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WHY ARE MEN BROTHERS?*

SOME IDEALS OF BROTHERHOOD.

Why are men brothers?

This is a pertinent question to ask of a student of Theosophy.

"You say that all men are brothers—even the despised Chinamen. How do you know they are? Can you prove it? Why is a Coolie born in the slums of an Asiatic city my brother?—or, to make the contrast even greater—the brother of such an intellectual giant say, as Gladstone or Herbert Spencer?

"Surely that is pushing the argument to the absurd—if that is possible.

"Perhaps they are both Masons?

"In that case one can see some sort of sentimental kinship, both being possessed of the same secrets.

"But after all, that is only a sentiment, purely an artificial kinship. What possible natural tie can there be between a Chinese Coolie and a Gladstone? Surely, this pretty, sentimental theory of brotherhood must halt here—if anywhere. One can hardly draw a greater contrast."

This is my brother talking—my brother who has not yet studied Theosophy. And he thinks he has punctured the brotherhood theory by carrying it to what logicians term *Reductio ad Absurdum*.

But Theosophy sees nothing absurd in the contrast, and is willing to draw—for the sake of the argument—a still greater contrast. *Theosophy* says that the infusoria and a Jesus of Nazareth or a Buddha are brothers! Is this blasphemy? It is not intended for such. And it is truth, whatever else it may be.

This dogma of Brotherhood—if a universal truth and demonstrable fact may be called a dogma—is not, however, the especial property of the Theosophical Society, though it is true that Theosophy alone to-day gives it its broadest and truest expression, and that Theosophy alone can and does prove it to be not only a sentiment, but a law of nature. All the world is full of this brotherhood idea in one form or another. There are more brotherhoods and there is more of a brotherly feeling in the world to-day than ever before.

Let us examine a little, before attempting to answer the question of this paper, what are the ideals and the meanings of brotherhood current at present.

Take the church. It has the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God for a dogma.

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But what kind of a brotherhood is this Christian brotherhood?—I should say, this brotherhood of the churches, for in truth the brotherhood of Christ and the brotherhood of Theosophy are identical. It is an exclusive brotherhood, to begin with. Only the elect may be admitted to it. Only those who take Salvation and go to heaven are brothers. The millions doomed to perdition are not the brothers of the few elect. I am giving the churches' definition of brotherhood, remember.

Thinking men and women have declared they will have none of this brotherhood. It is too narrow and selfish a brotherhood to satisfy the broadening sympathies and growing altruisms of this latter end of the nineteenth century. And besides, the things that one must believe in order to become the brother of a churchman, are things that the independent thinkers refuse to accept. And the churches' theory of brotherhood is unsatisfying, even if it were applied as broadly as it might be. It rests upon the legendary creation by an arbitrary God of the first man, and the farther legendary chronology which puts us all down as the children of Adam. In other words we are all the 70 one-thousandth cousins and nieces of Cain and Abel—that is, of course, supposing not only that this literal rendering of a truly occult account of creation be true, but supposing, also, that the physical body is the real man and woman. It is rather a waste of time, I take it, to examine this threadbare and exploded theory of a purely physical and selfish brotherhood any further. Geology alone disproves its chronology, and the awakening spiritual intuitions of man cry aloud that he is more than flesh and blood.

There are two other popular conceptions of brotherhood. One the Masonic; one that of the political economist. The Masonic is exclusive not alone so far as men go, but it totally excludes from its fraternal bonds more than one half the whole human race—for women may not become brother Masons.

Only the other day an incident was repeated in this city which gives a clew to the ideal of brotherhood held by at least some of the secret society men. A member of a certain order was on the point of deceiving an innocent girl who trusted him unwisely. Accidentally she noticed the badge of his order and remarked that her papa wore the same kind of badge. And this discovery saved her honor, for this fraternal society man could not find it in his heart to harm the daughter of a brother in the same order.

This is an exaggerated and an isolated case, but it has been told in this city as a fact. It was told to a friend of mine as an inducement for him to join that order.

"And if she had been my daughter, and I not a member of your order——?" said my friend. . . . But it is needless to comment upon this kind of brotherhood, it seems to me. Nor is it fair to judge the secret societies and fraternal organizations of to day by this isolated instance. It is far better—indeed it is true Theosophy—to judge no man or set of men, but merely to seek out the truth for yourself, and having found a morsel of it, to hasten to carry it to others. There are many good and true men in the Fraternal Societies, and in many of their rituals are lofty sentiments and noble truths. Their conceptions of brotherhood, at best, however, are very different from those held by Theosophy.

Theosophy would establish a brotherhood whereby every human face on earth should in itself be a sign manual and badge of fraternity, entitling its possessor to sure exemption from evil word, thought, or deed at the hand of every other human being; wherein one human, meeting another human face to face, both should instantly recognize in each other a brother of high degree against whom it were shame and dishonor to harbor so much as a passing thought of ill-humor.

You will notice, perhaps, that Theosophy never speaks of any but a universal brotherhood. All other brotherhoods are narrow and limited when compared with the Theosophical ideal. Nor are any of the many brotherhoods existing to day as broad and humane an expression of a divine truth as that which the political economists give.

They teach brotherhood because they see the absolute interdependence of all men. They point out, not so much that men are brothers, as the necessity for them living together like brothers. Their altruism rests upon effects—not causes. Blindly they mistake effects for causes, as all do who deal only with man as a physical being. They realize that the savage in Central Africa and the merchant in San Francisco are bound together by the laws of trade and commerce, by the laws which govern the production and distribution of wealth, of capital, and of labor. They teach that when a pauper starves a millionaire feels it in one way or another—and they are right in this. Nevertheless they are getting at the truth of brotherhood from the wrong end. They see the surface of things only. They classify the phenomena correctly, perhaps, but they fail to perceive the noumena behind them. They can give you a very good reason why men should become brotherly, but they do not tell us *why* men *are* brothers. Only Theosophy tells us that. Only Theosophy can answer the real questions of life.

And even in this realm of effects, Theosophy gives a better, truer, deeper and vastly more important reason why men should be brotherly, than does political economy. For Theosophy shows us—what western science is even now beginning to admit grudgingly—that the very physical molecules of our bodies, as they resolve themselves from our bodies directly into their several elements and ultimately into one element, are continually being interchanged.

We live in a sea of invisible atoms of varying degrees of vibration, and we breathe in by the lungs and by the pores of the skin indiscriminately and without conscious volition or choice of atoms. We inhabit the air much as fish inhabit the ocean. Only our ocean is a little finer, the fluid we breathe a little rarer. Think you the fish can see the water in which it swims? Neither does man see the ether he inhales and exhales.

But as it passes through his body it receives the impress of his thoughts, and it leaves his body stamped with good or evil, to be reabsorbed unconsciously by another. As I have said, all this matter is of varying degrees of fineness. Some of it, when lumped together in form is visible to the normal eye. This we call physical matter. The other is still finer, its vibrations are so rapid that it is never seen by the normal eye, except in very rare cases and under most exceptional conditions. This is called astral matter. But all of it, astral and physical, forms the ocean of ether in which we have our being. And all of it is plastic; all of it is easily moulded by our thought; all of it is continually being moulded by our thought. It comes to us, perhaps pure, perhaps impure. How shall it leave us to go out and be reabsorbed by our brothers?

Suddenly, unaccountably, an evil thought comes to our mind. Why and from whence? Theosophy answers—and, as I have said, modern science grudgingly endorses it; some of the greatest scientific leaders even affirm it as a proven hypothesis—that we are inhaling ether that is charged with the impress of an evil mind. Was it our own mind that gave it the fearful stamp of evil, and has it gone its way around the world, carrying evil in its track, implanting evil thoughts and deeds into the minds of the millions who must have inhaled and exhaled it, before its cycle brought it back to its starting point; and has it now returned to us like an evil bird come back to roost under its creator's wings? An awful thought, this. And it is not merely a passing thought or an idle theory. It is a fact, a solemn, hard fact, and it is well that we should know it for such.

It has its brighter side, of course, as do all things in heaven and earth. For sometimes—*sometimes*, I say—we think noble thoughts, elevating thoughts, altruistic thoughts, and then we send out this ether charged with the impress of good. If only this interchanging process of etheric vibration could halt until we have time to think noble and loving thoughts! But of course, it cannot. It goes on unceasingly and forever. And by its operation our own lives and the lives of our brothers are continually being colored. Is it not, indeed, a cogent reason why men should be brotherly?

But all this is effect, not cause. Our purpose now is to find out *why* men are brothers. Let us assume, for the argument, that men are brothers and try to answer, why?

THE PREMISES.

For some people the universe contains no mysteries. There are men who know why the blade of grass grows—God makes it grow. They know what the stars are—lamps that God placed in the heaven to make the moonless evenings more pleasant for Adam and his wife, and Adam's children and their sweethearts.

There are those who know what life is—they call it electrical energy. They can tell you why the compass points northward—magnetic attraction; why a stone falls to the earth when poised—the law of gravitation; what fire is—chemical combustion; and what happens after death—disintegration. These people despise the word mystery and would rule it out of the vocabulary if they could. To them the mystic—he who tries to lift a little corner of the curtain that divides the visible from the invisible; that separates man from his real self—he is a dreamer and a fool. These men have even a ready answer for the problem of brotherhood—I forget just what it is now, but no matter.

You and I know that the universe is full of mystery. And after years of study and thought and contemplation we are amazed at how very little of reality we can comprehend, what vast, wonderful, fascinating mysteries there are yet to solve.

Do we, then, rest content, with folded hands, and sigh, indolently, "Ah, well! All this is beyond me. I know that I am hungry and sleepy and hot and cold, have likes and dislikes—and that is enough. Why should I trouble myself about these unknown things?"

No, we do not say this; men who have begun to think never talk like this. Only those for whom the universe contains no mysteries, to whom everything seems quite open and plain speak thus when roused for a moment by a shooting star, or perhaps a new discovery—only those who do not think.

You and I are beginning to think—that is evidenced by our meeting on a Theosophical platform. Those who are too busy or too tired to think do not meet to discuss Theosophy. They have already answered this question of brotherhood to their own satisfaction, and have no further curiosity about it. Or, possibly, the question has never occurred to them and never will in this life. In passing along, however, one might remark, casually, that there are other lives ahead and that eventually all these questions must be solved.

This question is a deep one. It lies at the very base of Theosophical philosophy. It is the one thing insisted upon by Theosophy. It is the one important truth—more important than all other truths combined—that the Theosophical Society is here to teach and explain. Christ taught it and explained it—yet you will hardly get the truth of it from the New Testament as we have it to day. Every sage and every savior of mankind of whom the world has any record, came to man with this one grand message from the Lodge of Elder and wiser brothers—Mahatmas, if you will: "Men, ye are brothers!"

And again, to day, in this last quarter of the nineteenth century—as in the last quarter of every century—the Lodge is once more sending out this message of brotherhood. And to deliver this message of brotherhood, to insist upon the brotherly conduct of all men toward all men, and to give men a basis of faith in reason for the ideals of brotherhood they may still possess—this is the mission of the Theosophical Society.

It is not an easy task to give a true and real definition of brotherhood; to answer the question why are men brothers? as it should be answered. To understand a grand, fundamental truth one must think, think hard and long. To then translate that thought into words that will convey the same idea to other minds, one must think doubly hard and doubly long. And even that is not enough. Those who receive the definition must also think, for no words alone will express so profound a truth as that of Brotherhood.

Some people demand ocular demonstration for such simple things even, as the existence of the soul of man. It is sometimes claimed that we can know nothing about anything that cannot be seen. Of course, this is a very foolish claim, and hardly worth the consideration of those who realize that sight is only one of the senses. It is a faculty that belongs to the animal kingdom and only to the animal part of man. Reason is as much superior to sight as calm thought is to blind impulse. A thing proved in reason is better proved than a thing proved by sight alone, or by any other or all the mere animal senses. Even the law books will tell you that direct evidence, such as is founded upon seeing or hearing, is not always the best kind of evidence. The greatest of jurists have declared that a *complete* chain of circumstantial evidence is far more trustworthy than the testimony of eye-witnesses. For eye-witnesses often give false testimony, either from malice or prejudice, or imperfection of the senses, while circumstances—when the chain is absolutely complete, and no other explanation is reasonably possible—make the safest guide.

So in this matter of brotherhood, Theosophy does not propose to offer you the proof of eye-witnesses. Only Parabrahman or God sees the invisible bonds that connect man with man and which can never be severed.

Judges, in charging juries, often instruct as to the meaning of a reasonable doubt, and that instruction reads something like this: "Gentlemen of the jury, in arriving at your verdict you are expected to exercise the same degree of common sense as you would in determining upon a business transaction. You are forbidden by the law to go outside the bounds of common-sense and reason in order to find a doubt, either for or against the defendant. You are asked to find a verdict by the exercise of the same reasoning processes you would employ in the ordinary affairs of life."

In some cases such instructions have been appealed from, but in every case the higher courts have upheld them. You will find such instructions in all the law books to day, and you will find, too, that they have been given by the most learned judges of modern times and usually in cases where human life was at stake.

I ask you to exercise this same kind of business reason and common sense in following this argument. You can always find a combination of words that, when juggled skillfully, will apparently floor the most profound or the most apparent of truths. In our school days we asked one another what would happen if an irresistible force were to be hurled against an immovable body. But as serious men and women we care no longer for the mere jugglery of words. We are searching for truth; not for tricks. And he who searches for truth will find it.

MEN ARE SOULS.

And now to leap at once to the heart of the argument and put it all in a simple sentence: Men are brothers because men are souls!

Not till the end of a period of manifestation, not till millions and millions of years have elapsed and the homogeneity of all things becomes once more apparent, could there be in any sense, a rational basis for a purely physical brotherhood. And, indeed, not even then, for by that time physical substance, as we now know it, will have long, long since vanished from the universe we inhabit.

In truth, there can be no physical basis for brotherhood. Physical substance is always distinct and separate. Remove the separateness and distinctiveness of the myriad forms of matter, and matter disappears. To those who can look behind the veil of physical matter, there is no matter.

Matter is an illusion, the flimsiest and most fleeting of all illusions, for it is made up only of form, form that changes every day, every instant.

So if man is immortal, man is not matter. Man is that which lies back of matter. Man is

soul! The soul is the man, and this body of the soul is only one of its thousands of coats or coverings that it uses for a time, then loses forever.

This is the one grand mistake of nearly all of modern thought and philosophy—that it deals with this "mortal coil," this flimsy, changing, fleeting coat of flesh, as the real man. Even those who recognize, theoretically, the immortality of man, speak of "the soul of man." This is wrong. The soul *is* the man. When Theosophy speaks of man it means always the real man, the thinker, the ego, the mind, the human soul. It speaks of "man's body," but never of "man's soul." It is as logical to speak of a "three-pointed triangle" as it is to speak of "the soul of man."

But, still, one may ask, "May the souls not be distinct and separate? Where is the tie of kinship between them? What makes them brothers?"

Here it is that Theosophy asks you to believe things that can neither be weighed nor measured. It asks you to believe that there is only one soul in the universe and that you and I and all the atoms and monads are but fractional parts of that one Integral Soul—that Universal Oversoul, it is called.

We lay aside now the designation human soul. It is true that there is a basis for brotherhood on the purely human side of man's nature, for the thinking principle which distinguishes man from animal is but the individualized center of universal mind. Technically the universal mind is called mahat, which means cosmic ideation or universal intelligence and consciousness. Now in all the kingdoms below man this mahat or universal mind is latent, and lacks individualization in greater or less degree. Only in man is it individualized and developed into an active, potent guiding principle. It is this thinking principle—this mind of man which recognizes itself as itself and as separate from other selves—that Theosophy speaks of as the Human Soul.

But when Theosophy speaks of Brotherhood it lays aside all nice distinctions, all points of possible difference of opinion between students, or between any thinking men, and goes at once to the heart of things.

That which is in man is also in the stone and in the tree—the spirit of God and its vehicle, the spiritual soul. These two principles are technically called Atma and Buddhi. I cannot attempt to explain in cold words what these two principles are, but can only point out that you may discover for yourselves whether or not they exist, whether or not they are mere words.

There is one thing you may have noticed about Theosophy, that while it does not attempt to weigh and measure all its statements for you, at the same time it warns you not to accept them on mere blind faith, and it points out to you the way in which to verify all the statements for yourself. It is so with these higher principles of man, particularly. Theosophical literature will show you that there is a philosophical necessity for them, and the philosophy itself—which is a science and a religion as well as a philosophy—will tell you that Buddhi, the divine soul, can only be known by itself, and that the Spirit of God, the Atma, can only be known by itself.

Now these two higher principles exist alike in all nature. They inform the monad—they are the monad—whether the monad inhabit the rock, the plant, the animal, or the body of the man.

So that leaving aside this question of individual consciousness, in order to seek for the larger, truer, meaning of brotherhood and of life, you and I and all the living entities in the visible and invisible universe, are but differentiations of the Divine Oversoul. We are but different rays of the one Soul Sun. This is a metaphor often effectively used. Let us liken the Universal Soul to the Universal Sun, and then imagine a great building with, say, a billion windows, and ourselves and our brothers each a different ray of sunlight shining in through

those windows. Of course, to make the analogy complete there should be many more than a billion windows, for the rays of this Universal Oversoul shine into every atom in the Universe. We should have, indeed, a building with as many windows as there are metaphysical atoms in the universe.

But granted that there are a sufficient number of windows in our hypothetical mansion, and that all these windows face the south at the dawn of a bright summer day—or at the dawn of a period of manifestation, we might say. Consider for a moment, the sunlight streaming in through all these windows—the sunlight of the Universal Soul, let us call it.

With such a picture in the mind's eye does not all the rest follow as a matter of course?

Falling aslant through the open windows upon floors which boast all the beautiful marvels and harmonies of mother earth laid in nature's own exquisite patterns and mosaics, are these myriads of rays of sunlight (soul light).

You and I and our brothers, past, present, and to come, are these rays. Each of us is a single ray. Yet are we separate? We have only to turn our eyes back along the ray to dispel such an illusion. If we, these rays, stand with our backs to the sunlight and look only upon the dense matter around us and beneath us; if we look up no further than the roof of the building, and beyond us no further than the walls of the building, we seem to be separate. Yet we have only to turn our eyes in the right direction to perceive the truth.

Of course, it is a beautiful building—there are seams of gold on the floor, there is a wine press before us and a beautiful, sensuous goddess pours out the wine for us in silver cups. She is very fair. The sunlight (not the soul light), dazzles our eyes as it gleams on her white, heaving bosom, and from her shapely wrists—more graceful than the chiseled marble of Phidias—strings of pearls and precious stones are pendant. How they glitter as she holds high the cup of earthly joys!

Ah, we have no time now to look back over the ray and see the parent Sun! We press forward to get but a sip from that sparkling cup, or to win but a passing smile from the fair goddess! How eager, how eager we are!

Stand aloof with me for a season and watch the mad rush toward the goddess. See how the rays blend and mingle in the rush. The path—that broad and ever broadening path—is all too narrow. Some get in others' way, some rush past others, some knock others down in the rush, some trample on others, some beat, push, choke, cheat, rob, the others. What a wild fury it all is—and for what? Just for a sip from the silver cup; just for a smile from the red lips and twinkling eyes of the fair goddess, ere night falls and leaves the room in darkness. How passing sweet must be the nectar of that cup! How peaceful and comforting the smiles of the goddess!

But see, some one, standing high upon a pile of corpses, calls a halt and cries out: "Men, men, ye are brothers! Ye cannot live apart; ye cannot enjoy apart!"

"Its a lie!" cry some, and casting a stone at the sage, on they rush toward the goddess.

Some are inclined to think, and they ask of the sage, "Why are men brothers?"

"Look within yourselves," says the sage; "turn your faces from the goddess and look upward and inward. Look along the Ray to its source. You are the Ray."

But only a very few heed.

He cries again, "There's death in the cup! There's a pestilence gleaming from the eyes of the goddess!"

Now the goddess tunes a golden harp and plays a pretty melody. It drowns the voice of the sage and the mad rush goes on.

At high noon the glare of the sunlight is so real that the Architects insert colored glass in the windows. So now the rays shining through all take on different hues; and who shall be daring enough, in the afternoon sunlight, to cry again, "Men ye are brothers?"

The different patterns in the stained glass windows—evidencing the more than human skill and infinite resources of the architect—have changed the rays not only to different colors, but to myriads of different shapes and forms. Brothers, these? —Impossible!

Yet now and then one remembers the words of the sage, "Look inward," and turning, while yet his eyes can bear the greater light, he sees the truth.

Then, in the evening, comes another sage and cries again, "Ye are brothers!"

Many are weary of the chase now. Many have struggled toward the goddess from the early dawn and have not even reached to touch the hem of her silken robes. Many have fought and pushed and crushed so ruthlessly and fiercely that they have reached the cup and tasted even its dregs. Ah, "those dregs! They who have tasted them are the more weary, the more ready to listen.

But the glare of the dying sun is too strong for them. In vain they turn their faces back on the Ray—on themselves. The light blinds them; they can see nothing.

"I am lost!" they cry, "for I can see neither way."

Then night comes.

THE UNIVERSAL OVERSOUL.

Now, a word about this Universal Oversoul. Necessarily and quite apparently it is not a personal, fiat Deity. If it could be that, then we, its rays, could not be responsible beings.

It is to our universe what the Absolute, unknowable, unthinkable is to all the universes.

It is first the unknowable Itself and then an aspect of the Unknowable. It is the universal center of consciousness, or the center of the universal consciousness. It is both, in truth, and from it, to it, and in it radiate all other centers of consciousness.

Necessarily in an essay of this length and character one could not attempt to present even the greater and more apparent reasons that Theosophy finds for this postulate of a Universal Oversoul.

Nevertheless Theosophy does not ask you to accept it as a matter of faith, but asks you to examine all the premises and arguments carefully and calmly and earnestly, and then say for yourself whether you believe it or not. Look within yourself for the truth. Indeed, it is not a matter of belief; it is strictly a matter of knowledge. Not of knowledge derived from animal sensation, but of knowledge that comes from soul perception, from human reason, and from divine intuition—the kind of knowledge that a human being may rightly claim his own and be guided by; and not the kind of knowledge by which an ape and a cow gain experience.

And if you examine the question conscientiously and with a mind devoid of all desire save that of finding truth, you will find not only that the Universal Oversoul is a philosophical necessity—you will come to know that there is an Oversoul—you will find the Oversoul.

And in the finding you will solve the meaning of life. You will answer for yourself not only the question, why are men brothers? but also the question, why do I live?

You will know why the Great Soul seemingly separates itself into Rays and you will know that the mission of each Ray is to come into conscious knowledge of the whole. And beyond this human reason does not extend. You will never know why it is necessary for the Oversoul to separate itself in order to gain experience in matter and then return to itself. Such questions can never be answered. They are idle.

Let us consider some of the questions that can be answered.

Someone asks, "If we are but the fractional parts of a Divine whole, how can we be responsible for our acts; how can the parts be responsible?"

Let me say first, that some of the parts are not responsible, because they are not self-conscious; and, secondly, that as already hinted this ray of the Universal Oversoul is not all of man.

Man is a composite being, Theosophy teaches. Like everything else in nature—save the

Absolute itself—man is a Septenary being, having seven chief principles or parts. Even the irresponsible Rays, the monads which inhabit all the forms of matter below man, are also septenary in their nature. But their higher principles are latent, merely potential, and undeveloped. And man himself is finite, because some of his principles are still undeveloped.

The distinguishing quality between man and the animal is that man can reason. It is the action of mind that makes man responsible, enables him to shape his own destiny, and it is the latency of the reasoning principle in all the lower kingdoms which leaves them irresponsible and places the responsibility for their evolution in the hands of higher entities, ourselves.

When the sixth principle shall have been developed in man, man will know the Oversoul. When the seventh shall be active and potent man will be united with the Absolute, will have solved all the mysteries, will be once more a part of the Great Mystery of Mysteries.

Everyone who examines Theosophy, even casually, learns about the seven principles of man, and the names by which they are technically known. He learns that all of these seven principles exist alike in all men, though in different stages of development. Now there is not one of these principles but what may be, with more or less force, likened to the sunlight streaming in through the mansion of many windows, though, of course, the farther down the scale we get, the nearer to matter we bring the analogy, the less real and the more far-fetched it becomes.

A physical brotherhood is at best but a transient affair. The lower principles die—but man does not die. Yet we talk of men dying. Our very language is based upon our false conceptions of the real. The four lower principles of man do not retain their individuality when what we call death comes. Of course, in the abstract, it is wrong to say that even these lower principles die, for nothing dies. It is only change. But the physical body; the astral body; prana, or the life force; and the animal soul, or the passional body—all these disintegrate and separate at the hour of so-called death. Theosophy calls these the impermanent quaternary. No real brotherhood can be based upon these, for when they are separated from the Higher Triad—the real man—they exist no longer as an individual center but are resolved back into their respective elements.

But this Higher Triad, in which is the mind, the soul, and the spirit—the human—this is eternal and indestructible. This persists as an individual center of consciousness throughout the long ages. It ever was and ever will be. At times it clothes itself in the four lower principles and journeys for a brief space through physical life and being. Then what is called "death" comes, and the Higher Triad functions, exists, retains its individuality, on another plane of consciousness. It rests, as it may be said, and while resting assimilates the various experiences it has gathered while undergoing its seventy years or less of objective existence.

So it is seen that this Theosophical conception of Brotherhood is a lasting one. We are brothers not for this life alone, but for all time. We are brothers now and forever. And no man is not our brother. No living thing in the universe is not our brother. The spirit of the Absolute and the Soul of the Oversoul informs every atom in the universe; every atom in the universe imprisons them.

This is a grand, wonderful, mysterious universe, and he who sees only the surface of things is blind indeed; yet blinder still is he who cries,

"I am not my brother's keeper."

JAMES H. GRIFFES.

WE hope our readers will not skip the article in this issue by Brother Griffes because it is "set up" in small type. The PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST is so small that there was no other way to get it in.

DEVACHAN.

Devachan is another of those Sanscrit words which Theosophy has borrowed from the Hindus. An analysis of the term gives us Deva, meaning a very high being, and Chan, meaning a dwelling or place. This word Deva may again be referred back to the root dev, which means bright; which with its termination, gives Deva, a bright being. Devachan, would mean, then, the dwelling of bright, celestial beings, or the place of the gods. Though often spoken of as a place, it is rather a condition, or state, intermediate between two earth-lives, into which the Ego enters after its separation from Kama and the disintegration of the lower principles. In Tibetan Buddhism, the name Sukhavati is sometimes used. This means the abode of the blessed, into which ascend those who have accumulated much merit in the practice of virtue.

The Devachanic condition may be likened to the heaven of the Christians with this difference. With the Christians heaven is a place of eternal bliss; but according to Theosophy, the length of the stay in Devachan is dependent upon the spiritual aspirations and inclinations of the personality during its life on earth.

Because of the fact that we have aspirations and exalted ideas, there must necessarily be a state where those ideas and aspirations may be assimilated, giving us an opportunity to come forth and work, with greater harmony and with more energy, for human welfare and for our own good. It is said that wise Mother Nature has in some way provided for every need of her children. After the cares and trials of this life, after the fierce anxiety and restless turmoil which the spiritual thinking being experiences while imprisoned in matter, there comes to the soul the need of rest, of peace, of bliss. After the worn-out *Manu*, the Thinker, has spent its life upon earth, generating its various causes, clothing itself with its own mental creations, then comes a period of rest, in which the thoughts, the aspirations, and the energies set going in the past life are assimilated. Many of the highest tendencies, thoughts and aspirations, which on account of the binding, oppressive conditions and environments surrounding the Ego in earth life, could not be realized, find their proper fruition in Devachan.

After the death of the body, gradual disintegration of the lower

principles takes place; while those higher and more permanent constituting the real man, gradually retire or subside into a purely subjective state, there to assimilate what they can of the lessons of the late earthly experience. Some describe Devachan as a state of rest, while others claim that it is a state of activity; but all agree that it is a state of bliss. In reality, it is a state which is in entire accord with the needs or aspirations of every individual entering into it. It is a mental condition or state, as Kama is the state of desire. Here the mental and spiritual nature of man, the godlike nature within, lives upon its true plane, unhampered by the gross material vehicles which confine it in the body.

The Devachanic state is a continuation of earth life, but shorn of its sorrows; it is a completion of the wishes and desires of earth life, so far as those were pure and noble. It is the time for the assimilation of life experiences, the regaining of equilibrium ere a new journey is commenced.

The Self in Devachan is devoid of this body, but it carries with it such of its life experiences as are fit for assimilation with the Higher Ego. Manas, which during objective manifestation was dual, again becomes one, and unites with Atma-Buddhi, the two higher principles. As Devachan is the plane of effects whose causes originate in the purely spiritual and higher elements of man's nature, there is not the faintest touch of inharmony there. Nor can it be monotonous, for this would be contrary to the law of effects, under which results are proportionate to antecedent energies. That which survives in Devachan is not merely the individual monad, which lives through all the changes of the whole evolutionary scheme and flits from body to body, but the purer essence of the self-conscious personality, living out in this subjective state all the superior phases of thought, feeling and emotion. And, to the Devachanee, this subjective state is as real, as vivid as is our present existence to us.

Here, the Ego, divested of the mortal body, functions upon the plane of mind and soul. The Devachanee is surrounded by his friends and loved ones, and separated from all that is unpleasant. The high aspirations and ideals which he was unable to bring about on earth, because hampered by surrounding conditions, are here realized. This is also a place of growth; and one who has pursued studies of an abstract or ideal kind, such as music, art or poetry, may continue to

advance in the subjective state. And this, perhaps, may account for the genius of a Mozart or a Shakespeare.

To call Devachanic existence a dream, in any other sense than that of a conventional term, is to renounce forever the knowledge of the esoteric doctrine. As in actual earth life, so there is for the Ego in Devachan the first flutter of psychic life, the attainment of prime, the gradual exhaustion of force, passing into semi-consciousness and lethargy, followed by total oblivion, and then, birth into a new personality and the resumption of action on this plane. Devachan differs with every individual. The law of Karma rules there as here, and our thoughts on this plane are the causes of which Devachanic conditions are the effects. Just as the physical brain responds to and records molecular vibrations, so do spiritual thoughts and desires set up vibrations upon higher planes which are recorded upon the memory of the Higher Ego. And it is this record which determines, not only the conditions which will surround us in Devachan, but also the environments of our next earth life. If a man has originated no thoughts or impulses of a spiritual character, there will be no force to throw his higher principles into Devachan, and he will emerge from Kama Loka only to re-enter a new body, without the rest and growth which Devachan, might have afforded. Devachan is the effect or reward for good and noble thoughts and deeds; while return to earth life, or utter annihilation in Kama Loka is the effect which follows evil and material thoughts and deeds. "The moral and spiritual activities find their sphere of effects in Devachan." That part of us which could not bloom under the chilling skies of earth life bursts forth into flower, and goes back with us to earth again, stronger and more a part of our nature than ever before.

In Devachan there is change of occupation, just as there is in the life of a man or woman who follows one trade or profession; and there is this difference, that with the Devachanee the spiritual occupation is pleasant and fills his life with rapture. Here the dreams of the objective become the realities of the subjective existence. There are as many varieties in the Devachanic state of bliss as there are of perception upon earth. We create our own Devachan while yet on earth and mostly during the latter days and moments of our intellectual sentient lives. That feeling which is strongest in us in that supreme hour, when, as in a dream, the events of a long life, to their

minutest detail, are marshalled before our vision—that feeling will become the fashioner of our bliss or woe, the life-principle of our future existence.

The duration of the Devachanic period depends entirely upon the individual. An active, intellectual materialist would remain in this state a comparatively short time; while one of high aspirations and spiritual strength could remain a much longer period. Some of the books state that the stay of the average man lasts for fifteen hundred years; but whether or not this be the case, time is but an illusion, and does not exist on the subjective planes. So, however long or short the stay, it will seem complete. And it will not be, as so many fear, a waste of time, but a period of refreshment which enables the mental and spiritual forces of life to store themselves up once more in the spiritual man, thus creating the energy needed for taking up again the burden of flesh.

With the ordinary person, Devachan is entirely governed by the thoughts and aspirations of the past life, and, up to a certain limit, the length of this state is determined by those thoughts and aspirations. But, where these aspirations have brought a man up to real knowledge and to strength and power in his individuality—an energetic condition, far above mere idle dreaming for peace and bliss—when the soul has developed up to this high plane, then the man begins to shorten his Devachanic period. Then the energy is so strong that the waking or the sleeping dreams are no longer idle fancies; but they are states of energy, force and character.

There is another factor that has much to do with the length of Devachan, and that is the attraction of the Ego resting there for earth life, and also the attraction of other Egos, whether in or out of the body, for the one resting. Should the attraction of such Egos be so powerful as to create a force which would overcome the forces which held the soul in Devachan, the stay of the one upon whom such influence or attraction was exercised in that state would be terminated, and, under the law of Karma, it would again be attracted to earth life.

It is the law of Karma which takes us into this state, and which brings us out of it. So we should be careful what kind of Karma we are making; what causes we are setting up here, to produce their effects in the future. If we wish to be wiser, grander, purer men and women and to help in the work of humanity, we must create the conditions for ourselves.

THEOSOPHICAL COUNCIL.

The following extracts from a letter of President Hargrove to San Francisco Branch, apply to all Branches and centers, and are therefore published here:

“Let us dwell for a minute or two upon the future of the work. Our public meeting here showed what a wide-spread interest there is at the present time in Theosophy. It is not of course sufficient to interest the public temporarily.

“That interest must be sustained if permanent good is to be accomplished. And I hold that it is, after all, a very simple matter to keep them interested. Theosophy will do that if we present it properly. Already a good deal has been said on this point, both by word and in print. Yet once more I wish to urge upon every student the necessity of simplifying our teachings. It is our own fault if the most ignorant child cannot gain a fair grasp of our views in regard to man and all nature. We could afford to spend more time in thinking how Theosophy might be made easier and more elementary. This is even more important than the gaining of more knowledge about details for our own benefit or amusement.

“It is clearly not our business to be eccentric, nor to put forward such a natural and common-sense system of thought as Theosophy in a way that will strike many people as fantastic. It is not our business to shock people into Theosophy. We have to speak their language and to live their lives, so far as may be right and in accordance with our own ideals.

“But there is something which will attract people even more than efforts in the above directions, and that is if your Branch becomes known as a centre of true brotherhood. If every member were to live Theosophy, in thought and deed, your entire city would become theosophical in less than five years. For to show an actual and living example of tolerance, of kindness, of sympathy, of breadth of view, of wisely directed brotherly love, would attract thousands who soon would realize that near at hand was a haven of peace and good-will.

“To forgive our enemies and to forget them as such; to love one another, not emotionally but steadfastly—this is theosophy.

“An old story, truly; so old that one is almost ashamed to repeat it. But I think that it contains the key to all knowledge, for true

and unselfish love brings energy, and that brings work and sacrifice, and work breaks through the shadows round the heart. Once those shadows vanish, *wisdom* illumines the mind; or so the old books say and I think truly.

“ May we succeed then in establishing in our own minds and hearts true centers of brotherhood. The rest will take care of itself. With every good wish I am yours, fraternally as always,

E. T. HARGROVE.”

A MEDITATION.

“ The Self of Matter and the Self of Spirit can never meet. One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both.”

Where dwells this self of matter? Where is this place which cannot be inhabited by both the Higher and the Lower Selves? I think it is that place in the affections which we designate the “heart.” Up to the present time, self has filled the heart—the personal self—its desires, its pleasures, its pains, its hopes, its fears and its loves. For self, this petty self, we have lived and toiled, and its concerns have filled the heart, until it seems the center of the Universe, the one chief object of existence. Think what this means; nothing less than that self usurps the place of God.

How can we change this object of life? Poor mistaken beings, who have struggled so long for worthless ends, can we ever realize a different existence? We who have loved self so long, shall we not find life a blank, a “seeming void,” if work for that poor self is suddenly realized as valueless; if its desires cease to be a stimulus to action?

What shall we put in place of self? What shall become the object of life? What can fill the heart from which we banish self? The heart needs to love—it is its life. It cannot be vacant. That house which was “swept and garnished became the habitation of seven other devils more wicked than the first dweller.” Life must have a purpose, or we shall not have the energy to live.

Consider for a moment the Universe as a whole; we believe it to be a manifestation of Deity; then we as parts of the whole, are instruments of Deity, the Master of the Universe, the Higher Self. We exist then, by the will of that master, to carry out his purposes and to be a harmonious unit in the vast whole.

That Higher Self is the rightful tenant of the heart, we may enshrine it there, worship it as Divine, make its purpose, which is the uplifting and enlightenment of humanity) the object of life, devote ourselves wholly to it, listen for its commands as eager disciples wait for the teacher's words, and above all, cultivate its one divine attribute, which is no attribute—Compassion. Gradually self will disappear "thy being melted in its Being—Compassion Absolute."

E. P. J.

Editorial.

THE CRUSADERS.

"How beautiful upon the mountains," said the Seer of old, "are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" The metaphor of the aged East is vibrating through the thought of the West to-day, as we watch the good tidings of peace carried from land to land until the whole earth is girdled. For the Crusaders have at last reached San Francisco, have filled it with the waves of the divine force they carry, and have passed on to lay the Corner Stone of the School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity at San Diego—or, to be more accurate—at Point Loma near San Diego.

The work done in San Francisco was magnificent. At the public meeting upon Sunday evening the large hall (Odd Fellows) was jammed from floor to gallery. Every seat possible was occupied, and hundreds stood throughout the entire program. Some 2500 to 3000 were crowded within the hall, while it is impossible to estimate the number turned away—perhaps fully as many more. Half an hour before the meeting time the hall was filled to overflowing. Nor was mere curiosity to see a "mahatma" the motive, for after Mrs. Tingley spoke very few indeed left the hall, although it was already late. There was a real, deep-seated interest manifested to know what Theosophy offers to solve the problems of life. The speakers were listened to with marked attention and respect, and frequently applauded. Mrs. Tingley and Mr. Hargrove spoke eloquently as usual, while the other Crusaders did remarkably well—especially, the

Rev. Mr. Williams, who gave a very spirited address upon "Brotherhood." Mrs. Cleather and Mr. Patterson were also in fine form.

Then followed the "Brotherhood Supper," at which some two hundred worthy men, out of employment and hungry, were given a good, substantial meal. Short addresses followed the supper, to which these men listened with the closest interest.

But the principal work, as usual, was upon the "inside." Nearly fifty neophytes were admitted, and a feeling of brotherly solidarity generated which will have a most profound effect for good upon the Society primarily, and then upon humanity at large. Truly, the strong souls of H. P. B., Wm. Q. Judge, and other revered teachers, must rejoice to see the fruition of their work as it ripens under the magnetic force of their most worthy successor, Mrs. Tingley.

And she, the new Leader, how can one picture her as she is? Many have seen her, however, and they *know*. The old energies flow through her as freely as they did of old through Madame Blavatsky (so testify those who were and are nearest to both), while she herself brings a new and thrilling force to the rescue of humanity. No greater inspiration ever poured through any Messenger of the Lodge than that manifested by Mrs. Tingley when the Red Rajput, who colors the very texture of her skin—but, hold, we are trespassing upon forbidden ground. It is hard *not* to do so when writing of Mrs. Tingley. One thing, however, may be boldly and confidently stated. *She is the Messenger of the Masters*: no more need be, nor can be, said.

Let us upon the Coast, then, shoulder to shoulder, and heart to heart, press on with our work. We have every reason to feel encouraged. Let all personal issues be sunk, let the chafing of personalities, which at our present stage is almost inevitable, be recognized as only the personality, and not to be confused with the real brother and fellow-worker obscured temporarily by that personality. The night breaks; the day dawns; let us work on and hope on; we can not but win the fight for humanity if we continue to maintain a brotherly solidarity within our own ranks.

The Magazine review department is omitted from this issue for want of time. The editor has not even had time to review his own sins—much less to point out those of our publications.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE HUMAN AURA is a recent book, by A. Marques, S. D., which deals with this interesting subject from the standpoint of a clairvoyant. Of course, anyone not a clairvoyant is quite incapable of judging whether or not the work is an accurate description. This is the condition of the reviewer, and, like the old Baptist preacher who had never learned to read, he was on the point of saying that he "thanked God for it." For while such studies may be intensely interesting to those who have clairvoyant powers, they must remain matters of doubt and conjecture to those who have not. Besides the digging into the strata of the aura is just about as useful (or seems so to the writer) as the classifying of a hundred thousand varieties of beetles, inasmuch as it makes no one really better and more brotherly, which is the real object of knowledge. However, the book is a good one of its class, and many a hint may be picked up by its perusal, even if one differs from the author's deductions. For sale by the Mercury Pub. Co., Native Sons' Building., San Francisco.

There is no act, no thought, that does not make a force in consciousness; no power can finally stay that force from its entire manifestation. That sounds like fatalism, but it is not so; fatalists neglect a factor to which we will at once make reference. It is the *will* of each of us. The will is a generator of force, a liberator and a destroyer of forces that already exist. The will of man is a spark from the great flame of will that brought all this universe into manifestation, and its energies are for each man not limited. It is the very center of being, and we so study it. This central will in nature, from which we derive our own, is shown in *scope of action*. Actions of little scope have this will but little, resting rather on impulse, or on the smaller motives of personal humanity. The wider the scope the more of the central will. So, carrying it further, we say that a Master is he who acts with the full and unlimited scope of the central will. The central will in its full scope brings forth life. He imitates that whose actions bring forth scope of life in himself and others.

HERBERT CORYN, in Isis.

January issue should have read Vol. VI, No. 10. A mistake of the printer.

There was in the beginning neither heaven nor earth, and nothing existed except a boundless, primeval mass of water which was shrouded in darkness, and which contained within itself the germs or beginnings, male and female, of every thing which was to be in the future world. The divine primeval spirit, which formed an essential part of the primeval matter, *felt within itself the desire to begin the work of creation*, and its word woke to life the world, the form and shape of which it had already depicted within itself..... When the inert mass of primeval matter felt the desire of the primeval spirit to begin the work of creation, it began to move, and the creatures which were to constitute the future world were formed according to the divine intelligence, Maa. —*Book of the Dead.*

BRANCH REPORTS.

NARADA BRANCH, TACOMA, WASH.

R. H. Lund, Sec., writes: Narada T. S. is as usual very active, the greatest of harmony prevails which must be the direct cause of the good work that is continually being done at this place. Since last October our membership has increased from twenty-nine to forty-one, making ours the largest Branch in Washington and one of the largest on the Coast. Our public lectures are well attended by earnest and interested audiences, and the same can well be said of our Thursday evening study meetings.

Our officers for the year 1897, are:—President F. G. Plummer; Secy., R. H. Lund; Treas., F. L. Crosby, and Librarian, Geo. Sheffield. Our headquarters are at the same old place, 1004 Tacoma Ave., which is open daily from 2 to 5 o'clock P. M.

One of the most active and energetic organizations of our Branch is the "Crusade Workers" composed of the ladies of the Branch and a number of ladies not members, but very interested in the cause and work. It was through the work of this organization that our Crusade Fair of last December was made so successful; it is through their untiring devotion and work that our headquarters has lately been fitted out with a new carpet covering the whole hall, new curtains, and so many other things new that we boast of having one of the most pleasant and attractive rooms of any Branch.

One of the latest moves is a Home Crusade, now actively at work and meeting with great success.

LOS ANGELES BRANCH, LOS ANGELES, CAL.

H. B. Leader, Sec., writes: During the month of January the following lectures have been given here, viz: "A. B. C. of Theosophy", H. A. Gibson; "Why

Are Men Brothers?" J. H. Griffes; "Theosophy and Christianity," James M. Pryse; "Factors Wanting in Modern Life", James M. Pryse; "Man's Place in Nature", H. A. Gibson; "After Death, What?" A. B. Clark; "Consider the Lilies," James M. Pryse; "A New Series of the Ages", O. I. Clark.

Average attendance 79. We hold two study classes during the week besides the Branch Meeting, and interest generally is increasing.

REPORT OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SUB COMMITTEE.

During the six months ended 31st December, 1896, the regular lecturer, Abbot B. Clark, has visited the following towns giving lectures and parlor talks in each and organizing classes for study in six of them: Santa Barbara, Summerland, Ventura, Pasadena, Covina, Pomona, Ontario, San Bernardino, Redlands, Riverside, Villa Park, Santa Ana, Catalina Island, Santa Monica, Toluca, East Los Angeles. Classes have been organized in Santa Barbara, Redlands, San Bernardino, and Toluca, with a membership of from 12 to 18 in each, and in Pomona and Santa Monica with a smaller number. Other lecturers have visited some of these towns, and also Long Beach, Clearwater and Downey. Crusade meetings have been held in Pasadena, Santa Monica, East Los Angeles and Toluca, that at Pasadena bringing out an audience of nearly one hundred people. In all, there have been given 78 lectures within the six months (not including those delivered in Los Angeles) 33 by the regular lecturer, and 45 by others, with a total attendance of about 2307 persons. Over fifty columns of Theosophical reading matter has been published in the newspapers of Southern California within the six months, comprising articles from three inches in length to two or three columns, principally in the Los Angeles *Herald* and in the Pasadena *Star* and *News*. Over two hundred letters have been written, principally circular letters, and about 4000 leaflets distributed through the mails, beside 21 newspapers containing articles on Theosophy sent through the mails, and 475 distributed.

Respectfully Submitted,

PAUL S. HEFFLEMAN, SEC'Y.

BLUE MOUNTAIN BRANCH, ELGIN, O.

Julius C. Hug, Sec., writes: The Blue Mountain Branch, T. S. A., holds regular meetings every Sunday. We have music before, after, and once during the meeting. Each member has cards for questions to be handed to the audience. Members answer these as well as they are able. Our attendance is small but we will go on with our meetings.

H. H. and J. C. Hug held their first public meeting at Elgin. Neither are able to lecture, but about 75 people spent a pleasant evening. The Elk Flat Cornet Band played before and after the meeting. J. C. H. spoke about ten minutes giving the three Objects of Theosophy etc. etc. H. H. Hug spoke and read concerning the Theosophical Crusade, Masonry, and the School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity. Professor Bishop favored the audience with violin solos at intervals during the meeting.