither will I enter into final salvation alone, but forever and forever will I wait and work while one soul remains unsaved." And of returning to earth a Buddha—a Christ—a Savior of men—a beacon light to guide humanity through the darkness of matter back to the glories of Spirit.

*Abbott B. Clark, F. T. S.*

### The Mystery of the Chaldeans.

[Continued from last Number.]

**B**OTH astronomy and astrology were much cultivated by the Chaldeans. Astronomy is the most ancient of all sciences, and is always closely connected with religion. Its study was pursued by the Chinese, Hindus, Chaldeans and Greeks, for centuries before the Christian era. Upon the plains of Chaldea, observations were made and noted of eclipses, of the risings and settings of the heavenly bodies, extending to a very remote period. The priests of ancient Babylon asserted that their records extended back 470,000 years. Aristotle had transmitted to him, by the order of Alexander the Great, a catalogue of eclipses observed during 1903 years preceding the conquest of Babylon by the Macedonians. In these observations, the time is only given in hours, and the part of the diameter eclipsed within a quarter, but nevertheless

they comprise the earliest reliable observations extant, and a comparison of them with modern observations led Halley to the promulgation of the theory that the moon now moves around the earth with greater velocity than formerly. The Chaldeans were acquainted with the cycle of 6585  $\frac{1}{3}$  days, during which the moon makes about 223 synodical revolutions, and experiences the same number of eclipses. The clepsydra as a clock, the gnomon for determining the solstices, and a hemispherical dial for ascertaining the position of the sun, were also used by the Chaldeans. To them, also, is often ascribed the invention of the Zodiac and the duodecimal division of the day. Their ancient temples were pyramids, which served both as sanctuary and observatory. Astrology was a part of the sacred science of the Mysteries, and in days of old astrology was synonymous with astronomy, and was the study of the mystics of Egypt, India and Chaldea. In all these nations, the cross was held in highest reverence as a mystic symbol. It was the geometrical basis of the religious system of the Avatars; the manifestation of the Deity in his creature, Man; of God in humanity and humanity in God. The oldest monuments disclose the double or eight-pointed cross.

The crescent was also a symbol common to all these nations, and represented the mother goddess, the moon. In Babylonia, it was the symbol of Astarte, the Queen of Heaven; in Egypt, of Isis.

The close relation of the Chaldeans and Hindus, is shown, also,

by some of their myths, one of which is identical with a story told in the Puranas. The god Oannes had the body of a fish, but beneath his fish's head was a second human head, while human feet appeared under his tail, and he possessed a human voice. It is related that he spent the whole day among men, taking no food, and taught them letters, science, art, the rules for the foundation of towns and the building of temples, measurement, the boundaries of land, the seed-time and the harvest; in short, all that could advance civilization. Since his time nothing new has been invented. At sunset, he retired into the sea, where he passed the night. Oannes was the Babylonian Dagon, the man-fish, instructor and interpreter of the people. He is the emblem of priestly, esoteric Wisdom, who comes out of the "great deep," the water, which signifies the secret doctrine. His name is held in greatest reverence in the Chaldean records, and the priests of that nation are represented as wearing a head-gear like a fish and a coat of fish skin.

In the Puranus, the god Vishnu is shown to have assumed the form of a fish, with a human head, in order to reclaim the Vedas lost during the deluge. He taught men to build houses, to cultivate the land, to erect temples in which to offer thanks to the unknown Deity. At sunset, he retired into the sea.

Water, according to some old cosmogonies, was the first element. Water is the principle of all things, and God is that Mind which shaped and created all things from

water. Water represented the duality of both Macrocosm and Microcosm, in conjunction with vivifying spirit; as also the evolution of the little world from the universal Cosmos.

While the Hindu philosophy held the relation of parent to the doctrines of the Chaldeans, they in their turn became the teachers of others. Plato speaks of the Magians as the instructors of the Persian kings of Zoroaster. By way of Babylon and Chaldea, the wisdom of the East passed on to the Greeks and Hebrews. In the legends of both these nations, in their cosmogonies and in their religion, can be traced the influence of the Chaldean Magi. The Jewish Kabbalists were the pupils of the Kabbalists of Mesopotamia. All the esoteric doctrines of the Israelites was probably transmitted to them through Babylonians. The Jews were the pupils of the older nations, and particularly of Egypt and Chaldea. The Magi of Chaldea were their masters in the secret doctrine, and it was during the Babylonian captivity that they learned its metaphysical as well as practical tenets. From them they obtained the mighty "word", the "ineffable name", through whose potency the Hindu, as well as the Chaldean and Egyptian Initiate, performed his wonders. The Chaldean "Book of Numbers" contains all that is found in the "Zohar", and is older by many centuries. In one sense it is the original of the "Zohar", for it contains all the fundamental principles taught in the Jewish Kabbalistic works, but none of their blinds. In this book



are laid down the rules for the initiation of the neophyte into the Mysteries, which, as instituted, were pure, and proposed the noblest ends by the worthiest means.

The Jewish Scriptures indicate two distinct religions among the Israelites—(1) that of Bacchus-worship, under the mask of Jehovah; and (2) that of the Chaldean initiates, to whom belonged the nazars, the theurgists, and some of the prophets. The head-quarters of these were at Babylon and Chaldaea, where two rival schools of Magians can be shown. The oldest and most esoteric of the two possessed great hidden knowledge, and though indifferent as to what outer form of religion might be professed by its followers, insisted upon strict adherence to the secret teachings. Joseph was styled a nazar, and so were Samson and Samuel. The nazars, or prophets, were of the anti-Bacchus caste, and, in common with all initiates, they held to the *spirit* of symbolical religions and opposed the exoteric and idolatrous practices of dead-letter religion. Jesus was a member of this sect, whence his name the Nazarene, in reference to his humble and mean external condition; for Nazarene means separation, alienation from other men. The real meaning of the word Nazar is to vow or consecrate one's self to the service of God. As a noun, it is a diadem, or emblem, of such consecration; a head so consecrated. The nazars were separated or consecrated by a vow of chastity. This sect lived long before Moses, in Galilee, where was built Nazara. There the ancient Nazoria held their "Myster-

ies of life", which were but the secret mysteries of initiation. The oldest nazars, the "son of the prophets", were Chaldean Kabbalists.

A story, almost identical with the Biblical tale of Moses in the bulrushes, has been found inscribed on some of the tablets of the ancient Babylonians, and there is no doubt whatever that the Hebrew Kabbalists were the direct heirs of the Chaldean Magi, and from them obtained, not only all that they possessed of the esoteric doctrines of the ancients, but also their knowledge of numbers, of the stars, and of true magic.

The Serpent, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree of Life, as used in the Bible, are all symbols used in India, and transmitted to the Hebrews by way of Chaldea.

There is much said upon the subject of Chaldean magic and sorcery, and the conjuration of evil spirits. How much of this is reliable fact, and how much misinterpretation, cannot now be determined. The magic of the Akkadians were founded upon the belief in innumerable personal spirits distributed throughout nature, corresponding to the devas of the Hindus, and the elementals of Theosophical literature. These spirits were accredited with producing all the phenomena of nature. They directed and animated all created beings, caused good and evil, presided over the movements of the celestial bodies, rendered earth fertile by causing the growth of plants, etc., and presided, as well, over the birth and destiny of men. Throughout nature the Chaldeans perceived a dualism

embracing all the universe, and causing a perpetual struggle between positive and negative, or good and evil. The purpose of their magic incantations was to dispel this evil. They had great faith in the power and efficacy of certain rites and formulæ. Not only was man aided, but great catastrophies in nature were averted, as well, by the power of the magicians over these nature spirits. Such is a Westerner's explanation of the power of the Eastern Initiates to govern and guide the forces of nature. That such power is in the hands of the Masters of the race to-day, is the belief of many members of the Theosophical Society at this moment.

Now, what is Magic? In all ancient times it was considered as the divine science, the wisdom and the knowledge of God. True Magic is spiritual wisdom. And the Chaldeans, who were among the oldest magicians, placed the basis of all magic in the inner powers of man's soul. They possessed a profound knowledge of powers of simples and minerals, and discerned magic properties in the plants and animals as well. It was by these means that they performed their so-called "miracles". To the Chaldeans, magic was synonymous with religion and science.

Thus, as one by one we unravel the broken and tangled threads which connected the Chaldean Magi with their Aryan fathers, so one by one we gather together the scattered links of the chain which binds the religions of all the nations of earth back to their common Source, the Ancient Wisdom

Religion, given out at the beginning of humanity upon this planet. Once again we are brought face to face with the Truth proclaimed by the Initiates of old, and handed down through many generations; sometimes, it is true, clouded and obscured by superstition, but reawakening with the light of the Eastern Sun. And we hear, echoing down through the ages, the Divine Voice, proclaiming the Brotherhood of Mankind.

*C. M. B., F. T. S.*

### The Mystery of the Ego.

THE mind is not the supreme or highest power; it is only a function; an instrument with which the Ego works. The brain must not, however, be confounded with the mind, for the brain is in its turn but an instrument for the mind. If mind and brain are but the instruments, where is the Ego?

Many years ago while pondering over the waking, sleeping and dreaming states of consciousness, the idea presented itself to my mind that perhaps what we call the waking state is the dream, and the dream, the waking. This idea became so fixed that for a long time, during the process of disrobing for the night, it seemed necessary to make haste in order to "wake up."

Let us see what H. P. B. says about dreams:

The principles active during ordinary dreams—which ought to be distinguished from real dreams and called idle visions—are Kama, the seat of the personal Ego and of desire awakened into chaotic activity by the slumbering reminiscences of the lower Manas. The lower Manas is usually called the animal soul. It is the ray which emanates from the Higher Manas, or permanent

Ego, and is that "principle" which forms the human mind—in animals instinct, for animals also dream. The word dream means really "to slumber"—the latter function being called in Russian "*dremati*."

The combined action of Kama and the "Animal Soul," however, are purely mechanical. It is instinct, not reason, which is active in them. During the sleep of the body they receive and send out mechanically electric shocks to and from various nerve centres. The brain is hardly impressed by them, and memory stores them, of course, without order or sequence. On waking, these impressions gradually fade out, as does every fleeting shadow that has no basic or substantial reality underlying it. The retentive faculty of the brain, however, may register and preserve them if they are only impressed strongly enough. But as a rule, our memory registers only fugitive and distorted impressions which the brain receives at the moment of awakening. This aspect of "dreams," however, has been sufficiently observed and described correctly enough in modern physiological and biological works, as such human dreams do not differ much from those of the animals. That which is entirely *terra incognita* for Science is the real dreams and experiences of the higher Ego, which are also called "dreams" but ought not to be so termed, or else the term for the other sleeping "visions" changed. The nature and functions of real dreams cannot be understood unless we admit the existence of an immortal Ego in mortal man, independent of the physical body, for the subject becomes quite unintelligible unless we believe—that which is a fact—that during sleep there remains only an animated form of clay, whose powers of independent thinking are utterly paralyzed. But if we admit the existence of a higher or permanent Ego in us—which Ego must not be confused with what we call the "Higher Self"—we can comprehend that what we often regard as dreams, generally accepted as idle fancies, are, in truth, stray pages torn out from the life and experiences of the inner man, and the dim recollection of which at the moment of awakening becomes more or less distorted by our physical memory. The latter catches mechanically a few impressions of the thoughts, facts witnessed, and deeds performed by the inner man during its hours of complete freedom. For our Ego lives its own separate life within its prison of clay whenever it becomes free from the trammels of matter, *i. e.*, dur-

ing the sleep of the physical man. This Ego it is which is the actor, the real man, the true human self. But the physical man cannot feel or be conscious during dreams; for the personality, the outer man, with its brain and thinking apparatus, are paralyzed more or less completely.

We might well compare the real Ego to a prisoner, and the physical personality to the gaoler of his prison. If the gaoler falls asleep, the prisoner escapes, or, at least, passes outside the walls of his prison. The gaoler is half asleep, and looks nodding all the time out of a window, through which he can catch only occasional glimpses of his prisoner, as he would of a kind of shadow moving in front of it. But what can he perceive and what can he know of the real actions, and especially the thoughts, of his charge? The real Ego does not think as his evanescent and temporary personality does. During the waking hours the thoughts and voice of the Higher Ego do or do not reach his gaoler—the physical man—for they are the voice of his conscience, but during his sleep are absolutely the "voice in the desert."

In the thoughts of the real man or the immortal "Individuality," the pictures and visions of the past and future are as the present. Nor are his thoughts like ours, subjective pictures in our cerebration, but living acts and deeds, present actualities. They are realities, even as they were when speech expressed in sounds did not exist; when thoughts were things, and when men did not need to express them in speech; for they instantly realized themselves in action by the power of *Kriya-Sakti*, that mysterious power which transforms, instantaneously, ideas into visible forms, and these were as objective to the "man" of the early Third Race as objects of sight are now to us. The Higher Ego (*Manas*) is more or less dormant during the waking of the physical man. This is especially the case with persons of very materialistic minds. So dormant are the spiritual facul-



ties, because the Ego is so trammelled by matter, that *it* can hardly give all its attention to the man's actions, even should the latter commit sins for which that Ego—when reunited with its *lower Manas*—will have to suffer conjointly in the future. It is, as I said, the impressions projected into the physical man by this Ego which constitute what we call "conscience;" and in proportion as the Personality, the lower Soul (or *Manas*), unites itself to its higher consciousness; or Ego, does the action of the latter upon the life of mortal man become more marked. It is the immortal man, which passes from one incarnation to another. Every noble thought, idea and aspiration of the personality it informs, proceeding from and fed by this root, must become permanent. As to the physical consciousness, as it is a quality of the sentient but lower "principle," (*Kama* or animal instinct illuminated by the lower *manasic* reflection,) or the human Soul—it must disappear. That which displays activity, while the body is asleep or paralyzed, is the higher consciousness, our memory registering but feebly and inaccurately—because automatically—such experiences, and often failing to be even slightly impressed by them. Every human organ and each cell in the latter has a key-board of its own, like that of a piano, only that it registers and emits sensations instead of sounds. Every key contains the potentiality of good or bad, producing harmony or disharmony. This depends on the impulse given and the combinations produced; on the force of the

touch of the artist at work, a "double-faced Unity," indeed, and it is the action of this or the other "face" of the Unity that determines the nature and the dynamical character of the manifested phenomena as a resulting action, and this whether they be physical or mental. For the whole life of man is guided by this double-faced Entity. If the impulse comes from the wisdom above, the force applied being noetic or spiritual, the results will be actions worthy of the divine Ego; if from the "terrestrial, devilish wisdom" (psychic power), man's activities will be selfish, based solely on the exigencies of his physical, hence animal nature. As Madame Blavatsky adds, the above may sound to the average reader as pure nonsense; but every Theosophist must understand when told that there are *Manasic* as well as *Kamic* organs in him, although the cells of his body answer to both physical and spiritual impulses.

Verily, that body, so desecrated by materialism and man himself, is the temple of the Holy Grail, the *Adytum* of the grandest, nay, of all, the mysteries of nature in our solar universe. That body is an *Æolian* harp, chorded with two sets of strings, one made of pure silver, the other of catgut. When the breath from the divine Fiat brushes softly over the former, man becomes like unto his God—but the other set feels it not. It needs the breeze of a strong terrestrial wind, impregnated with animal effluvia, to set its animal chords vibrating. It is the function of the physical, lower mind to act upon the physical organs and their cells;

but, it is the higher mind alone which can influence the atoms interacting in those cells, which interaction is alone capable of exciting the brain, via., the spinal central cord, to a mental representation of spiritual ideas far beyond any objects on this material plane. The phenomena of divine consciousness have to be regarded as activities of our mind on another and higher plane, working through something less substantial than the moving molecules of the brain. They cannot be explained as the simple resultant of the cerebral physiological process, as indeed the latter only condition them, or give them a final form for purposes of concrete manifestation. Occultism teaches that the liver and the spleen cells are the most subservient to the action of our "personal" mind, the heart being the organ *par excellence* through which the "Higher" Ego acts upon the Lower Self. —*Julius Oetli, F. T. S.*

### Experience Under Ether.

THE following experience occurred while under the influence of ether, which was administered to me to enable a physician to perform a delicate surgical operation. I remained under the influence of the anæsthetic for two hours.

For some days previous to the operation, I had a strong desire to take a trip to some of the other planets, or a spin around this world.

While the ether was being administered I had the desire strongly in my mind, and tried, as it were, to disconnect myself from the body, as an experiment. Of course, if I did visit any other

planet, or paid my old home in Ireland a visit, I have no recollection of it.

The interesting part of my experience began when I commenced to come to, or while in a semi-conscious condition. My soul, or inner consciousness, appeared to resemble a small light. My consciousness, or intelligence, seemed to tell me that space and matter were annihilated, and I, although bound up in this small light, appeared to be the sum and substance of everything. I had the consciousness as if I had passed through all the various stages of matter before I had become this light; I had also the consciousness that I would dissolve, and again pass through all stages before coming back to the condition in which I then was, (a small light). I heard a voice saying words to this effect, "Well, you have been through it all; there is nothing real in the universe; it is all a dream". Strange to say, the voice which I thought said this appeared to be that of the Doctor. I then gradually sank into deep unconsciousness again, and as I did the small light died out also. When I came to, I found myself in bed, having been carried there from the operating room, by the Doctor's assistants.

I wish to say by way of explanation, that for years I have had the thought strong in my mind, that there is nothing real or tangible in the universe. I did not acquire this idea through study upon the matter; it seemed to come by inspiration.

I might say that I am thirty-five years old, and from a boy have

always taken a great interest in Occult science. The great mysteries of Life, Death, and that vast forever, have always been a great source of interest to me. Of course, like the majority of people who have an inclination in that direction, I have had to pass through the various stages of Orthodoxy, Skepticism, Materialism, and Spiritualism, and have progressed so far as to be able to comprehend some of the teachings of Theosophy, which to my mind, gives a clear account of the great mysteries by which we are surrounded.

*Robert McCourt, F. T. S.*

### Correspondence

BETWEEN THE DAYS OF THE WEEK  
AND THE AGES OF THE HUMAN RACE.

THE tradition of a golden age runs through all religions, indicating that sometime in the career of man on this earth, an era of peace and harmony prevailed. It was a period of unalloyed bliss, when man was still in supreme innocence and guilelessness, prior to his hard-won experiences in the vale of tears. This age is also called the Solar Age, as there always must have existed an association of ideas between the golden beams of the sun and the metal of that golden tint from which these derived their signification. This Solar Age is represented by the first day of the week, Sunday or the day sanctified to the Sun.

But the divine man must develop his potentialities; must learn the lesson of physical existence and enrich his store of wisdom by experiencing sorrow and suffering, with their refining and ennobling

influences. The first stage of his descent into matter was only partial; within the radiance of the golden source of eternal truth, but its beams had changed their golden for a pale silvery hue, being reflected by the Lunar orb, the Moon. For as man had passed away from the direct illumination of the infinite, his ideals lost their purity and the image of truth became veiled in symbols; became occult, the arcanum of initiates. This age was the age of reflected truth, and by virtue of its analogy to the Moon's reflecting the golden light of the Sun, turning it into a silvery shade, it was termed the Lunar Age, and is represented by the second day in the week Monday.

But as man sunk deeper into matter the light emanating from his divine abode became more and more faint to his inner vision, until finally it did not longer reach him, and man, forgetting his celestial ancestry, degenerated into a fighting animal and divine heroism, found expression in brute force. The age now ensuing may be called the era of Martial exploits or the Iron Age. In the mythological denomination of personified virtues and vices we recognize in Mars the God of battle and warfare. But Mars is represented in the mythology of the Goths by Otis, who also is the divine incarnation of bravery and heroism and it is from this latter divinity that the third day of the week—Tuesday (old Gothic Otisdag or Tis-dag) derived its name.

However as time went on, experience taught the warring savage that unity gives strength, and peace gives comfort and bene-

ficence. This gave rise to society, and the time hitherto wasted in aimless and profitless battles was utilized in philosophic pursuits, and man began to speculate upon the meaning of the existence of the universe and of himself. Consequently this Age became the Age of Philosophy and may well be designated as the Mercurial, as Mercury was understood to be the God of science and philosophy. In the Gothic mythology we find this deity appearing under the name of Odin—the God of wisdom, and it is the memory and worship of him that our fourth day, Wednesday, or Odinsday was dedicated.

But, as is well known, the philosophy which found for every expression of nature and of mind an incarnated god, gradually turned from a speculation upon causes to a speculation upon effects; from the worship of a supreme Being, to the worship of man; a worship that finally developed into idolatry and culminated in exoteric forms of Phallic worship and Bacchic festivals. The consciousness and aspiration of the masses became intensely human, and art, philosophy and science were centered upon the glorification of the human form. In Jupiter or Jove, the human form was brought to the grandest perfection of which the genius of the sculpture and painter could conceive. Consequently this period would justly deserve to be called the Age of Physical Man, and, as Jupiter was the supreme embodiment of the conceptions and ideals to which the consciousness of this age gave rise, we find in the fifth day of the week a monument to his memory.

For Thor in the Gothic mythology is simply Jupiter in disguise, as both of them represent the same virtues and characteristics, only modified by the peculiarities which the geographical and climatological dissimilarities of the two countries wrought on their people. From Thor, Thursday received its name and significance.

The veneration for the human form terminated in the specific worship of the female portion of the human family. But this worship did not elevate itself above the level of mere sensuality, as the equality of woman was absolutely denied. This worship of the purely physical woman took effect in polygamy and peopled Mohamed's heaven with voluptuous hours. Also the mystics of that period resorted by preference to the erotic symbols. All this goes to show that that age was ruled by Venus, the goddess of feminine graces and attractions. And as Venus corresponds directly to the Gothic Frega, the goddess of Love, it becomes at once apparent that the sixth day of the week, Friday, is related to this effeminate age.

Our present age is characterized by egotism and indifference to human suffering and sorrow, in which man is judging the world and its existences from the view of ignoble motives, and recognizes no other efforts than those which ripen into personal benefits to the exclusion of everybody else.

But the cause of the selfish man is planned by ignorance, and in his mad efforts to benefit himself to the exclusion of his fellow-beings he defeats his object, and, like "Time" personified as Kronos

in the Greek Pantheon, devours his own children. Kronos is identical with Saturn and from this somber deity we have borrowed the name to our seventh, or last day of the week—Saturday.

Thus we have at present passed through six ages or periods of human development and find ourselves in the seventh or last, with its momentum of sordid materiality and egotism. But following the evening of the last day of the week, comes the morning of the first—the reappearance of the First Age which we have learned to think of as the golden, when humanity after having passed through a cycle of earthly experiences shall again return to the celestial realms of purity and virtue which it once deserted.

*A. E. Gibson, F. T. S.*

## Notes and Items.

### THE CORRESPONDENCE CLASS.

This department of Theosophic work is being productive of so much good that it deserves every encouragement. It is practically a thorough academic course in Theosophy which may be taken at one's own home. A similar method has been instituted by some colleges, and those who take this course are graduated with all the honors of a regular degree; so that this correspondence class may prove to be the first step towards the formation of a great central University for the teaching, accurately and scientifically, of the religion, science and philosophy popularly known as Theosophy. But whether this be visionary or not, it is certain that the class is accomplishing so much that any one not a member of it is missing a grand opportunity. Send in your names, all you Theoso-

phists who really desire to do all in your power to fit yourselves to help and teach others.

Mr. E. B. Rambo recently made an extended business trip through northern California, and the States of Oregon and Washington, also visiting Victoria, B. C. He visited among the Theosophists in nearly all the towns, and gave several Branch talks and public lectures.

Mr. Rambo has just returned from his annual business trip through the southern part of the State where he visited the Branches and members.

Dr. Cook, of Sacramento, paid the Headquarters a flying visit and gave an interesting account of the work at Folsom prison by himself and Messrs. Joy and Spinks, also of Sacramento. The next month's lecture at the prison will be by Dr. Cook on "Evolution and Heredity."

Give your friends a book, the most important and valuable of all Christmas gifts. Elegant pocket editions of the following devotional books have been issued. The Voice of the Silence—the most sublime and classical book in the English language. Printed in clean, legible type and elegantly bound, in Russian leather, 75c; in Morocco, \$1.00.

We recommend The Key to Theosophy, The Ocean of Theosophy and Esoteric Buddhism, as giving the most comprehensive presentation of Theosophy outside of the master books, Isis Unveiled and the Secret Doctrine.

The Bhagavad-Gita, the Book of Devotion. This is said by H. P. B., W. Q. J., and others, to be "the greatest book in the world." In Russian leather, 75c; in Morocco, \$1.00.

The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali. The most clear and authentic of all interpretations, by Wm. Q. Judge. In Russian leather, 75c in Morocco, \$1.00.



Either of the foregoing books will make the most valuable and lasting of Holiday presents. See price list on last page.

The Headquarters at San Francisco have been crowded with visitors and enquirers.

#### Notes From the North.

Seattle Branch has opened new headquarters at 612 3rd Street, between James and Cherry. A large room has been secured which is capable of seating several hundred people. The room has been refitted for the purposes of the Branch and all its meetings will hereafter be held in this new home. Being within two blocks of all the car lines in the city—and on the ground floor, it is expected a larger attendance will be secured. Across the windows in large letters is the sign "Theosophical Headquarters." This room is the realization of a dream and desire on the part of some of the members for months and it will doubtless make a new era in the history of the Branch, extending its usefulness.

The room was opened on Sunday, Nov. 4th, to a fair audience, and will soon be thrown open in the afternoon for the dissemination of information and literature, the lady members of the Branch having this in charge. The Seattle Branch has done a great deal outside work in various towns since its organization and will now try and perfect its center.

Anna L. Blodgett of Seattle visited the towns of Whatcom and Fairhaven the past month and at Whatcom a large audience gathered to hear her exposition of Theosophical teachings. The visit proved most satisfactory and opportune.

Port Townsend Branch is holding regular weekly branch meetings. Some excellent papers are being presented by the members and much benefit thereby derived. The public also receive the benefit in an indirect way.

Victoria Branch is said to have opened the finest lodge now on the Coast. The members of that wide awake Branch are very earnest and thorough in their work.

Olympia Branch has taken a room on Main St., where it now holds its regular meetings. Public and private attendance is good for so small a town. The branch has added several new members and the faithful few are encouraged.

Tacoma Branch holds up to its standard of high class work and is ever alive to improvement. The H. P. B. Training Class is reported to have awakened great interest in the members and much benefit is being derived therefrom. Mr. Geo. Sheffield visited Seattle Branch the past month and delivered an excellent address on "Theosophy and Darwinism". Nov. 11, Anna L. Blodgett of Seattle visited Tacoma and gave a paper on "Astral Bodies" to the usual audience in their comfortable and cosy headquarters.

ADL

#### Prison Notes.

G. M. T. writes:—At Folsom on Sunday, November 11th, Dr. Cook lectured on "Evolution and Heredity." Some of the convicts of Folsom have formed a Society known as "The Society of the Round Table;" its objects being "the investigation of the Truths of Theosophy; the strengthening of the bonds of Fraternity; the promotion of Harmony and Good-fellowship; and the general Social, Moral and Mental improvement of its members." Warden Aull generously arranged that the Society should have the use of the prison chapel every Sunday afternoon. We therefore hold weekly meetings. We also have a Society paper, known as the "Round Table Gazette," which issues monthly and is edited by a member appointed for that purpose.

At the conclusion of Dr. Cook's lecture he was presented with an engrossed copy of a set of Resolutions, passed

by the prison Society, in which the convicts desired to express their gratitude to the Theosophical Societies of San Francisco and Sacramento for the numerous courtesies extended.

At San Quentin Prison, Nov. 11th Dr. Griffiths lectured upon "Brotherhood." The chapel was crowded, as usual, and great interest evinced. Questions and answers lengthened the proceedings to one hour and a half. The San Quentin Brass Band of eleven pieces, opened and closed the meeting with appropriate selections.

### Among the Coast Branches.

#### Kshanti Branch, Victoria, B. C.

W. Harold Berridge writes:—We have just emerged from a minor Pralaya. Rev. Dr. Copeland visited us last August, and Dr. Griffiths followed him a few days later, and it was due to their efforts and encouragement that we secured a suitable and permanent headquarters in a central part of this city, so we now have a hall capable of holding over one hundred people, open every night in the week and public lectures every Sunday evening. We started this last September and have up to the present time given nine lectures as follows:

Sept. 2.—Theosophy and Christianity, a reply to an attack by a local minister; by T. S. Pearce. The whole of this lecture was printed in one of our Daily Papers; Sept. 9, "Reincarnation," by W. H. Berridge; Sept. 16, "Theosophy Generally Considered," by H. W. Graves; Sept. 20, "The Elder Brothers of Humanity," by E. B. Rambo; Sept. 23, "History and Theosophy," by T. S. Pearce; Sept. 30, "Brotherhood," by C. T. Jeanneret; Oct. 7, "Karma and Reincarnation," by F. C. Berridge; Oct. 14, "Theosophy and the Atonement," a reply to an article by W. Goldstone, by T. S. Pearce; Oct. 21, "The Astral Plane," by Captain Clark

#### Pacific Branch, Watsonville, Cal.

Santa Cruz Branch not only maintains well attended regular Sunday evening public meetings, but some of its members find time and opportunity to carry on T. S. work in adjoining towns. During the past two years a number of Theosophical lectures have been given in Watsonville, by different speakers, and Mrs. L. A. Russell of Santa Cruz Branch formed a class for study which was led by herself during the past summer. This combined work has resulted in a Branch. On Oct. 14th, Dr. Griffiths and Mrs. Russell went from Santa Cruz to Watsonville and met by appointment those who desired to form a Branch. The Pacific Branch, T. S., was then organized with seven charter members. Humphrey Hetherington was elected President, and Wm. H. P. Hill, Secretary,

A. G.

#### Stockton Branch.

Jennie L. Southwell, Sec. writes:—In Stockton, Sunday, Oct. 21st, Abbott Clark lectured on Reincarnation. The hall was filled with representatives of the progressive ideas of the day. Both daily papers reported his lecture in good shape.

#### The Theosophical Lodge.

HONOLULU, Nov. 5th.

The Aloha Branch, of Honolulu, Hawaii Islands, continues to meet regularly at No. 109 King Street. Every Monday a class is held, open to the public, the text book being the Ocean of Theosophy in which the greatest interest is manifested by the members of the class. Wednesdays are kept for Theosophical discussions between the members of the Branch, and on Thursdays, there is a class in "Secret Doctrine." To-night the class will take up the last part of chapter II of the Ocean.

#### Pacific Coast Lecturer's Movements

[Lecturer's address: 418 Market St., San Francisco. Correspondence invited.]

Oct. 7th Dr. Griffiths lectured in Oakland upon Brotherhood to a full house. From that date to Oct. 13, various meet-

ings were attended in San Francisco. Sunday, Oct. 14, accompanied by Mrs. L. A. Russell of Santa Cruz Branch, he went to Watsonville and organized the Pacific Branch with seven charter members.

On the same evening Dr. Griffiths returned and lectured in Santa Cruz upon "High Lights of Theosophy," to a large audience. The following night a public quiz was held attended by a larger number. Next evening, Oct. 16th, he spoke in Felton on "Theosophy and Reincarnation." Oct. 17th, attended the meeting of Santa Cruz Branch, and explained methods of Branch and open meeting proceedings, which were adopted. Oct. 18th, "Karma and Reincarnation" was given in Soquel to a deeply interested audience. Oct. 19th, Boulder Creek was visited and a general lecture given to a good house. Oct. 21st, he lectured again in Santa Cruz upon "Brotherhood" to an audience of increased size. Oct. 22, another public quiz was held. Long interviews and reports of lectures were printed in the Santa Cruz papers.

A. G.

When Dr. Griffiths lectured at Los Gatos, Oct. 26, a number of the inmates of the Keeley Institute attended, paid close attention, and afterward inquired for literature. A fair audience was out, and those who remained after the lecture expressed a desire to have other lectures.

At San Jose the following lectures and meetings took place under the auspices of Excelsior Branch: Oct. 28, lecture on "Brotherhood," and immediately afterwards a full Branch meeting was held to devise ways and means to extend T. S. work; Nov. 4, a second lecture was given—subject, "What is Theosophy," in I. O. O. F. Hall, before a fair audience. Dr. Griffiths also attended the regular Branch open meeting held in the afternoon and spoke upon the Seven Principles. Quiz meetings were held Nov. 5 and 6. At the Branch meeting Nov. 7, Dr. Griffiths was invited to present and explain

order of proceedings and methods of study and work for Branch and Public Meetings and Training Classes. The Branch evinced strong desire to discover, adopt and put into execution all available means and methods to enlarge its sphere of work and usefulness. Some changes were made and others discussed. It only remains for San Jose Branch to extend and continue present lines to become a stronger T. S. centre. Success to it.

Nov. 3rd, West Side, Santa Clara Co., was visited in response to an invitation from Bro. J. W. Rupert, President of Marysville Branch, who is temporarily residing there. Bro. Rupert had awakened considerable interest among the people of West Side, as indicated by the attendance at Dr. Griffiths' lectures given there Nov. 3rd and 4th. Mrs. B. Goodrich opened her large parlors for the lectures, and there is fair prospect of a Branch at that point.

Nov. 8th, Dr. Griffiths attended the Gilroy Branch which is doing good work and systematic study. Several accessions to its roll have recently occurred as one result. The next night a lecture on "Brotherhood" was given in Wright Hall. The members express determination to work on orthodox opposition, notwithstanding.

There is a growing interest in Alameda as a result of past persistent and good work of Triangle Branch.

Bro. Julius Oettl, of Aurora Branch, has recently taken residence in Alameda and been actively co-operating with members there.

Improvements are being made in Branch work, and regular public meetings begun. The latter will probably soon be held every Sunday evening. Dr. Griffiths lectured there Nov. 15th, in Red Men's Hall, upon "Adepts, Who, What and Where are They," to a good audience. A. G.

We can advance solely by working unceasingly, unselfishly for others. He who forgets charity, kindness, forbearance for others, cannot progress.