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Theosophy in Theory and in Practice.

AS ALL the world knows, theory and practice are two widely different things. Each has its use; but, like faith and works, they must join hands and labor together, to bring forth the best results. No amount of theorizing will ever be of much benefit to the world, unless the theorizer, or some one else, puts it into practice. On the other hand, a great deal of honest labor is lost—or at least partially lost—because it is done in an unconsidered, haphazard sort of way. That is practice without theory.

The work which is most effective, which is of real, lasting value, is that which results from a thoroughly well-digested theory, a systematic and carefully thought out plan, conscientiously worked out on practical lines. The person who goes to work in this way has a very fair chance of accomplishing something worth living for, while one who acts altogether upon the impulse of the moment, wastes his time and strength in desultory and spasmodic efforts, which may be quite as frequently as productive of evil as of good. Yet it is often said that the truest word has been spoken, the best act has been performed on the momentary impulse.

That may be true enough; it is true. But the person to whom this right impulse comes at the right moment, is not the careless, thoughtless, inconsiderate being who has never attempted to formulate any system of life or thought. No; these right impulses come to those who have made strong endeavors to think out the problems of life, and to bring their own lives into accord with the system or theory evolved through the process of that thinking. What appears to be impulse is the logical outcome of deep and laborious study. Such a person has learned what to do under given circumstances; when those circumstances arise he simply does what he has learned, without having to stop and go over again the same ground which he has before passed in arriving at these conclusions. Therefore it is not really what is usually understood by acting on impulse. The boy who has thoroughly mastered the multiplication table will, when asked, answer instantly, without pausing to consider, that 7 times 7 are 49. His prompt reply does not come from impulse; it comes from knowledge.

So the person who is prompted to say or do the right thing at the right time, acts, not on impulse, but on knowledge acquired either in this, or in some former life.

It is not the dreamer, the theorizer, who lays this true and stable foundation, on which prompt, efficient action is built. One might study the science of music forever, but it is only constant and long continued practice which gives him the ability of mechanical execution. The great musical genius may compose the grandest harmonies, but he must also have learned the perfect and skillful use of the instrument before he can translate his compositions into sound. Otherwise what shall it profit the world? So the painter may dream of the most divinely beautiful pictures, but, wanting the mechanical skill to put his visions upon canvas, his work as an artist is never done. Yet some may say his thought will go out on the mental plane and inspire and impel other artists to accomplish more and better work. True enough; yet had his thought inspired and impelled himself to action, a greater amount of work would have been done, and his thought would have gained in force and intensity through his very effort to give it visible form and color on the practical plane. And this added force and intensity would also have been given to those whom his thought had reached. Thus, his theory, without practice may have done some good; but this same theory, worked out by himself, would have accomplished far more.

Those who suppose all they have to do in the world is to *think* good thoughts are in error. Those who think they must be all the time rushing about the world doing something, without considering what is necessary to be done, or how best to do it, are also mistaken. When a person has advanced so far that he is above labor or action on the material plane, he will no longer inhabit a dense, material body, such as we see around us, and which must be fed and nourished on the coarse matter of the vegetable, and even animal, kingdom. No; when he has reached a plane where his work is to be done alone by thought, he will have a thought body—a luminous, ethereal body, composed of matter so rarified, so spiritualized that it could not be perceived by our grosser senses. Moreover, the rate of vibration in such a form would be so widely different from that of ours, that should we come into sudden contact with such a body, the shock to us would be full of peril—might even prove fatal. That is one of the many reasons why the Mahatmas do not come among us. Why so many people think they could and should do so is because they are ignorant of these occult laws.

Practice is theory crystalized into action. This is the work which every true Theosophist has before him. Theosophy bids humanity look up to higher ideals than have ever before been disclosed to its gaze. But it is not enough to only perceive these ideals. Shall we allow our joy in, and our intense admiration for, their divine beauty, to absorb all our time thought and strength? That is the part of the dreamer, the idle theorizer.

The part of the practical worker is to at once set about transforming the ideal into the actual. In other words, he puts his theory into practice. The principal object of the Theosophical Society is to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of man. It avows its belief, not only in the oneness of humanity, but in the entire and perfect unity of all created things, from the Logos down to the atom of sand. It holds that mankind is absolutely One—as much alike, and as closely connected, as are the atoms of which each of our bodies are formed.

This is the ideal; but of what use unless made actual! This is the theory; but of what value is any theory unless it can be demonstrated to be true? Now what is the work of Theosophists? To present this ideal to the world in the guise of an actual fact. To work out this glorious theory in the actual practice of universal brotherhood. Very often people say: "I should like to work for humanity, but I don't know how; I don't see anything to do." Now, it is a strange thing indeed if in a world so full of sorrow, sin, suffering and ignorance as this is, no opportunity of helping others ever presents itself. There is no one to whom the chance of working unselfishly for others is not given. Our interests are so blended with, and we are so closely related to, those around us, that all our daily thoughts, words and actions directly affect them, either for good or for ill. There is no relation in life where self-denial may not be practiced.

This is the first step toward showing our belief in Universal Brotherhood. Every one can conscientiously do his whole duty toward the members of his own family, and toward all others with whom he is brought into contact. Indeed this is the very first and the most important thing to do. The men or women who neglect home duties, husband, wife, children, parents—or any who are in any way dependent upon them—while straining their eyes upon some distant ideal, will never realize that ideal. They will never reach it because they refuse to use the only ladder by which they can climb to it. That ladder is the patient and faithful performance of every duty that comes to us, no matter how humble, insignificant or unpleasant it may be. This is the apprenticeship through which every one has to pass who aspires to do any really great and effective work in the world.

Before one is fit to be a master he must have shown his faithfulness as a servant. Before one can become a teacher he must have been himself a pupil. We shall never fit ourselves for higher positions, by shirking the stern responsibilities of life, and shifting its heavier burdens from our own shoulders to those of others. Nor can we fit ourselves for higher and better work by neglecting or evading the plain, every-day duties of life, however unpleasant or uncongenial they may be. Every neglected duty is a broken link in the chain leading upward; and though we may apparently now pass it by, yet sometime in the future we shall certainly come to a place where our further progress will be barred until we have gone back and mended the broken link. This is the practical part of life and it can

not be ignored ; or, if it is, no true advancement can be made. The theory alone is not sufficient. It is not enough to hold the theory of brotherhood, but we must act as though we really believed it. We must show our positive faith in it by treating others as well as we treat ourselves ; by taking as lively an interest in their successes and failures as we do in our own. If we really do believe in brotherhood we cannot do otherwise. If we do not believe in it we might as well stop talking about a theory which we can not, or will not, put into practice.

We have heard a great deal about Masters, Adepts and Mahatmas. People wonder, speculate, doubt, and ask questions. A certain class believe and theorize, but get no further. Now, the way for such to change belief into certainty, is to practice their own theories. The only way to obtain any positive knowledge of the Masters is to lift ourselves up to their plane—for They will not descend to ours. That is the practical part ; for we may theorize forever about them and never reach them. It is a theory that every human being has within him the latent wisdom, energy, will, and creative potency of a God. Now, it seems incredible that any one should believe this, yet make little or no endeavor to awaken within himself this dormant power. How can this power be awakened ? Not by dreaming life away. Not by theorizing on the greatness of man and the grandeur of his heritage ; for this heritage will never be his until he claims it. And when he does this, he must prove his right to it by his work. No other proof will be accepted. It has been said there is no royal road to learning. Prince and pauper must plod over the same long and weary way. This saying also holds good on the higher path. Wealth, learning, position, count for absolutely nothing. A clean life, honesty of purpose, an unselfish wish to benefit others coupled with an unflagging energy, sincere devotion and unceasing labor for humanity, are the golden keys which open the mystic doors. The Masters recognize no others. He who possesses these, be he king or beggar, is sure to gain admittance. The practice of this theory brings the desired end, and nothing else will.

We hear also a great deal about love. So much that it often becomes tiresome ; because some people have such very queer ideas of what love is. We are told every day—almost hourly—that we must love every one with whom we come in contact. Granted : but what are we to love in them ? Is it the vain, frivolous, selfish personality, with its manifestations of envy, malice, pride ; and the continual thrusting forward of petty, personal aims and ambitions ? If we must love these things in others, then we must love them in ourselves. They are not things to love ; but there is a difference : in ourselves we must subdue them ; in others tolerate them. One has not gone far on the path of earnest endeavor before he learns this. He then ceases talking so much about love and forgets to be giving constant expression to fondness for individuals. Is it because he loves his friends less ? Nay, verily ; for he loves them, and all mankind, far more than ever before ; but it is the soul in them he sees and loves and pities. He sees the

bondage in which it is held. He sees—nay, he feels—the agony it endures.

Having become, in some degree conscious of his oneness with all humanity, he is—he must be—to that degree, partaker of all its woes and sorrows. When he has reached this point he no longer looks at the personality. It is the soul enshrined in that personality which occupies his attention. It is the soul he loves and labors to uplift and enlighten. This is the love that will aid and benefit humanity. Nor is it in any way akin, in its manifestation, to the gushing, effusive, wordy expression of one whose only conception of love is that weak, pale, flabby article which goes no further than the personal. This does not imply that we are not to do all we can for the personal well-being of our fellow men; only we must not stop there. We are not to make it the end—rather a means to reach a far higher end. This is practical, to use all means at our command to bring about the desired result. We believe that every man has within him—potentially—the wisdom and creative power of the One, Infinite and Eternal. Do we really believe this? If we believed that this mighty force—the power and energy which brought the universe into being was indeed in us—would we not make some effort—nay, the most unceasing strenuous effort to develop and use that power? For it is only by our own effort that it can be done. In the lower kingdoms progression goes forward, pushed on by the force of the great Law of Evolution. But with man it is different because he has reached the stage of self-consciousness. When that stage is reached man's destiny is in his own hands. Henceforth his progress, or retrogression, depends entirely upon himself. It is a sad mistake to suppose that by this Law of Evolution we shall be carried onward to the destined goal without any labor or care on our part.

There are two goals; and every mortal is bound to reach one or the other. A time will come in the evolution of every soul when a final choice must be made. He who is able to make the right choice does so because the thoughts, the continued effort, labor, unselfishness and devotion of his past lives have developed in him the strength and wisdom to choose aright. It is the sum total of all his past. He whose total is made up of weakness, self-indulgence, idleness, pride, vanity, lust and greed will not be able to hold to the upward course. He may have known the theory perfectly but he has not put it into practice. Finally, by what means can man advance towards the desired goal? All Scriptures, from the most ancient down, have given one and the self-same answer.

All great Teachers and Saviors, from Rama and Krishna down to Jesus of Nazareth and Mdme. Blavatsky have reiterated this answer, in varying phraseology and often in almost the self-same words. They have all told us that God is in us and we in Him. It is ours to seek and find that God, who is our Father and ourself. The path pointed out is true and earnest devotion. What then is devotion? It is not cant, hypocrisy,

nor the making of long prayers. It is not goody-goody talk about love by those who will do nothing—make no sacrifice—to help their fellows. It is work, work, unceasing work, for the good of Humanity. It is self-renunciation, self-sacrifice, the giving up of personal aims, ambitions and desires. It is putting aside the sense of separateness, and thus growing into conscious oneness with all that is; until the joy of the lowest is ours, and our desire to alleviate the pain and misery of the world, becomes so great that we are willing to do, suffer or sacrifice *anything* for its sake. This is devotion. This is Love. This is Theosophy, in Theory and in Practice.

STANLEY FITZPATRICK.

Religion in Religions.

THE idea of reincarnation is universal. It was both a Christian and a Jewish one. Remember the remark of Jesus when his disciples asked the reason for the punishment of the blind man, and remember, also, Jesus' statement that John the Baptist was the reincarnated Elias. In the 90th Psalm it is said by the Jewish singer, "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Thou turnest man to dust and sayest, 'return ye children of men.'" Take with that the saying, "Dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return," which means "as long as thou art dust—connected with, not freed from, living in the dust of the earth—so long shalt thou return to dust.

Let us turn to the forms of worship. They consist in every religion of symbols and ceremonies which try to express that which cannot be expressed in words—to which are quite frequently added miraculous stories concerning the life of the founder of the particular religion. In this, their outward garb, religions seem to differ most fundamentally. Yet the comparative sciences show that such is not the case, and the results of dispassionate investigation are truly remarkable, for these prove that all known religions have a common source—the Wisdom-religion. It contains certain truths to be found openly or hidden in everyone of the seven systems. As these systems follow each other historically their symbols, rites and modes of worshiping the deity are largely borrowed from each other in the beginning; and, as the course of each system becomes more defined and independent, the source whence it came is sought to be obliterated by designing priests; the gods of the previous system and its most illustrious teachings being turned into devils and heretical doctrines by the new one. It is found that the gods or devas of the ancient Brahminical, or Hindu, religion became the evil spirits of the Zoroastrian priests; that Thor, the old German or Scandinavian Lord of the Heavens, was by the Christian priests turned into the medieval devil. Consider that after the death of the Nazarene his apostles and early followers built upon the petrified remains of Jewish Jehovah worship a new system which embodied the doctrines of reincarnation, karma and the Platonic view of the uni-

verse; which system flourished 200 years after him in lower Egypt, centered around Alexandria under the neo-platonists and gnostics, and then remember that the Christian Church, the successor of these, has declared all these doctrines heretical, and has succeeded in causing them to be disregarded, and even despised, to this day. So much for the doctrines. But how about the Christian Cross, the Mohammedan crescent, the Jewish hexagram? The cross is not particularly a Christian symbol. Indeed, after Jesus had been crucified, his immediate followers abhorred the sign of the cross; but, as we have said, the seemingly iron tradition of the church is at times quite flexible, and the cross soon became the symbol of Christianity, as against all other religions. But they who believe the cross to have originated with Christianity are mistaken; it is as old as the hills. It was an Atlantean symbol in the form known as svastika. It was found in the palace of Palenque as a symbol of the ancient Americans. In the form known as the tau, it was a sacred symbol of the ancient Egyptians. In Isis Unveiled we find it was used at the Eleusinian and Bacchic mysteries. It was common among the Assyrians, Romans, Hindus and Jews, and through the Cabalists and Gnostics it finally came into the Christian Church. The Mohammedan crescent is also an universal symbol, and is connected with our silently-watching old mother—the moon. The serpent is also a symbol in all religions, and not to be found alone in Genesis. It is the universal symbol for that force which with spiral motion first thrills through the ether at the dawn of a manvantara. It is the symbol for eternity, immortality, and wisdom. Archaeology and symbolism have shown that almost every one of the forms and symbols of Roman Catholic worship—the keys on the mitre of the pope, the institutions of celibacy, monks, nuns, rosaries, chants, fasts, processions, holy water, etc.—are borrowed from Buddhism.

The expression of Religion on the physical plane is its ethics, and this is wholly identical in all systems. That human duty is charity and devotion, is one of the principal themes of the Bhagavad Gita. "Hatred does not cease by hatred, hatred ceases only by love," is Buddha's doctrine, and St. Paul places charity above everything else—even faith and hope. Compassion is the subject of the *Voix of the Silence*. "What I do not wish men to do to me, I also wish not to do to men," said Confucius. Zoroaster's ethics are: "Think purely, speak purely, act purely." During the initiation into the mysteries in ancient Egypt, the neophyte had to vow, that he would honor his parents above all; the commandment of the bible is too well known for quotation. All religions forbid murder, theft, covetousness and adultery.

The ethical side, being the aspect of Religion on this physical plane, has been considered the most important by all moral reformers, like Confucius, Buddha and Christ, and their teachings on these lines being most explicit, the identity of the Religion in Religions can here be shown, most readily. But that the various systems in their esoteric philosophy and their esot-

eric rites and forms point to one source, is unmistakable. These esoteric teachings are changed according to the soil, the nature, the climate, the people, the age, to which they are transferred, and they have a tendency to differ more and more from the truth as in the rounding of their cycle of birth, growth, flowering and decay, the esoteric teachings become ossified, formal, dogmatical, dead-letter misinterpretations. Brahmanism, esoterically, perhaps, the most magnificent system of pantheism, has degenerated into mere polytheism. The Zoroastrians, originally devoted to the worship of the true spiritual sun, hidden source of all manifested suns, are fireworshippers. Buddhism, esoterically the grand religion of compassion, and a system of such wonderful universal charity, mildness, purity, rectitude as to be easily the greatest of all systems, has become the worst of all in dogmas, fetich-worship, ceremonies and rubbish in general. Yet, so great was this religion that even to-day the influence of its ethical side, makes the Buddhist the purest, most unselfish, temperate, mild and sincerest of men.

The statement is generally regarded as true that dogmatism is the enemy of religion. The Church in the west, is, to a large and continually growing class of men, no longer identical with religion, but stands for rigid dogma. The dogma, however, is neither truth nor religion. And while the church, to prop up and maintain the crumbling edifice of its dogmas, relies on divine revelation, even school-boys skeptically war against this imposition. What is a divine revelation? That has to be found out by everyone for himself. The truth can only be discovered by carefully and continually separating it from symbols and allegories—not to speak of misinterpretations. Under this test, a divine revelation is that which to the mind of the unbiased student seems so exalted as to appear to him as emanating from a source of spiritual wisdom higher than anything he knows of on this earth. Such are the sermons on the Mount, the Bhagavad Gita, as well as the eternal truths contained in other systems.

This truth is one wherever and under whatever form it may appear. For, as H. P. B. said, "There can be only one truth, for two small truths on the same subject constitute one great error." Indeed, the truth is one. It is the same whether seen as the basis of religion, philosophy or science. Theosophy gives the cue to this truth. Theosophy is not an eclectic system, which takes from every religion what it considers best and builds up a new compact philosophy. Theosophy, on the contrary, is the Wisdom Religion—the common source whence these many systems come, and to which they must again return.

The true reason for the differences of religions from the Wisdom Religion and from each other, is the fact that true religion, which is the spiritual knowledge of the inner man, and which is seated in the buddhi principle, called in the Bhagavad Gita at times "spiritual discernment," lies on a plane much higher and totally different from that on which exoteric systems of religion flourish. This truth, in passing to the lower planes, changes

its aspect. Its power of illumination is dimmed. The purity of it is obscured. When it has reached man, it becomes a part and parcel of this lower plane; it is of the descending cycle, the black age, the unspiritual people, in which and with whom it must exist. But the silver thread which binds us to the Master is still there. On the physical plane, it is ethics; to do one's duty; the duty of one's own particular calling, to which we are bound by past Karma; to be charitable, and to efface the self. Christ and Buddha said very little about their philosophy, and laid no stress whatever upon forms, but their teachings center around their code of ethics, which is indeed the best mode of worship. Along this line alone, we can raise ourselves to higher planes. Then will the "brain immaculate within shine through the form of clay."

Since no one religion is entitled to the exclusive claim upon truth or revelation, it is evident that our efforts should be directed towards—to use the words of Mr. Judge—"a dutiful, careful, and brotherly inquiry into all the religions of the world to discover the central truths."

B. B. GATTEL, F. T. S.

Letters to A Student, No. XI.

AND now to your question, which I take to mean this: How should we meet evil? How should we deal with it? We are told in various places not to resist it; what does that mean and what is the sense of such teaching?

I think you will find that all these ethical teachings found in the world's sacred books are something more than mere moral aphorisms. For, in truth, ethics are but statements of law on the mental and moral planes. The old sages saw the action of forces which we call thoughts, good and bad—saw the effect of thought as force on the plane of mind, and laid down rules for men in order to help them live scientifically, if they would. You will see that thought is a force; you will see that the One Unknown manifests under three aspects, and that which we call thought is but one aspect of the great Unknown. So all things can be studied from these three standpoints: (1) Life or Spirit; (2) Mind or Consciousness; (3) Matter or Substance. Think of every event, thing, person, teaching, fact, as a triangle consisting of these three aspects, only one of which you see at the first impression; and look for the other two. You hear a man described by another as one of considerable intellectual power. He is described from the aspect of mind. Yet another may have looked on him from the physical standpoint, and say that he is a big man of a certain shape, and so forth. Yet a third may describe him from the aspect of force, Life or Spirit, (call it what you will) and say that he is a man with a strong will, of great force and magnetism. There you have a man described by three different people from three different aspects, and before you can form a fair opinion of the man you must combine these three different views,

synthesizing them in your own mind. So it is with all things: Every thing is a manifestation of the One Unknown. We have to learn to study in that light. This can best be done by constantly changing the terms of our thought; by remembering that thought is really force-motion in the universal ether or astral light; that all the movements in substance are but modes of consciousness—but expressions of the universal mind. So we come, in time, to look upon men and events impersonally.

See how this applies to ethics: they are no longer moral injunctions, dogmatically laid down by this person or some other. Ethics are state ments of the action of forces; we are told of the results of certain acts which spring in all cases from certain thoughts. We are advised that if we would live in harmony with nature we should do this or that, and avoid other lines of thought and action. Otherwise results will follow which will not only injure others, but, primarily, ourselves. Thought being a force reacts upon the centre from which it originated, just as do all other forces, from an electric current to an india-rubber ball thrown against a wall.

Now you will have read that the first need of a student is to know how to think, and, above, I have been trying to point out what appears to me to be the right and proper way to approach problems like the one you propound in your letter. This is what I have been told, and what I believe to be true. So, if we follow out this practice, we shall soon find that we are able to solve these things for ourselves, by asking ourselves questions and clearly defining the problem we wish to solve. Take your own question and follow out what I have said. Evil, in the sense I have used it in the earlier part of my letter, corresponds to a force going in a particular direction, let us say. How do you ordinarily stop a force such as a billiard ball, travelling from left to right? Not by sending another ball after it, going in the same direction; that is clear. You meet it with a force of an *opposite* nature. This may be your own hand or another ball driven to meet it. But, in any case, it is a force of a nature opposite to the one you wish to arrest. Now, the evil of which we have been speaking is illustrated by the first force which you wish to stop, and you will see that if you meet the evil by further evil you only increase the momentum of the force you wish to stop. You will be defeating your own end. So the only way to stop evil is by meeting it with a force of an opposite nature, going in an opposite direction—namely, by meeting it with good.

“Resist not evil.” This means that we should not fight it; should not attack it. When we meet with it in persons we should not try and destroy the person who acts evilly. For, remember that all forces follow the line of least resistance. In other words, water flows down a hill and not up it. So we may symbolize man collectively as a great tide making its slow way to an unseen sea. All are journeying to it; it is the nature of man to reach this goal. It is the action of the Spirit, which he is to return home-

ward to its source. From Unity have all things come; back to Unity all things return. And we are of this band; we are atoms in the great tide of life, following the line of least resistance by hastening to accomplish the aim of Nature. Now imagine that we meet evil. That simply means that we see other parts of this tide struggling to reverse the natural order of things, and to turn aside from the path of this all-embracing force by which I have symbolized Humanity. What is the wise plan to follow? Should we turn aside from our own path in order to try and force these others back on the track? Think. Is it not true that "the treading of many feet make a track?" Is it not true that a stream of water wears a course for itself and for the water following behind? Is it not true that if we keep steadily on our way we make a track or path along which all others must follow, as along the line of least resistance, to this unseen sea towards which all are wending? I think you will see that is true, and that instead of bothering ourselves overmuch about those you try to turn aside, instead of resisting their evil, or attacking them and their actions—the wise plan to follow is to keep steadily on in the path which we believe to be the right one. If we are right indeed, if our path is, in fact, the shortest to the final goal, then, in time, all others must be drawn into it, all others must, sooner or later, see that ours is the way, and will follow the track we have made for them as water irresistably follows the shortest and easiest track and not the longest.

So this injunction to resist not evil I think is very scientific. It is strictly in accord with the dictates of common sense. It means that we should go on with our own simple duty, not doing the duty of others, no matter how much we feel inclined to try. For, "the duty of another is full of danger" and, "the natural duty of a man should be followed out, even though stained and not of the highest order," for "it is better to do one's own duty well than to do the duty of another." That is what the Bhagavad Gita teaches, as you know. It is the best way because it is in accord with the design of Nature or the Over-soul. We see evil around us on all sides and can do nothing directly to stop it. Some people rush in with all sorts of plans and schemes in order to purify the world in a day, but Nature smiles at such things. It cannot be done. Man cannot be made pure. He must become pure through his own efforts. Evil is not stopped by overwhelming force. That can only stop its physical expression for a time, and, even then, it is bound to soon burst the bonds that restrain it, and manifest once more. We can best help by doing our own simple duty to the utmost of our powers, as I say, and this, of course, includes doing all we can to remind men by act and thought and example that the divine light shines within them and within all men; by trying to teach them Theosophy in other words, or rather, by trying to remind them of these old truths which once they knew but have for a little while forgotten. Doing ones own duty must also include the carrying out of all those moral teachings we have received, such as defending others when

unjustly attacked, not condemning others, trying to enter and remain in the highest part of our own consciousness, and many other things which you will know as well as I do.

So you will see that to resist not evil does not mean that we should succumb to it. But in all cases it is a mistake to fight it. If, for instance, evil thoughts try to enter our minds, it is a mistake to turn on those thoughts and fight them. Just turn away the mind from thinking such things. Occupy it with other things; with something that interests it.

By fighting it you simply turn your thought on it, and so add to its strength and give it a resting place and a home within your sphere. If you wish to avoid temptations, cease to think about them. Then the germ of such things, which must be in your mind to some extent already in order that the temptation may arise—then the germ of wrong thought is starved and dies.

All this is not easy and cannot be well understood except after long and careful thought, but I think it will repay you to think it over very carefully and to try and act upon it so far as is possible.

CHIEW-YEW-TSANG.

"The Father and I are One."

Now we are the three in one and the one in three, is a question which is, perhaps, exceedingly difficult for us all, and any light will, I think, be appreciated on this most metaphysical, and at the same time most practical, question. The Higher Self, the Ego, and the Lower Self, and all aspects of this trinity in unity. Now, we will say, a person, or an entity is entirely engrossed on the physical plane—that is, he is busy satisfying the wants, desires, and passion of the physical senses. To have a good time—that is, something good to eat, something nice to look at, nice to smell, some agreeable exercise for the body, and for the whole five senses—such a person is said to be living on the physical plane in the human-animal stage of consciousness, and this stage, or plane, we might call the Lower Self—that is, our consciousness is acting on the lower plane of existence.

Next we have the mental plane; here we enjoy or suffer wholly in the mind; the physical may not be affected at all. For instance, when we become so engrossed in a book where either suffering or delight is so vividly portrayed that we are moved to tears or laughter as the case may be. For the time being we are living wholly on the plane of the mind. These states of the mind range from the very highest to the very lowest, and pertain to the Ego, or thinker, and the Ego is "high" or "low" according to the mental food we, or it, is indulging in.

Now, we may descend from this plane of the intellect to the plane of the physical, and the gratification of the physical senses, if we wish; and, for the time being, forget all about our experiences upon the mental plane,

but we have the power to recall those mental experiences if we choose, and remember that we did, and can again, enjoy or suffer on that plane, so that because we temporarily forget, and for the time being are only conscious of one plane, is no real argument against the fact that those other planes do exist, and for us. Here, then, we find the One (our consciousness) as the two, of the "three in one." Here is the "one in two;" self acting consciously on the physical and mental planes of body and soul.

But some are able to reach in consciousness a still higher plane than that of the mind. This is done by aspiration, a desire to understand the higher plane of consciousness, and to be conscious of the conditions and experiences of these which are called the spiritual planes. The highest aspect of the spiritual plane would represent that of the higher Self. That is our individual self-consciousness acting on the highest plane of manifestation in the universe. But we see it is in reality the same self acting on all the different planes. The self is that which is conscious; the adjectives, higher and lower, simply refer to the plane of nature on which the self may act, if it is sufficiently conscious of its own powers to be able to select and act on these different planes. When we can, at will, consciously register on all planes of consciousness, then we have the self, the One, acting consciously in Spirit, Soul, (or mind) and Body, and the object of evolution is attained so far as this special Manvantara, or period of time is concerned. And then only is the Monad, the Self, ready for experiences on higher planes in higher universes.

This idea can be simply illustrated by the thermometer. The Self would correspond with the mercury in the tube. When the highest degree possible for the mercury had been attained, then the self would have become the Higher Self, and all the degrees marked on the tube would correspond to the seven principles of man. But, as the mercury runs up or down according to the degree of heat applied, so does the self-consciousness run up and down the seven principles according to the heat of desire and aspiration. If thought about, this illustration of the thermometer may be carried out indefinitely, not only in reference to the seven principles of man, but also the seven elements, and seven hierarchies of Kosmos itself. This gives us an intellectual conception, which each has to individually demonstrate and prove to himself what these conceptions in reality are by consciously realizing them. We pretty thoroughly realize the physical, and to a great extent, the mental plane; but comparatively few have experienced the highest, or the spiritual. Now, as immortality depends on our becoming conscious on all planes, we must push our evolution up to the higher planes ourselves, and in that way become the Higher Self—the conscious "one in three and three in one"

The mercury, or self, is the same in kind in all, but we must each scale our own thermometer—the ladder of the seven principles—before we can consciously and intelligently say, "I and the Father are one," and realize that all experiences of this universe have been garnered.

ANNA L. BLODGETT, F. T. S.

Editorial.

Experience proves that Theosophy can be most acceptably presented to the laboring classes. Especially can karma and reincarnation be explained as enforcing Brotherhood. Persons wishing to study and work along these lines are referred to pp. 37-39 of the Key to Theosophy, for practical hints. Also pages 197-249 of the same work, will be found to present many valuable points to use at such meetings. No leading-up policy is required. Plain, straight Theosophy—karma and reincarnation—is what is needed. These, and these alone, meet the wants and solve the problems of laboring men. "Strive to get a clear, comprehensive and common-sense view of Theosophy, and to the world give only that view, and the world will appreciate. Never consider yourself as the actor, and think of the real Self." "Never consider that you have done better than another; always strive to improve." "Do not soar to ridiculous heights where no one can follow you, and where you will not be at home yourself." "And karma, reincarnation and the seven-fold constitution of man are the important doctrines, and can be presented in every manner." "Do your best and you will have all the opportunities you can manage, and all the experience you require," are extracts from letters from William Q. Judge, in regard to this matter. Begin your reading from the above mentioned pages of the Key with the idea and wish to get from this study that which will enlighten and benefit the world. And, remember, it is not our petty opinion or ideas that the world wants, but the teaching given to it by the real Leaders.

The working men of the country are not, as a rule, believers in the orthodox religions of the day, and much care is necessary to show them Theosophy is not such, but contains a more natural and more rational view of spiritual things. It is explained most profitably by avoiding religious terms and controversies, and by dwelling upon karma and reincarnation, along the lines of retributive justice, and the indestructibility of matter, force and mind; and the gaining of wisdom by experience, ultimating in perfected man. Never use Sanskrit words, nor oratorical phrases, but fill the mind full of the very essence of the subject; and use plain, clear, forcible Anglo-Saxon words. Put the ethics of Theosophy, enforced by its scientific basis, in short sentences, straight to the point. Thus the common people will have the help of Theosophy to guide them through the struggles and responsibilities which lie before them.

A. B. C.

Miss Ann Brice has organized a Theosophical Sewing Class for young people, with the object of teaching the children both how to sew, and the habit of helpfulness and unselfishness. Such work is practical Theosophy, and is an example all might well imitate.

Pacific Coast Lecturer's Movements.

Beginning with August 22nd, Dr. Griffiths spent a week in Victoria, B. C., lecturing upon "Suicide," "Evolution of the Thinker," and "Karma and Reincarnation"—the latter lecture being given to convicts in Provincial Prison.

This department of prison work has been patiently pushed forward, in the face of considerable opposition, by Kshanti Branch, until now Theosophical meetings are held regularly every Sunday, books and literature supplied, and many inmates deeply interested. The Victoria members of the T. S. A., are devoted and loyal workers. Their Headquarters at 28 Broad street are open every evening, and the library well patronized. Reports of Sunday evening lectures are furnished to the local press, and several lectures have been printed in full. This last is the best kind of T. S. work. When the same painstaking efforts are adopted, like results will always follow. Many newspapers will accept gladly clean, concise reports, who would not take the trouble to get them themselves.

Port Townsend was visited and a nucleus found which promises later to develop into a good, strong Branch.

The lecturer's work in Seattle was reported in the September Theosophist.

Among the Coast Branches.

Victoria Branch, Victoria, B. C.

From this most northern centre, Sec'y Harrold Berridge, reports continued activity and a hopefulness before which obstacles disappear. The local Headquarters is a great and growing success, and public interest increases. The following lectures were delivered during June and July: "Theosophy and Ethics," Capt. Clark; "Man," C. H. Chesley; "The Theosophical Society," H. W. Graves; "The Astral Light," G. F. Jeanerret; "Duality," W. H. Berridge; "Evolution of Man," F. C. Berridge; "Theosophy a System of Truth Verifiable by Man," Capt. Clark; "Brotherhood," F. Satus; "Aids from Theosophy," H. W. Graves.

Olympia Branch, Olympia, Wash.

Mrs. A. R. Shimmons, Sec., writes: We have rented a nice hall, 416 Adams St., on the ground floor, and have it seated and lighted, and intend to have meetings regularly. Our only drawback is the poverty of the town in general and of our members in particular, but we are devoted.

Tathagata Branch, San Ardo, Cal.

Bro. J. C. Hadley, President, writes most hopefully of the work and prospects of this active little Theosophic centre.

Santa Cruz Branch, Santa Cruz, Cal.

Mrs. L. A. Russell, Sec., writes: Mrs. Harris lectured in A. O. U. Hall to a good audience upon "Theosophy *versus* Churchanity," handling the subject from the standpoint of unity upon the higher planes; that true religion is the binding together of all; and that the basis of all religions is identical. She also met the members of the Santa Cruz T. S. A. and gave a course of lessons upon the "Evolution of Manas," being a synopsis of all that is to be found in Secret Doctrine upon that subject.

Sirius Branch, North Yamhill, Oregon.

The President Dr. E. O. Svenson, writes hopefully of the prospects of this one of the latest additions to the theosophic constellations upon the Pacific Coast.

Pleiades' Lodge, Soquel.

W. R. Wilson writes: We are at present studying the Key to Theosophy and are enjoying the work. We have gone out into the highways and endeavored to compel some to come in, but while they acknowledge the importance of the study and admit they are interested in it, it seems as if their Karma would not allow them to actually take hold, and as the Christians say, "confess Christ."

Salt Lake Branch, Salt Lake, Utah.

Bro. Turner writes: Salt Lake Branch is still growing, and the interest is stronger than ever. Theosophical literature is being scattered all over the Territory. A class has been formed at the penitentiary for study. Twenty or twenty-five prisoners take part in it. They have selected a President, and are doing earnest work.

Both San Francisco and Golden Gate Branches are working with energy and are holding well-attended meeting.

The Sunday night meetings at Red Men's Hall are particularly well attended. At a recent one of these, in which "Death and After" was the subject, the hall was densely packed; a few stood throughout, and some were even turned away. In San Francisco any topic which treats of reincarnation or the future life will always fill our hall to overflowing, in which may be found a hint as to what the people really desire, and appreciate, and which is therefore helpful to them.

"This is better, that one do

His own task as he may, even though he fail."

O Spirit, sole judge, light of the world, son of Prajapati, spread thy rays and gather them! the light which is thy fairest form, I see it. I am that immortal person, Om!

—Upanishads.