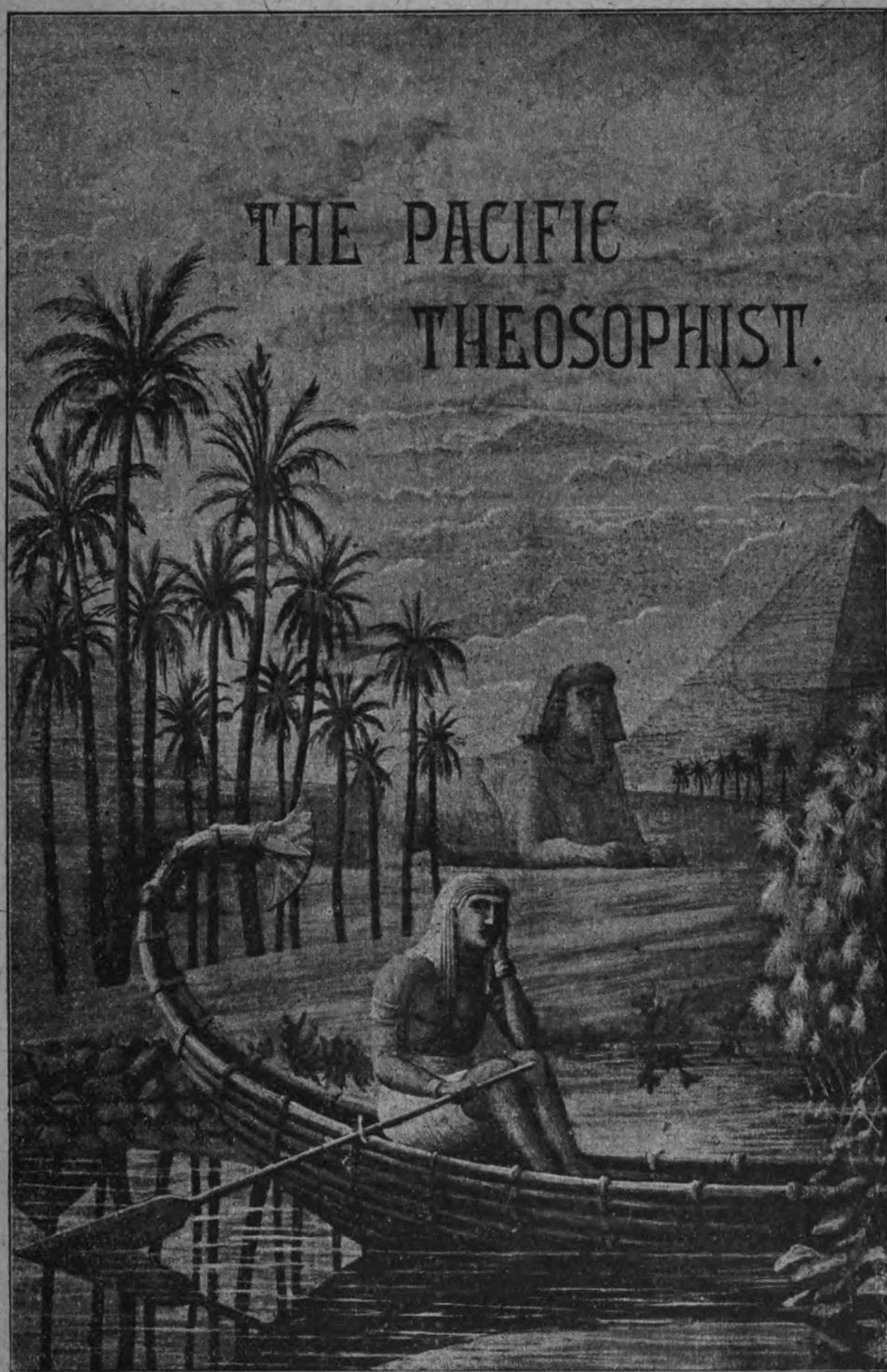


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— { "Seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his desolation sits starving for the bread of wisdom, without a hope or consolation, and—let him know the truth." } —



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## THE SCALES OF JUSTICE.\*

### *Ladies and Gentlemen:*

The idea of justice is innate in man, for it cannot have arisen out of the circumstances surrounding human life, as most of these are at present unjust. It is a heritage from man's diviner nature—a memory of more divine states from which he has descended to this lower realm.

The ethical conceptions of all religions, without exception, are based upon the idea of justice. Even Christianity, absurd as its teachings in this regard seem to be, attempts to explain human relations to God and nature from the standpoint of justice, both in this life and in that to come. But the evident injustices which we see about us upon every side, which attend upon birth, and follow us, like an avenging Nemesis, throughout every moment of our subsequent life, and which are entirely inexplicable by the so-called Christian philosophy, compels man to question this creed, and to seek for further explanation. The failure of human justice, indeed, has caused man to seek for justice in God; and all the gods which men have ever worshiped are supposed to be the personification of justice.

In the West, there is no conception of justice because of its dominant intellectuality. Philosophy has no answer because philosophy has become entirely intellectual, and justice does not root in intellect.

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\*Stenographic report, by Clara A. Brockman, of a lecture at Redmen's Hall, San Francisco, Sunday evening, February 2nd, 1896.

It has its origin higher. It is ethical in its essence, not intellectual.

Therefore, modern philosophy, when questioned, answers our demand for the reason and meaning of human life; for an explanation of the injustices and inequalities which attend it, by pointing out, with Spencer, that all individual existence perishes or disappears in a great Unknowable—an abyss which swallows everything and gives back nothing; or, with Von Hartmann, that life is extinguished in a great Unconscious—something for which human woes, miseries, sufferings and sorrows, do not exist; or, with Schopenhauer, asserts the dominance of evil, and advances the doctrine of pessimism and despair.

Many Western philosophers have reasoned boldly and well concerning the problem of human existence. Hegel, Spinoza, Von Hartmann, Spencer, and many others, have spent their lives in philosophic investigation. They have perceived the great Aspects of the Absolute which constitute nature. Some of them have recognized a material, a conscious, and a force aspect, and have followed one or the other of these up to the very threshold of the Unknowable. Their reasoning is often magnificent, but has ended in ethical disaster, because they have failed to postulate or comprehend the spiritual in nature, or in man. They have rested upon the intellect, which can never of itself conceive, or understand, why justice is essential to the very existence of this universe.

Nor has Western science any answer to this riddle of the Sphinx. It grovels in the very depths of materialistic negation for a basis for its philosophy of life. It asserts that all the wonderful faculties of the human soul have originated from matter; are but the play of blind force, taking the direction of the least resistance. It declares that emotion, intellect, reason, intuition, are the effects of material causes, although they are totally unlike and almost infinitely greater than these causes. For science, the stream runs up hill all the way; out of unconscious matter, and out of blind force playing through that matter, arise all of these wonderful ethical conceptions of justice, compassion, hope, love, and all the divine attributes of the human soul.

Western religion, also, answers not. It attempts to do so; but its answer is full of inconsistencies; is unphilosophical, untrue, and absurd. It accounts for the inequalities and injustices, for the many



inexplicable circumstances which mar human life, by declaring that they are the will of God. The coming of souls to diseased, or deformed bodies; to enlightened parents, or to those who are cannibals—in short, all the injustices which surround life and clog effort, are the will of Deity; happen because God permits them: We, as finite human beings, Christianity declares, must not question the Infinite; we are to accept whatever happens, no matter how cruel, unjust, or unnecessary it may seem to us to be, because it is the will of God; and God, it assures us, cannot but be just. Since it adopts the fatalistic hypothesis that all that happens to us is the will of God, it therefore appeals to that will, exerted arbitrarily, to restore the disturbed equilibrium, to soothe the outraged sense of justice which arises in every human breast, by setting up the dogma of forgiveness of sin through vicarious atonement. Unphilosophical as this dogma is, it, nevertheless, does make an attempt to establish a basis of justice between God and man; but leaves the unjust relations which exist between man and man wholly unexplained. It fails, also, to account for the inequalities, and therefore injustices, which attend birth, and, as God's providence arranges all these environing conditions, differing applications of the theory become mutually destructive. God sends us into the world with no knowledge of it, surrounds us with temptations and trials without providing any surety against our yielding to them; and then declares, say his self-constituted representatives, that the balance of justice has been struck by one man suffering for the sins of the whole of humanity. Such a dogma is the very apotheosis of absurdity. Could the sufferings of one feeble human body restore the disturbed equilibrium between God and humanity? To say nothing of the inconceivable force, the infinite knowledge and power of the Great Infinite attempting to express themselves in the feeble body of a single man, no matter how pure and holy, it was perfectly impossible for Jesus as a man to have suffered enough to have atoned, under the law that the cause must equal the effect, for all the wickedness of mankind. The finite cause does not equal the infinite effect; the assertion is unphilosophical and illogical.

The Christian religion permits, almost encourages, crime, by this method of attempting to force its dogmas to appear just. Vicarious atonement offers the opportunity for a long life of sensuous, criminal

delights, if it shall be accepted in the end. The legitimate offspring of such a tenet is seen in the many murderers who swing from the scaffold directly into the New Jerusalem. No matter how vile or heinous the crime, no matter how great the woe and misery inflicted upon the innocent because of that crime, the murderer goes to the divine kingdom of heaven, and shares its eternal happiness, because he has accepted vicarious atonement, and cast the burden of his sins upon Jesus. The victim is hurried into eternity without a moment's notice; has no time to prepare, to obtain priestly consolation, to ask forgiveness and accept vicarious atonement for his sins. He dies in sin—is hurled unforgiven into everlasting hell. For the victims of murderers, and their helpless, woe-stricken families, are passed over in silence—vicarious atonement does not reach them; their suffering is the mysterious will of God—that limbo so convenient to cover the retreat of the theologian whenever his dogmas fail him.

Injustice could not have a more complete exemplification than in this illogical, unphilosophical, doctrine of the vicarious atonement. It never was a dogma of early Christianity—the true Gnostic Christianity. It was a perversion of an esoteric tenet of Gnosticism, introduced long after the time of Christ, as will be plain to anyone who will make a study of the days of the early Christians. It was misconceived and erected into a dogma by ignorant Christian "Fathers." It was never taught by Christ, for he, as we believe, was an adept and taught pure Theosophy. Just what his teachings were, however, will probably never be known, for we have no record of but one written sentence, and that was in the sand. It is said that when asked to condemn a certain one, he stooped, and with his finger, wrote on the sand; and that single line in the unstable sand was the sole record by himself of all his teachings. What they were, then, can only be determined by their analogies with other sacred scriptures; but this analogy is sufficient warrant to show that they have been distorted by those who desired place and power, and such control over the destinies of their fellow men as should compel all people to come to them for salvation, and—pay them for it. And the perversion and substitution has succeeded. Witness the great churches which fill our cities, supporting a hierarchy which labors not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed—nor fed, nor housed—like one of these. They seek place and power

and return nothing but absurd unphilosophical and untrue dogmas, which have first created, and which now tend to perpetuate these unjust conditions. These self-called, self-chosen Agents and Ambassadors of the Infinite had, and have, every reason for making people believe they were, and are, the Vicar Generals of God. The eternal destinies of men are in their keeping; Peter can loose and unloose; he has the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and, through this, to kingly place and power upon earth. When a mere man can say: "Believe as I tell you, or you will be damned—not for thirty or forty years—but for eternity," is not that a fearful power, and its abuse almost sure? It has created a pride, intolerance and ambition, which have perverted the pure teachings of the Nazarene, and destroyed the usefulness of the church. The churches are whipping the masses today with the lash of this dogma, and mankind bends cowardly knees to these ambitious, untruthful, unphilosophical teachers, because of their slavish fear of that which lies beyond the portals of death. What a comment upon the justice, truth and brotherliness of men's lives when they *fear* a future merely because it is unknown. And among Christian nations, only, is found this unreasonable fear of death, which shows how its teachings of vicarious atonement have perverted man's innate sense of justice, destroyed his trust in both himself and nature's laws, and left him a prey to the vagaries of an ignorant imagination, and the arguments of an equally ignorant, and, too often, unscrupulous priesthood. But this idea of vicarious atonement is but half of the Christian conception of justice; the other half is forgiveness. Forgiveness is a beautiful teaching, and the Christian declares that God will forgive us, and strike the balance of justice by vicariously suffering for us. The first assertion contains the poetry, the pathos, the beauty, and the truth, of the dogma; and we swallow the second because of its sugar-coating, not recognizing what it really is.

What is the nature of forgiveness? It means that when we are injured, we refuse to revenge ourselves—to take the law into our own hands. But this does not prevent the result of the act reacting upon the one who injured us. The law must run its course; every cause must have its effect. There is no escape from the consequences of an act because of forgiveness. If one is injured, and really forgives from his heart, he cuts himself off from the effect of that

action. But, if he, embittered because of that injury, says: "I will avenge myself, I will not trust the law," then he binds himself up in the action, becomes an active agent in the equalization of that account. He will have to administer the punishment himself, if he insists upon it; and in so doing, can but commit another wrong, and lay himself likewise under the action of the law. But, if he forgives, then he who has wronged or injured him goes his way; and the law, which none can escape, avenges injury. The bible says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Theosophy says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Law." Because this great law of Karma, or that each cause is followed by its appropriate effect, is the law of Deity or Divinity.

This brings us to the Theosophic conception of justice, and how the accounts between nature and man and between men themselves, are adjusted and harmonized. In common with almost all great religions except Christianity, Theosophy appeals to the great, immutable, inviolable law of cause and effect. Karma it is called, in order to express it briefly. The word Karma means always cause and effect; whether the action be upon the physical, the mental or upon the spiritual plane, for every plane of nature yields obeisance to this infinitely just, wise, and compassionate Law.

Science admits that cause is followed by effect upon the physical plane, but denies that the same thing applies upon the mental plane; although everywhere, every day, and during every moment of our lives, the evidence is before us that this is true. Can anyone live a wicked, vile life—which can only be done by thinking wicked and vile thoughts, mentally—without the effect becoming quickly apparent? It is the record of the conservation of conscious energy; the proof that the mental act is followed by the mental effect. A few brief months, a year or two, will brand the mark of Cain upon any brow, and is the exemplification of the fact that the law of cause and effect is as immutable upon the plane of mentality as upon the plane of molecular physics.

Upon every plane, under every conceivable condition, the law holds sway. It is the one strong bond which binds the finite to the Infinite. If there is anything we can recognize as the will of God, as the fiat of Divinity, it is this divine law. In it is all promise, and all prophecy. It is the warrant of the stability of this universe, for

if it were set aside for but a single moment, this would tumble to pieces like a child's castle of cards. It can not be violated. It is an expression of Infinite will, inasmuch as it is inviolable upon every plane of the manifested universe. Being the will of the Infinite, no finite power can set it aside. Nor can it set itself aside. Because, to do this would require a power equal to itself, which would at once land us in the absurdity of postulating two Infinities. No, Divinity, the very Absolute itself, cannot transcend its own laws; it has not the power. Issuing out of the Infinite, and the expression of infinite force, the law of Karma *is*, and nothing but an infinite opposing force, which can not exist, can set it aside.

Therefore, this law of cause and effect is, as said, the warrant for all effort; it guarantees perfect justice; it is the promise and surety of everything for which man can hope or long. For it assures him that if he sets up the proper causes, the effects, resting upon infinite wisdom and power, cannot fail to follow; they must and will take place. So that in it is the certainty and the prophecy of the godhood towards which humanity is slowly striving.

The law of cause and effect guarantees us, further, that the punishment shall only equal the offense. This is denied by all our Western philosophies, and by all Western religions. Christianity tells us, for example, that a child, having arrived at the age of seven or eight years, who tells a lie and dies unforgiven, goes to an eternal perdition; that it burns in the flames of an actual, fiery hell, as three-fifths of the ministers of San Francisco declared in a published symposium two or three years ago; or, according to the remainder, it suffers a worse punishment of mental torture and despair.

What a dreadful dogma to teach, or to believe! How it outrages all our conceptions of justice! How the very statement of it blasphemes God! No human parent would punish his children for such an act by even the momentary searing of its tender flesh with flame, yet he believes that God punishes his children a thousand times more terrible throughout eternity. And so, of all our crimes and offenses. No matter how venial the offense may be, if we die with it unforgiven, we go to eternal punishment; but if, upon the gallows, even, we repent and ask God to forgive us, the balance is struck the other way. There is—there can be—no equality between the punishment and the act which brought it about. Infinite effects, eternal punishment, are predicated of the most trivial, finite causes.

Let us think about these things; let us reason them out for ourselves. We have too long followed these "blind leaders of the



blind." We have too long subscribed to an unphilosophical, untruthful, blasphemous philosophy. For we blaspheme Divine Justice each time we attribute to God such acts. These are man-made creeds; man-created devils and hells; man-invented dogmas; man-conceived punishments!

The law of cause and effect, then, guarantees that if we commit a sin or a crime, we will be punished exactly to the extent which that sin or crime demands, and no more, nor no less, because the law proceeds out of the Infinite, and it is impossible for it to err. It represents infinite justice, and infinite justice is but one with infinite compassion; for who desires to be unjust? Therefore, nature, in correcting our injustices, proves herself to be the great compassionate Mother. She is ever striving to set us aright, but she never revenges herself upon us, as the bible says of Jehovah. The exact penalty is meted out, the account is settled forever, and we are then fully forgiven. For the voice of nature is that of eternal forgiveness.

Such is the Theosophic conception of justice as between man and nature, or man and God, and this conception, as already seen, adjusts equally well the relation between man and man. There is reason to believe that the dogma of individual salvation through vicarious atonement, accomplished with fear, doubt, and much personal and greatly exaggerated peril, is largely responsible for the growth of individualism in the West. Man, the unit, instead of humanity, is the key note to our civilization, and, therefore, there is nothing in all of the social customs and laws which govern our conduct towards each other, into which the element of injustice does not enter, and in many of which it is the ruling principle. Individualism is the curse of our modern Western civilization. We climb up over the bodies of our brothers whom we pull down in the struggle for existence. Our laws make our extortions and robbing safe, and assure us of the enjoyment of our spoils. Every usage of Western civilization is founded upon this teaching of individualism; of guaranteeing to each man all that he can get by any method short of downright violence. The law says that if a man takes outright that which belongs to his neighbor, he is stealing, and it punishes him. But if a man discovers something which is of benefit to humanity, or in any other way acquires a monopoly of anything, then it permits him to extort from the community any price he chooses. Men feel repelled by the

idea of paying fifteen or twenty per cent. interest on money, and denounce it as usury, but if one has the monopoly of a thing and chooses to ask five or ten thousand per cent. profit upon it, he is considered as acting justly and honorably; no one protests; it is the law, the custom. What causes us to have such selfish conceptions as these but our perverted sense of justice, arising through the encouragement of individualism, which is the key note to our religion, our philosophy, and, therefore, of our daily life.

Instead of this individualism, which makes of each man an Ishmael whose hand is raised against every other man, Theosophy teaches that men are brothers in reality; that within each man is a divine principle which has its source far above this arena of passion and struggling, which roots in divinity itself. As we strive by altruistic effort to realize that which we feel to be our highest and holiest aspirations, there will come a time when we will recognize this divine principle as our real self and refuse to outrage or wrong it. In that day, will all these injustices cease, as darkness fades before the approaching dawn. We cannot compel men to be better by law; but we can arouse in them a higher, diviner sense of justice, after which it will be as unnecessary to pass laws to prevent people from being unjust as it is now to do so to prevent them from being charitable, and our present unjust laws and usages will be cast aside as a garment when it is outworn.

There is yet another factor which will help in our conception of justice and brotherhood. All men are souls incarnated in human-animal bodies, striving to overcome the animal passions, appetites and desires, inherent in the body. Ignorant, confused, estranged by this mysterious incarnation from our divine source, it is inevitable that we make mistakes. How, indeed are we to learn, except by doing so? Therefore, it seems to me, that suffering, and perhaps sin, is inevitable. It would be most illogical to suppose that souls could come into entirely new environments, encounter a phase of consciousness with which they are totally unacquainted, benumb their own diviner nature by incarnating in gross animal bodies, and not make mistakes. They must, it seems to me, fall into error and commit wrongs.

It is only by the sharp contrasts of opposites that we learn. We must have object lessons; to learn to be virtuous by the contrast

of vice; to be merciful, by experiencing the injustice of man; and so on, through the whole list of human qualities. Then let us not too austere-ly condemn our weak, sinning brothers; by their example we learn. Let us, therefore, be tolerant. Let us bear in mind that the scales of justice are balanced by infinite wisdom. It is possible that that which seems to us so wrong may be a necessary schooling for the soul. Humanity as a whole may have gone so far astray that it is absolutely necessary that some of its units should have to serve as object lessons. Since vice, crime and injustice exist among men, let us, then, profit by their corrective example, but let us not self-righteously separate ourselves from the so-called wicked classes but endeavor to arouse within them the divinity which is latent within all men. Only by so doing can we free ourselves from the effects of their actions, and render it unnecessary, and, indeed, impossible for us to occupy in a future life the awful positions in which the law of cause and effect places them in this. In the surety, then, that eternal justice, which includes Infinite wisdom and infinite compassion, guides and sustains this universe; in the certainty that nothing can come to us which is not our own, we can press forward into the abysses of an unknown future with every hope, and with perfect trust. Through the gates of birth and death we shall ever enter new fields of conscious existence. The mistakes and sins committed in this life we will right and atone for in the next. Forever the soul returns to take up its old tasks; to balance the old karmic account. How unreasonable to suppose that one life can satisfy human needs, human hopes, human aspirations! Whatever other spheres and other eons may have in store for us, these, our human longings, our human hopes and aspirations, must first be fulfilled, else, God, who has awakened in us a conception of them, is unjust and cruel. The possibilities of human experiences on this, our beautiful human planet, must be exhausted; here we must fit ourselves for other worlds and other states of consciousness, ere we can pass on, else nature is chaos, and reason and order meaningless words. Let us, then, with the great Gentile Adept, "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race which is set before us," knowing that eternal justice rules the universe; recognizing the divinity within our own souls; and refusing to sin against our divine Father in Heaven by acting unjustly towards our fellow men.

JEROME A. ANDERSON.

## THE CLOSING CYCLE\*

BY WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

Who is the person who gave out the concrete statement that 1897 was to be the close of the cycle when something would happen? It was H. P. Blavatsky. There is not the slightest doubt about it that she did say so, nor that she fully explained it to several persons. Now is there any doubt at all that she said, as had been so long said from the year 1875, that 1897 would witness the shutting of the door? What door? Door to what? What was or is to end? Is the T. S. to end and close all the books?

Nothing is more plain than that H. P. Blavatsky said, on the direct authority of the Masters, that in the last twenty-five years of each century an effort is made by the Lodge and its agents with the West, and that it ceases in its direct and public form and influence with the twenty-fifth year. Those who believe her will believe this; those who think they know more about it than she does, will invent other ideas suited to their fancies. She explained, as will all those who are taught (as are many) by the same Masters, that were the public effort to go on any longer than that, a reaction would set in very similar to indigestion. Time must be given for assimilation, or the "dark shadow" which follows all innovations would crush the soul of man. The great public, the mass, must have time and also material. Time is ever. The matter has been furnished by the Masters in the work done by H. P. Blavatsky in her books, and what has grown out of those. She has said, the Masters have said, and I again assert it for the benefit of those who have any faith in me, that the Masters have told me that they helped her write the *Secret Doctrine*, so that the future seventy-five and more years should have some material to work on, and that in the coming years that book and its theories would be widely studied. The material given has then to be worked over, to be assimilated for the welfare of all. No extinguisher will fall, therefore, on us. The T. S., as a whole, will not have the incessant care of the Masters in every part, but must grow up to maturity on what it has with the help to come from those few who are "chosen." H. P. Blavatsky has clearly pointed

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\*From *Irish Theosophist*, January, 1895.

out in the *Key*, in her conclusion, that the plan is to keep the T. S. alive as an active free, unsectarian body during all the time of waiting for the next great Messenger, who will be herself beyond question. *Thereby will be furnished the well-made tool with which to work in grander scale*, and without the fearful opposition she had without and within when she began this time. And in all this time of waiting the Master, "that great Initiate, whose single will upholds the entire movement," will have his mighty hand spread out wide behind the Society. Up to 1897 the door is open to anyone who has the courage, the force, and the virtue to TRY, so that he can go in and make a communication with the Lodge which shall not be broken at all when the cycle ends. But at the striking of the hour the door will shut, and not all your pleadings and cryings will open it to you. Those who have made the connection will have their own door open, but the public general door will be closed. That is the true relation of the "extinguisher" as given by H. P. Blavatsky and the Master. It seems very easy to understand.

"Many are called, but few are chosen," because they would not allow it. The unchosen are those who have worked for themselves alone; those who have sought for knowledge for themselves without a care about the rest; those who have had the time, the money, and the ability to give good help to Masters' cause, long ago defined by them to work for mankind and not for self, but have not used it thus. And, sadly, too, some of the unmarked and unchosen are those who walked a long distance to the threshold, but stopped too long to hunt for the failings and the sins they were sure some brother pilgrim had, and then they went back farther and farther, building wells behind them as they went. They were called and almost chosen; the first faint lines of their names were beginning to develop in the book of this century; but as they retreated, thinking indeed, they were inside the door, the lines faded out, and other names flashed into view. Those other names are those belonging to humble persons here and there whom these proud aristocrats of occultism thought unworthy of a moment's notice. What seems to me either a printer's error or a genuine mistake in ———'s article is on page 26, where he says: "*Will be knowledge generally diffused throughout the cultured classes.*" The italics are mine. No greater error could seem possible. The cultured classes are perfectly worthless, as a whole, to the Master builders of the Lodge. They are good in



the place they have, but they represent the "established order" and the acme of selfishness. Substitute *masses* for *cultured classes*, and you will come nearer the truth. Not the cultured but the ignorant masses have kept alive the belief in the occult and the psychic now fanned into flame once more. Had we trusted to the cultured the small ember would long ago have been extinguished. We may drag in the cultured, but it will be but to have a languid and unthusiastic interest.

We have entered on the dim beginning of a new era already. It is the era of Western Occultism and of special and definite treatment and exposition of theories hitherto generally considered. *We have to do as Buddha told his disciples: preach, promulgate, expound, illustrate, and make clear in detail all the great things we have learned. That is our work, and not the bringing out of surprising things about clairvoyance and other astral matters, nor the blinding of the eye of science by discoveries impossible for them but easy for the occultist. The Master's plan has not altered. He gave it out long ago. It is to make the world at large better; to prepare a right soil for the growing out of the powers of the soul, which are dangerous if they spring up in our present selfish soil.—The New Century.*

We need to-day a simple faith and trust, and in this we will find ourselves living in a condition where everything is possible; where everything we touch will blossom forth and bear gladness and joy to others. Receiving ourselves unstintedly, ungrudgingly of that large and ample life which animates everything throughout universal space we shall give freely with open hearts so that no impoverished life shall ever flow from us.

In the true condition of mind and heart there arises a sweet peace which does not descend upon us from above, for we are in the midst of it. It is not like the sunshine, for no transitory clouds obscure its rays, but it is permanent and ever-abiding through all the days and years. Nothing can move us when that condition is reached. We have but to take the first step in the true spirit of brotherliness and all other steps will follow in natural sequence. We have to be warriors and fight the old fight unceasingly, but leagued with us in this ancient fight are all the hosts of light. Behind man, behind all institutions, brood the eternal spirit of Compassion.—K. A. TINGLEY.

Dr. Allen Griffiths has resumed the practice of dentistry in San Francisco. His address is 1170 Market St.

## Editorial.

### PRINCIPLE AGAINST PERSONALITY.

The Theosophical Society is a strong, powerful organization. Consequently we have in it strong and able personalities. This was to have been expected; it is a law of growth. The strong individuality requires the strong personality for a vehicle. Also, the loaves and fishes, at least under the form of honors and power, are in evidence within the ranks of our body. This, too, was to have been anticipated; it is the law of growth as exemplified in the lower Quaternary of the Society, so to speak.

But, nevertheless, these points of danger must be carefully guarded. But one person in the whole Theosophical movement holds position because of inherent right to do so, and that person is Mrs. Tingley. She alone is chosen by those who have the great Theosophical movement in charge—the MASTERS. But, apart from this leader—and she has no official connection with the Theosophical Society—there is no man so high as to demand him for the head of the exoteric movement; none so low that they may not be candidates for its highest honors. Let there be no “rings,” nor “slates,” in selecting those who are to represent us as our officers—and servants. Let there be no attempt to resort to the contemptible political methods of our time. Let our deliberations be spontaneous, liberal, dignified.

The karma of the Gnostics presses heavily upon us. The pride of Leadership had more to do with the failure of that movement than is generally recognized. Its splitting into schisms and sects was an active agent in its destruction. Already that old karma has riven our Society in twain, working through the personal pride of one of the old time dissenters and would-be leaders. Already appear others laden with that same karma of insane desire to be leaders—to rule or ruin.

This danger was foreseen by the Great Lodge and as carefully guarded against as possible when the present movement was inaugurated. In the old time, the pride of leadership was fortified by personal interpretation of facts and theories but partially explained. Now the great central truths have been more fully unveiled, and the printing press has made forgery, garbling, and suppression difficult, if not quite impossible. Thus the two wings of the Theosophical Society today differ little or nothing as to philosophy. On ethics they are entirely agreed. So that all the danger of repeating the old Gnostic splitting up, and, therefore, of the gradual death of this movement, lies in personal desire for leadership.

Let all Theosophists recognize this thoroughly, and promptly suppress any attempt to divide, and so weaken, the Society on the part of anyone whomsoever. There must be no exceptions. Indeed, our policy must rather tend towards that of the old tyrant who illustrated his methods by passing through a wheat field and knocking off the heads higher than the others. *Caput*

*giganteae* is and will be the *bete noir* of our Society. And he or she who opposes, either openly or secretly, the Appointed Leader of the Movement, is suffering from this disease.

The woes of humanity are appalling; its sorrows heart-rending; who dares interpose his petty personality to obstruct the advance of the hosts who are marching and fighting for their alleviation? Shame if the Theosophical army should be compelled, like Parthians, to place its warriors back to back in order to fight foes both in front and rear—the latter being of our own ranks! Brothers, let us think of humanity, and forget ourselves! When the desire for place or power arises in our hearts, let us pause and listen to the moans of the Great Orphan! When we feel that the methods which our personal vanity makes us think the only ones must be followed or we will desert the movement, let us remember that there is and can be but one Leader; that the duty of another, even though well done, is full of danger. Let us fight on, and hope on; and maintain our faith in our great Cause, and in its great Leader. Let us lay our heads upon the breast of the Great Mother, Nature, and *feel* (for we may) the agony of the long travail, which we are making greater and longer! She pleads, she entreats—this great patient Mother—and then the Law of the Infinite, the great law of Cause and Effect, punishes! We are swept out of her path; we are no longer worthy to be called sons—we, who fancy it is our highest, our only, desire to serve her! Oh, these terrible, these benumbing, personalities, how they thwart defeat, and humble our strongest and best! Selfless, selfless must we be; the woes of humanity appeal to us; its sins and shame cry aloud to us. Shall we betray our great trust? We can not; we DARE NOT!

JEROME A. ANDERSON.

### THE HOUR IS STRUCK.

This is the hour when all the forces generated by the active Agents of Evolution from the earliest antiquity, surge like a mighty wave against the mightier forces of the future, and meet upon the shifting sands of the present. As the giant tides breast each other and struggle for mastery, a whirling maelstrom swirls into currents and eddies. Floating upon the angry waters, tossed by fierce gales and beaten by all the elements, are the wrecks of nations, organizations and individuals. The debris of the ages collects for a final plunge into oblivion. A wail of despair rises high above the struggling mass of souls as they sink beneath the seething waters—for the cyclic decree is inexorable, and the dark forces are doomed to that death which is destined for all the destructive agents of nature.

Far out upon a jutting headland whose base rests upon the foundations of the earth, and whose crest rises above the waters and the murky clouds, gleams a Beacon whose light is the Light of the Lodge. A single Attendant guards the flame whose Light never dims throughout the eons. She is the Watcher and the Messenger. Apparently alone, she is not so. Behind the scenes are the Great Ones, and about her those whose loyalty to the Lodge

leads them to unswervingly support the Messenger. Here and there, flitting flashes flare out of the ominous clouds for an instant and dazzle the unwary; but, dying out, leave the deluded to grope in denser darkness. But still the Great Light shines on with ever increasing brilliancy; the faithful Watcher attends the Flame; the Messenger's Voice is heard by those in whose hearts burns the Light of the Spiritual Sun, and the conquering Host is borne upon the irresistible tide into the triumphant Golden Age! ALLEN GRIFFITHS.

## BRANCH REPORTS.

### *To the Coast Branches:*

Excelsior T. S., San Jose, Cal.—At our regular Sunday meeting we have taken up the different phases of life, as they came before us. On December 12th we had a lecture by Miss Anne Bryce. Branch meetings are held Tuesday evenings, and though we have no increase of members to report, we do feel an increase of strength.—MISS L. S. MORGAN.

Kshanti T. S., Victoria B. C.—December lectures: "One on Many Lives," F. C. Berridge; "The Law of Love," T. Henson; "The Ancient Wisdom Religion," H. W. Graves; "The Birth of Christ," F. E. Whitesides.—W. H. BERRIDGE.

Los Angeles, Cal., T. S.—Branch meetings are well attended and induce great interest. Lectures: "The Work of Great Men," H. A. Gibson; "Practical Theosophy," P. S. Heffleman; "Power of Imagination," H. A. Gibson; "Evidences of Reincarnation," A. B. Clark; "Liberty," H. A. Gibson; "The New Order of Things," Dr. G. F. Mohn; "The Larger View of Christmas," H. A. Gibson; "Keynotes," Mrs. J. A. Brink.—H. B. LEADER.

New Century T. S., Portland, Or.—Our new quarters, 629 Marquam building, located in the very best part of the city, are inviting in appearance, and "the feel" is good. Meetings are held Sunday and Wednesday evenings, with a study class Sunday afternoon at 3. December 15th a book social was held, at which 45 volumes were donated. H. A. Gibson, of Los Angeles, is here for a number of weeks; from the interest manifested, all are looking forward with bright anticipations of future good. Subjects: "The Inner Man," Dr. Ernest Barton; "The Crime of Hypnotism," J. H. Scotford; "Why I am a Theosophist," Dr. Crist; "Elementary Theosophy," Dr. Barton; "The Astral World and its Forces," Mrs. C. McIntire; "Brotherhood," Mrs. Dr. Barton; "Reincarnation," J. H. Scotford; "Our Conception of Ideals," Mrs. McIntire.—C. E. WILBER.

Olympia, Wash., T. S.—The following officers have been elected for the following year: President, Dr. H. S. Strickland; Vice-President, Mrs. H. E. Ogden; Secretary, Mrs. M. L. Burntrager. Work proceeds steadily in Branch and public meetings.—MRS. A. R. SHIMMONS.

Pasadena, Cal., T. S.—November and December lectures: "Heroism," H. B. Leader; "The Master Key to the Greater Mysteries," E. E. Synge; "The Finding of the Christ," Dr. G. F. Mohn; "The Larger View," H. A. Gibson;

"The Religion of Brotherhood," A. B. Clark; "Steps for Beginners," Mrs. Nellis; "Practical Talk on Brotherhood," Paul S. Heffleman; "The Possibility of Scientific Prophecy," Mrs. M. R. Egbert.—MISS EDITH WHITE.

Petaluma, Cal., T. S.—Officers for 1898: President Mrs. J. D. Ellis; Vice-President, J. L. Hall; Secretary and Treasurer, Mrs. I. Anderson. The reports presented at annual meeting, December 26, show a favorable condition. Three members were gained during the year, one was dimitted and one died, the latter, Mrs. Angie E. Shaw, who expired December 17th. Meetings are held in the Recorder's office in the City Hall, visitors being present each time. For some time we have had Mrs. Mercie. M. Thirds to lecture for us once each month. We have done what we could in the way of propaganda —MRS. J. D. ELLIS.

Prometheus T. S., Portland, Or.—Subjects: "The Universal Religion," Miss. S. J. Niles; "Karma," Mrs. M. E. Imboden; "Lotus Work," Mrs. L. R. Webster and Miss Niles; "Reincarnation," Mrs. Webster; "The Saviors of Humanity," Miss Niles; "The Ego in Man," Miss Niles and Mrs. Durkee.—MRS. L. D. DURKEE.

Redding, Cal., T. S.—We have distributed many papers and leaflets, large packages going to the free reading room and to the prison. Meetings are held at 2.30 p. m., Sundays. Each member gives a quotation from the "Gita." The "Secret Doctrine" is the basis of study.—MRS. E. SEIFERTH.

Salt Lake, Utah, T. S.—The Study Class is occupied with the opening chapters of "Brotherhood." At Sunday meetings the following subjects were given: "The Three Qualities of Nature," Miss Eva Lloyd; "The Practicability of Theosophy," Mrs. Louise Boyden; "Kama in its Broader Sense," A. V. Taylor. On December 26, at our Christmas meeting, Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson explained the Theosophic idea of Christmas, giving a discourse on "The Light of the Logos, or What Think Ye of Christ." The anthem "Glory to God" was sung by Mrs. Green. The average Sunday attendance is 40.—MRS. LEO-LINE W. BROWN.

San Francisco, Cal., T. S.—At the annual meeting officers were elected as follows: President, Dr. J. A. Anderson; First Vice-President, Dr. Allen Griffiths; Second Vice-President, Miss Anne Bryce; Secretary, Miss Clara A. Brockman; Financial Secretary, H. Buntrock; Treasurer, Paul Bunker; Reception Committee, Mrs. Annie T. Bush and H. A. Somers; Ushers, H. Buntrock, R. C. Krause, M. P. Christensen and Fred Diserens.

The Secretary's report showed 24 initiations and 9 admitted on dimits; increase 33; died 1, dimitted 6, resigned 3, dropped 5; total withdrawals, 15, giving a net gain of 18 members. During the year 478 meetings were held with an attendance of 29,000; besides this number there were 7000 visitors at the reading room, making total attendance, 36,000. At these meetings 643 lectures and addresses were given. Among the meetings were 3 Brotherhood suppers, at which 710 men were entertained. The report continued in brief, as follows:

The year 1897 has been a very prosperous one for Theosophical work—per-



haps the most prosperous in the history of the Society. Perfect unity of action has been manifest, meetings have been well attended, a large volume of work has been performed, and there has been a considerable gain in membership.

"During the year three lines of work were suspended. One of these—the meetings at the Men's Home—was stopped because of the lack of workers, those engaged in it having their time occupied in other directions, but if other members desire to take up the work the opportunity still presents itself. Meetings at the Sailor's Union were suspended because of the fact that all the sailors were at work, and consequently unable to attend. At San Quentin Penitentiary our work ceased because of a revolt among the prisoners, following which all meetings there were closed. Negotiations are now pending looking to a reopening of this activity.

"New activities established are the Brotherhood Auxiliary a social organization; and the International Brotherhood League, with its series of three meetings.

"A valuable form of propaganda instituted during the year is the placing of leaflets on coast and river steamers. By this means the outlines of Theosophy are presented to the traveling public, as evidenced by the distribution of 30,000 leaflets during the year.

"To conclude the review of the year, we may add that the various study classes have done good work. The Beginner's Class has studied the Ocean of Theosophy; the Secret Doctrine Class has done much studying of H. P. B.'s master work, and the Ethical Class concluded its analysis of Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms, and is now reading the Voice of the Silence. The Lotus Group was re-organized in September and has made a gain in attendance; and the Sewing Class has continued its meetings, at which are given instructions in Theosophy and needlework. All of these classes are open to members and others."

December lectures: "Our Other Lives," Miss J. D. Hassfurth; "Why Do We Not Remember Our Past Lives?" H. H. Somers; "Necessity for Earth Life," Rev J. S. David; "Theosophy as Applied to Daily Life," Mrs. F. E. Wait; Branch study: "Proofs of Reincarnation," H. H. Somers and Alfred Spinks; "Purpose of Life," E. S. Stephenson; "Why Do We Not Remember Our Past Lives?" J. A. Scharlin and J. T. Moriarty.—A. J. JOHNSON.

Stockton, Cal., T. S.—Quite an interest was shown in the public lectures during December. Subjects: "Maya or Illusion," "Thought," "Ethics of Theosophy," "Manas."—MRS. ELMIRA F. WEST.

Triangle T. S., Alameda, Cal.—December was a period of much activity. Attendance at Branch and Sunday meetings has been very good—an increase over the preceding month. Subjects of Branch study: "Duty," "Thought," "Will," "Is Life Worth Living," "The Life of Christ." Lectures: "The Lost Chord," H. B. Monges; "The Holy Grail," C. B. Woodruff; "Theosophy as Applied to Life," Mrs. F. E. Wait; "Is Life Worth Living?" Miss Jennie Tuttle.—CHAS B. WOODRUFF.

AMOS J. JOHNSON, Sec. P. C. T. C.

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