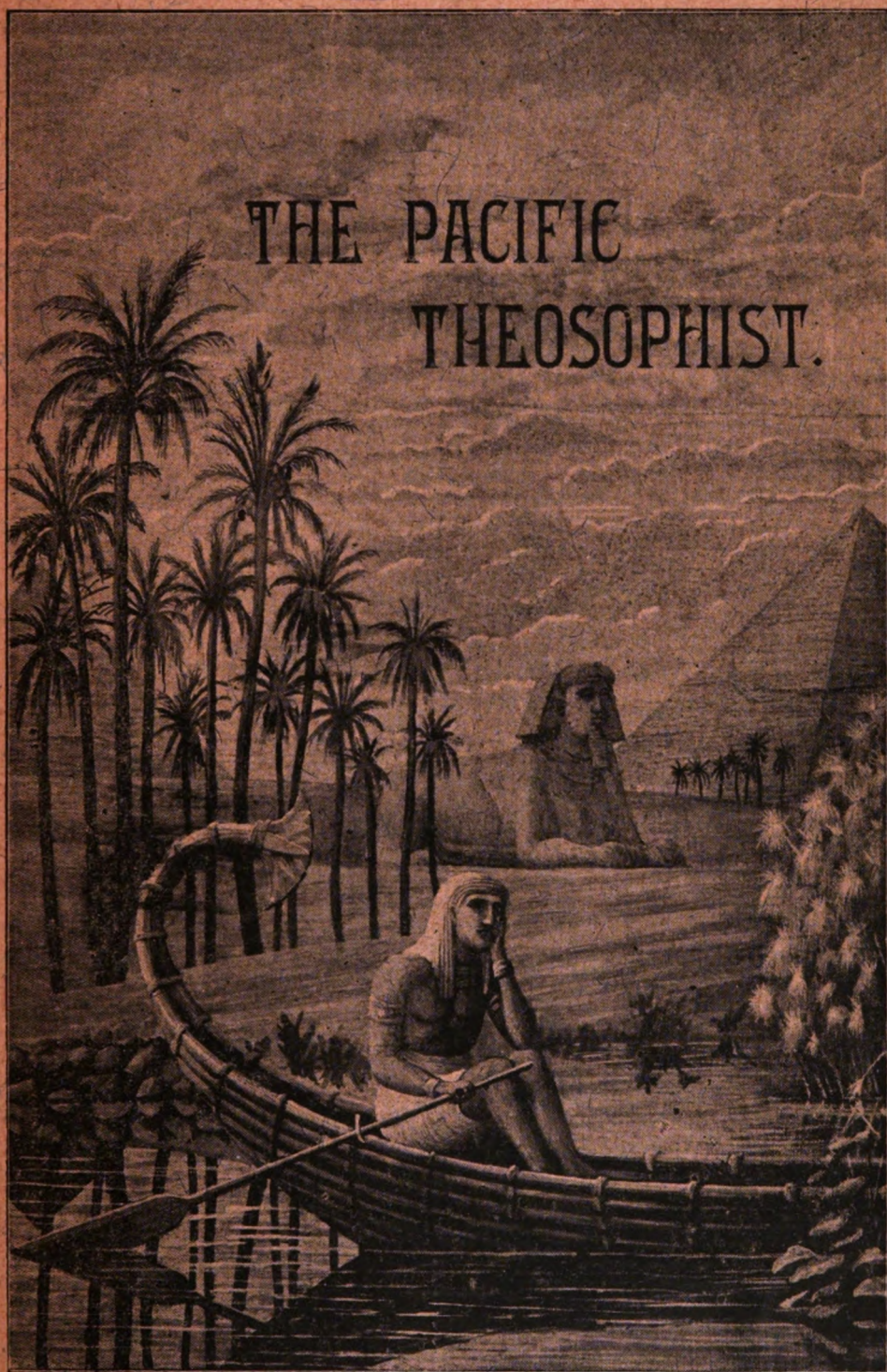


7:4
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
— { "Seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his desolation sits starving for
the bread of wisdom, without a hope or consolation, and—let him know the truth." } —



A THEOSOPHIC JOURNAL,
— Devoted to the Practical Realization of Universal Brotherhood. —

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HOW TO PERFORM MIRACLES.*

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:—

Associated with the origin of all religions are occurrences or phenomena which are declared to have been miraculous, or above the domain of natural law. This is due, unquestionably, to the fact that all the great religions of the world have originated with great teachers, who, as Theosophists believe, are sent by the Great Lodge, having in charge the progress of our humanity through the cycle of evolution, to reteach the old but forgotten truths. All these teachers have shown, perhaps as a warrant of their authority and power, a deeper knowledge of nature's laws than is possessed by ordinary beings, which knowledge carries with it the ability to perform so-called "miracles." Because the acts done by these holy men transcended the powers of the ordinary man, they were said to be miraculous, but, of old, it was recognized that they were not therefore above the law. It was reserved for the latest, the Christian religion, to declare them to be due to a power which sets aside law at pleasure—a power capable of transcending even itself, according to this most unphilosophical and illogical conception. Having abandoned logic and philosophy it follows that Christians necessarily believe the most absurdly impossible things. The assertion (an astronomical myth) that Jonah was swallowed by a whale, remained in its stomach three days, and was then vomited up and cast safe and sound upon dry land, is accepted literally by millions of Christians, notwithstanding

*Lecture at Redmen's Hall, San Francisco, September 29th, 1895.

its easy identification as the father of all "fish" stories. For, having accepted the belief that miracles are beyond the domain of law, nothing is too absurd to be pronounced miraculous.

The Theosophic explanation denies the possibility of miracles in the religious conception of these. It teaches that this is a law-governed Cosmos; that there is absolutely no event which has ever happened, or can ever happen outside of the domain of law. If we remove the possibility of law in any single instance, the whole universe falls like a child's castle of cards. Therefore, miracle simply implies a greater knowledge of nature's laws than is possessed by those to whom the phenomenon appears miraculous. To a savage, conversation with a person an hundred miles away by means of a telephone is absolutely miraculous, because it is done through laws of which he has no conception. He is in precisely the same position in regard to his "miracle" as is the Christian of to-day. Ignorance of law causes him to attribute to some superhuman power things which he does not understand because of that ignorance.

Man is in the midst of infinite space, which fact implies a further fact. If space be infinite, then it must contain infinite force, else would all finite forces be dissipated in its abysses. Space, therefore, being philosophically shown to be the arena of infinite force, it follows that this plays through man; but he knows it not. Even its minor manifested correlations would destroy him in the twinkling of an eye, if he were responsive to them. Standing in the midst, the mighty play of forces—of action and re-action—goes on as if he were non-existent—one of the greatest mysteries of this mysterious Cosmos. Yet this assertion is easily proven true. By certain processes it is possible to evoke within the empty space of this room, electrical energy sufficient to put in motion all the machinery in San Francisco. Out of this apparent nothingness comes energy terrific in its power. Has it really arisen out of nothing, or did it, and does it, exist all the time, and in all space? The latter is undoubtedly true. Man is unaware of its existence because he is irresponsive to it. Only when he forces them to manifest does he become aware of these terrific energies which are playing about and through him.

This may be illustrated in another manner: If we take light and separate it by means of a prism into its seven primary colors, there will be observed certain heat effects which can be easily shown to lie

below the limit of vision, being below the red ray. It is also easily possible to cut off the light rays, and leave these which are lower than the red to pass. If this is done, these rays below the red may be so focused as to bring platinum to a red heat, when the human eye can be placed directly in that focus without danger, or without experiencing any sensation of light, or heat, or anything else. This illustrates well how the human organism can be out of relation, or irresponsive, to powerful forces. These vibrations below the red cause the platinum itself to become visible, but the eye cannot be made to respond to them. And, similarly, above the violet there are other rays to which the human eye is also irresponsive, but which are chemically very active. It is thus easily proven that there are forces in nature playing through man, to which he is irresponsive, and of which he knows nothing. So, reasoning by analogy, we quickly arrive at the conclusion that it is perfectly possible for infinite force to play through his organism, without his being conscious of it. Indeed, this, our material Cosmos, is but a bubble floating upon the sea of real existence, and its forces when compared with those upon which the stability of our universe depends, are but as the bursting of a bubble compared to the mighty energies of the ocean which pulsates beneath.

There is a great hiatus between the lowest and the highest vibrations to which the human sense organs respond. From thirteen to fifteen up to a few thousands, per second, we hear them; beyond this, silence ensues. But let the motion continue to be accelerated, until it reaches into trillions, and it will then appear first as color, and finally, as light. In this hiatus of human consciousness must lie stupendous potentialities. In it, also, is evidently an expanse that lies directly in our evolutionary pathway. We have the A and the Z of it in sound and color. Is it not reasonable to suppose that we will have to learn the other letters of this mighty alphabet? And this is but a single arc in the circumference of infinite potencies, and shows what infinite possibilities of progress lie before the soul when such a minute segment of vibratory forces open up such illimitable avenues for conscious experiences.

In potentiality, it has been said, God lies hidden. Of the many attempts to define God—to reason back to that great Causeless Cause of all that exists—it seems to me that this, senseless almost as it seems,

is one of the very best. *In potentiality lies God*, because in potentiality lies all possible potency. It is a most mysterious thing, the possibilities of latency, the infinite possibilities of conscious expansion and of latent force which lie hidden within every atom in space. And in this mystery, we come, as it seems to me, as near to the awful presence of God as it is possible for the human intellect to do.

By developing these potentialities all will be able to perform so-called miracles. It is taught in Theosophy that the center of consciousness which constitutes the human soul has within it all the potentialities of the universe. It is also further taught that every atom contains within it the same divine potentialities, and that once within the plane of differentiation every atom must pass through the cycle of necessity; becoming first man and then God. This cycle of necessity is the arena in which it finds opportunity to widen its consciousness, to develop its infinite potentialities, and so to return again to its source. Because, once differentiated, no finite consciousness can ever possibly be reunited to the infinite, except by once more widening its conscious area to infinity, and it can only do this through an infinite number of finite experiences.

Miracles, then, are the result of wisdom; and wisdom is but the right application of knowledge. Continuous conscious experiences are the lot of all manifested beings; right application of them alone conduces to wisdom. One may go through an experience whom it profits nothing, while to another it will add to his stores of wisdom; and so on. We have the power at all times to make the right application of our experiences, and we must choose rightly, or we will never develop this wisdom which must be ours if we are to become the gods which it is the real destiny of the human soul to become.

Miracles, therefore, are but the result of knowledge of the spiritual planes of nature. But what is spirituality? and what do we mean when we say it is necessary for us to become spiritual? It is simply the knowledge of laws governing spiritual planes. As stated, this is a law-governed Cosmos; it is impossible to escape from the domain of law; and this orderly conception of the universe is carried by Theosophy up to the very Absolute itself. Law obtains upon every plane, no matter how high or holy, nor how low. Upon the physical plane it is the (to us) blind play of forces. It is law that water shall seek its level, and if a dam breaks, the water rushes down and sweeps the

inhabitants of a valley to destruction, utterly regardless of everything except to obtain its level. Law upon the physical plane is the will of entities who have, by the power of their wills, brought the physical universe into existence. Upon the passional, or animal plane, is seen a higher element, that of partial free will appearing as passionate self-will, which expresses itself in the survival of the fittest. But we must remember that there are no sudden leaps in nature. Each plane of consciousness grades into the plane above it. So, in this law of the survival of the fittest, we note the beginnings of a still higher consciousness. The mother fights to save her young. Animals group themselves into species, each member recognizing and protecting its own kind. So the dawn of an approaching ethical or spiritual law is heralded. Law upon the spiritual plane expresses itself as ethics; is altruism and compassion. That we ought to do right; that we ought to be moral; that we must be altruistic—all these things are absolute laws upon this higher plane; as much so as that water must run down hill, is upon the physical plane. These are actual laws of nature which cannot be relegated to some metaphysical limbo. These so-called ethical conceptions, therefore, are statements of law upon spiritual planes, and we must recognize them, if we would ever develop the hidden potentialities within us. Man is a thinking being; his proper habitation is not upon this physical earth, and among these blind forces that have neither consciousness nor reason. His life roots almost infinitely higher. He must, if he would progress, study these higher laws which govern higher states of being. It is not an idle schoolboy's story to tell one he must be good—nor a grandmother's sermon. It is a statement of law so far above material ones that this very fact makes it appear almost absurd. But it is true; it is the law of man's real being; the law which obtains upon thought planes. If we recognize that we are thinking beings, only temporarily incarnated in these animal bodies, our real life belonging to far higher worlds, then we begin to see the importance of carefully studying these "grandmother sermons"—these idle, fairy tales which appear to mean so little, and yet mean so much.

The miracle which man has to accomplish is the evolution of his lower nature up to divinity. What is the agent by which this is to be accomplished? Here we approach a question which touches the very Absolute itself. "A determined will," says Paracelsus, "is the

beginning of all magical operations," and in the will is to be found the promise and prophecy of all progress. It is one of the keys to the riddle of the Infinite. It transcends all analysis; it escapes all definition. Do not most of us think—have we not been taught to think—that our will is our own? It is not so. Reasoned into its last analysis, will is the first thing thinkable, in the process of creation.

In Theosophy, three aspects of the Absolute—matter, force and consciousness—are often referred to. If we substitute for force, will, we will have a much clearer conception of that great Something which pulsates throughout Cosmos, and which we degrade by calling it force, in imitation of that materialistic science which sees nothing in nature but blindness and unconsciousness. All force is conscious—is but the expression of some conscious, willing entity, be the entity high or low. There must be as the Cause of the Universe, and proceeding from the very Absolute itself, an Infinite Will, which inheres potentially in every atom of that Universe. We, as atom-souls, are using this will—a force, which we do not create, which is infinite in potentialities, and which it only requires knowledge and wisdom to evoke and apply. Will is the key to unlock all secrets. It is ours—ours to use, ours to direct, ours to control; and he who has learned even a fragment of the proper methods by which to utilize this mighty power can perform the most wonderful miracles.

The Will of the Absolute, we are told, projected this Universe ideally. Lower created beings, using lower aspects or differentiations of this Absolute will, then created material universes and worlds, such as we see in the heavens about us. For all manifested will must, logically and philosophically, be the result of manifested entities, as all thought must be the act of thinking entities. Yet will, as said, eludes analysis. Thought and will are so associated with consciousness, that the source of this mighty universe is said to be Absolute Ideative Will. This Infinine Will lies hidden within these forces of which I have been speaking, is the source of the will of all entities in the Cosmos. It is possible for any entity—and not only is it possible, but I believe it to be the destiny of every entity in this manifested Cosmos—to one day function this Infinite Will; to no longer permit it to flow through him, unrecognized, unutilized, but to seize upon it, to direct and control it. Infinite force thus lies ready

to our hand. The very making of worlds becomes possible to a single individual, if he but know how to direct and control those infinite energies which play through and about him. Therefore, it is one of the most important concepts in human life—one of the most important tasks to which we can set ourselves—to develop our wills.

And how is this to be done? We are now possessed of but feeble will. It arises within, as it appears to us, or is associated with another thing, we call desire. In fact, upon this lower plane, will would seem to be desire passed into action. Upon infinite planes the two, it may be, become one. As the soul, profiting by its experiences, gathers wisdom, and retreats inward nearer to that Infinity, so do will and desire tend to become again one, because wisdom governs desire, and the will becomes potent in proportion as the two are united.

But we find here, in our daily human life, that desire and will are separated—are two—and we are told to kill out desire. This can only mean that we are to kill out selfish desires, because, if will and desire be one upon the higher plane, it is our duty to endeavor to make them one here; and so we can at least begin by strengthening our wills—this feeble spark of the divine which we have within us—by refusing to yield to the sensuous delights which surround us, and which constitute our daily experiences. We can conquer; we can overcome; and each desire or fault overcome is a strengthening of the will; is a demonstration of our power to use this mighty instrument.

Therefore, the task before every man, and the miracle which every man ought to, and must, perform, is to make himself pure and holy. This is possible for every man—is the duty of every man. Each soul must make this conquest before it can free itself from this, the very lowest, arc of the cycle of necessity—this in which we suffer the most, in which we are absolutely the most ignorant—the very sport of fate! Each must begin the task at exactly where he finds himself; each has to start by subduing the enemies which confront him now. If each of us will go out of here to-night determined to take one little fault by the throat, to throttle it, to put it under our feet, we will have made the beginning which will one day end in the evolution of a will which will constitute us one with God.

This, then, is the lesson of our study of how to perform miracles;

to permit the evolution—the functioning within us—of this which ought to function; which we do not have to create, or call into existence, but which is ours to utilize if we will only make the opportunities for it to act. So long as we keep our minds and hearts set upon the sensuous things of the material plane, so long will this mighty energy sweep through us unnoticed and useless; when we recognize our real, inner being, and study the laws of the true domain of the soul, so soon will we begin to permit this mighty force to act through us, for we will begin to direct and control it. How mighty, then, is the future that lies before each man! Within him is the potentiality of utilizing this great, infinite Will, if he will but make the necessary conditions; but realize that he is a part of divinity himself!

JEROME A. ANDERSON.

“LIFE’S LITTLE IRONIES.”

PART IV—A DEEPER VIEW OF LIFE.

Let us look at “Life’s Little Ironies” now from our broader, deeper knowledge of Karma and Reincarnation. What a different world it is. Truly it has been written:

The world is as we take it,
Life is what we make it,
And within ourselves the problem lies
Of solving all philosophies.

Let us go back to the story of Tess of the D’Urbervilles, and view her wrongs with our greater knowledge. Who shall say that Tessie deserved the awful fate that was hers? No Theosophist, surely, for “Judge not” is truer and more full of meaning to Theosophy than it is to latter-day Christianity.

Let us look at Tessie in a previous life. She is a creature of fiction, so we may dare that liberty. Thomas Hardy did not tell the whole story. He began with her career in the year 1800 and something. Let us go back a few centuries, and understand the story if we can. Tessie is the daughter of a Roman Senator, let us imagine. She is rich and fair and kind and lighthearted. Perhaps she is generous and gives alms to the poor. Upon the whole, though, she leads rather a thoughtless and aimless life. She has no worries, no cares, and so she lives without growing much. Her life course runs in pleasant, easy channels. She has the thoughts of those around

her, and nothing in all her life occurs to mar the even, happy tenor of her ways and make her think deeply and suffer keenly at the wrongs of others. It is not well for men to be happy when others suffer. That is selfishness. Let us say, then, that pretty, light-hearted Tessie is selfish in the larger, truer things of life. And perchance, on circus days at the Coliseum, she draws her skirts tightly that they may not touch the soiled gown of an unfortunate sister. You could not call this Tessie a bad girl. She is a very lovable kind of girl, in fact, and she lives and dies with much more of sunshine in her life than shadow, and the few shadows that do darken her life contain what to broad-minded, active, sympathetic, men and women would be but trifling sorrows, none serious enough to cause a tear or an hour's pain. Let us imagine that such a life as this was Tessie's in her incarnation preceding the one wherein Thomas Hardy becomes her biographer.

Do you not see that there is something lacking in Tessie's character, in the character of her soul, I mean, the character that lives, that persists still when the body dies? There is a side to her nature undeveloped. She is good and gentle and kind, but she needs a broader, deeper charity than she has when death releases her for a time from the earthly life. She needs great, deep thoughts, she needs a heart so sensitive that it bleeds at the wrongs and the sufferings of others. She needs to develop yet that phase of character which will make her realize something of the true purpose of life, which is to widen one's sphere of consciousness and live for others instead of self.

Now how shall she gain this experience? The novelist himself has told us. When next she came to physical existence we find her among the poor and lowly. That sweetness, gentleness and natural refinement which made her such a lovable girl in the days of Ancient Rome are still hers. We see that they are lasting qualities. She brings them back to life with her. And now she begins the experiences that will broaden her gentleness, deepen her kindness and charity until her heart knows the very throbs of the very lowest kind of women—perhaps the kind of women she had the least sympathy for in her former life of happiness, ease and luxury.

And her life in the novel, as it would have been in real life, was not all sorrow. No one is ever always miserable, and very often it

is that those who can suffer most can also enjoy most. Indeed, that is a law. Strong natures have strong passions, either for good or for evil, or for both; and strong natures have great capacities either for suffering or for enjoying, or for both.

Take the case of Jean Val Jean, in Victor Hugo's great novel of *Les Misérables*. Can we not readily imagine, not that Jean Val Jean deserved his awful sufferings, but that they were needed rather to round out some undeveloped side of his character? If we could look into our own past lives and those of our brothers', think you we could not see the justice of all things? But our visions are limited. We cannot even remember the things of our childhood, how then could we expect to remember still more ancient things. And yet, in a sense, we can never forget. Experiences are always remembered, though not consciously. And that is all that is necessary. The net results of all our past, lives always in our present characters.

There are, of course, many positive causes set up in most lives. We sin much or little, as the case may be, and there is always the result, either in this life or in some other. Now what is it to sin? It is to break a natural law; it is to do something or to think something contrary to the harmonious laws of nature; it is to set up causes from which effects must surely follow.

It is these effects which bring suffering and sorrow to our doors; and only when we cease to break nature's laws; only when we know how to think and feel and act in harmony with the divine vibrations of nature shall these sufferings and sorrows cease. Think you this is a gloomy prospect for the race—that it must attain all wisdom before it shall reach all happiness?

I cannot think so, for though the present darkness is great, I know there is a light; sometimes we even catch a glimpse of it. I think poor Tess caught glimpses of it now and then in her life of sorrows and lost hopes. I think it brought even peace to her when the black flag was hoisted on the tower—and also the consciousness that she had not lived in vain.

JAMES H. GRIFFES.

(To be Continued.)

Let Karma judge thee, and also plead thy cause against the unrighteous.—*Farewell Book*.

CONCENTRATION.

It has been said that "through concentration lies the power of raising the Kundalini, or Spiritual Force". If we would successfully pursue the study of concentration it seems necessary, before going farther, to inquire what this Kundalini or Spiritual Force may be. In the "Voice of the Silence" it is defined as being one of the "mystic yogi powers". It is also called "The Fiery Power," and the "World's Mother."

It is the Buddhi principle of the universe considered in a state of activity, instead of being passive, as we usually think of it. It is said to be an "electro-spiritual force"—the creative power—and can kill as well as create; hence a very dangerous power in the hands of those ignorant of its mighty force, or not wise and pure enough to direct it into safe and proper channels. It is further defined as an "electric fiery occult or Fohatic power;" the great pristine force which underlies all organic or inorganic matter. In its best and highest aspect it is divine force directed by divine will, whose vehicle or agent is Manas or Mind.

Flame, or Fire is always used to describe spirit. Spirit in activity is fire. All life is heat, or fire—the manifestation of spirit. Nothing can exist which has not this fire in it; hence we say there is—there can be—no such thing as dead matter. This fire is the life force, and it is the power which moves the universe. It operates on each of the seven planes of being, or consciousness. Electricity is the instrument or vehicle through which it works on the physical plane. All living forms of every kind contain electricity, or, more correctly speaking, are conductors through which electric currents flow.

These electric currents carry the life-force, or fire. In accordance with the law of evolution, these currents act in the lower kingdoms, plants and animals, without thought or volition on their part, promoting in them life and growth. But these electric currents, being matter of a far finer and higher kind than the gross physical bodies through which they pass, in a short time wear them out; then decay sets in and finally comes disintegration, which we call death. And this so-called death is caused simply and actually by an excess of life, or fire, which burns up the frail channel through which it has been flowing. This is the action of this force on the merely mate-

rial plane, where it is both constructive and destructive—highly destructive, as we sometimes see exemplified in the action of the lightning. On the higher planes its action is precisely the same; and man, having reached the stage of self-consciousness, may learn the laws which govern this force and consciously apply and direct it for his own benefit and that of the race.

Science has discovered how to conquer and use this force of electricity on the material plane. Sages and Masters of Wisdom have eons ago discovered the method by which it can be conquered and used on the interior and higher planes of man's being. They tell us that concentration is the method to use in directing and applying these currents as we will. What then is concentration? It is simply fixing the mind or thoughts upon one object, or subject, to the entire exclusion of all others. This may seem quite simple and easy; yet those who attempt to practice it do not find it so. It requires a considerable degree of will power, which is precisely that in which most persons are sadly deficient. We must ever bear in mind that what we call electricity is only the material vehicle of the real, divine force or Fire. Now, as the laws and methods by which the force in electricity is utilized on the physical plane have all been worked out on a strictly philosophic and scientific basis, so on the higher or metaphysical planes, they are dealt with in the same philosophic and scientific manner. Thus the rationale of concentration has been deduced from the most careful study and frequently applied tests of a deeper philosophy, a more strict and far-reaching science than is as yet recognized by the merely worldly philosopher or scientist.

Electricity is used as a remedial agent for restoring diseased or paralyzed organs or parts of the physical body. In other words, a lack of vitality is supplied by directing currents of the life-bearing force to the parts so suffering. But this can only be done by one skilled and trained in the use of electricity; otherwise the patient, instead of being benefited, might be injured or even killed. Man possesses an interior organism which material science has failed to discover. This interior is the real man and in it are located the real centers of thought, feeling and perception—in fact all the senses and sensations. The physical form with its wonderful and complex system of nerves and organs is but the outward, visible shell or covering of the real, though invisible, man (invisible on this plane). Men

have constructed very skillful and ingenious electrical machines to use on the physical body; but they cannot construct a machine to reach the inner man; nor is it necessary, for the Builders of the human being have supplied him with the apparatus, within himself, for exploring the inner and higher planes, and which when properly understood and applied, will carry him upward to the very throne of the Infinite. This instrument is the mind. Will is the power to direct it, and thought, aspiration, meditation and concentration the means through which it works. Within man are all the faculties which, when developed, will make of him a God. But they are only potentially his; for in the great mass of mankind these faculties are latent, or from long disuse have become atrophied. They are paralyzed and the "Fiery Power," the electro-spiritual Force, does not circulate through them. It is to be borne in mind that every psychic and spiritual faculty of the interior man has in the body its corresponding organ of expression. Each principle has also its own particular center or organ in the brain.

To awaken these dormant or paralyzed organs to life and activity the electric currents must be applied through which the divine force or fire can be imparted to them. These currents can only be generated by the action of the mind—thought. The stronger and clearer the thought, the more persistent and continuous its application, the more speedy and complete will be the awakening of the latent powers and faculties of the soul. Hence the necessity of constant meditation; which means to think as long and as often as possible upon any subject about which knowledge is desired. View the subject in every possible aspect and argue out the pros and cons on every line. In order to meditate in a manner to obtain any real good the power of concentration is a pre-requisite. For we cannot truly meditate upon any subject unless we are able, for some considerable length of time, to place and hold upon it our undivided attention: that is, concentrate upon it the entire mind.

Concentration then is the directing of a strong, steady thought-current toward one subject of meditation; and this thought-current will in time awaken and vivify the various faculties or soul powers, according to the subjects of meditation and the motive which actuates the person using this means of gaining knowledge or power. The psychic powers or faculties latent or only slightly developed in our

present humanity are those pertaining to the astral and lower psychic planes. They belong to the lower ego, the personality, and therefore act only on the lower planes of consciousness. They can never rise to the spiritual plane for they are only of the lower mind. Hence thought-currents, or the electro-spiritual force, when brought to play upon these faculties develop only astral and psychic powers, such as most mediums use, believing and calling them spiritual.

The spiritual powers are those of the Higher Ego, or Mind, which is the vehicle or instrument of the Divine Soul or Buddhi principle. Now, when through thought-currents the electro-spiritual force or fire is directed to the awakening or vitalizing of the faculties pertaining to the higher mind spiritual power or wisdom is the result. The lower psychic powers are those used by sorcerers, necromancers, and black magicians of all kinds. The true spiritual powers are those acquired and used by real Initiates, Brothers of the Great Lodge, Masters, Adepts and Mahatmas.

STANLEY FITZPATRICK, F. T. S.

SUCCESSIVE REBIRTHS.*

In our study this evening of "Successive Rebirths" let us first see what is it that is reborn successively. That it is not the body is evident, and by studying the sevenfold nature of man, as put forward by Theosophy, we will find it in the Thinker, the Ruler of the body, generally spoken of as soul. It is that divine part of our being that is without beginning or ending, but which after progressing along certain lines, reaches a point where, to progress further, it must incarnate in an animal, though human, form. It thus gains the needed experience, and continues to seek incarnations, until it (the soul) has learned all it can while in a physical body, and it then progresses on other spheres and perhaps by a different method. Let us firmly implant in our minds, that we are this which reincarnates, and not the vehicle of flesh which we use. More than 600 millions of people on the earth to-day believe in Reincarnation. It is only in our Western World that the idea seems new or strange, and even here the old truth is being rapidly recognized. Thousands in western lands to-day accept it gladly, for it is the only idea advanced that shows justice in the world—which we innately demand. It is

*A "10-minute Branch Paper," read before San Francisco Branch.

the only theory that explains why we should have geniuses and idiots in our midst, and perhaps born in the same family. This heredity certainly does not explain. Good men and women often give bodies to criminals and vice versa. Not long ago a western man of science declared, "It is the sign of a rusty mind to investigate such an outgrown theory as Reincarnation." But it seems as if that mind is the rusty one which refuses to investigate what could and would remove the rust of ignorance, supply a reasonable hope for humanity, and show the object of living in these physical bodies.

Does it seem as if any idea could bring more hope and comfort to suffering humanity today than this sublime truth of Reincarnation? We all have many longings we would like to fulfill, but realize we can not in this incarnation. We all feel power in our souls that we can not give expression to through this body and in present environments. That power is the result of seeds sown in the past, and the day will surely dawn when we will reap the effects. Not many people have a clear memory of their past lives; that is, of the incidents that composed them, but we are each of us to-day the memory, or record, of all our past. That we do not remember the mere incidents, is no reason why we should deny them. Do we remember all the events of babyhood, childhood, or youth? No, only a very few instances, but we do not deny the fact that we passed through these stages, while in this body. If it be true that we remember very little of what takes place this life, it would be strange, indeed, if we remembered all the details of our past lives. It is one of Mother Nature's great kindnesses to her children, that in the present stage of evolution, we are not conscious of the details of the past, for we would have many things to regret. When we studied our multiplication tables we had many a weary hour's work, committed many an error, and felt we never could master such a difficult subject, but now that we have mastered the situation and the tables are part of our being, why should we keep looking, and referring back, to the difficulties we passed through in acquiring this? So, with our characters. Those lessons we have mastered in the past, form what we call our innate character. Those things which we say, we "do naturally" are the very things we have become proficient in, in the past. A genius is not made or created, he becomes from the continued effort in one direction for numerous earth-lives. We be-

lieve nothing is lost; all the energy and force generated in the past is conserved, and manifests again.

The Universe is governed by law, which is not blind, but intelligence itself. This law seeing the only way for souls to progress after arriving at a certain stage of self-consciousness was by incarnating in human form, will keep us repeating the act until we have mastered all the necessary lessons of our earth lives. Our wanting to come back or not, has little to do with it, but if we question humanity carefully, we will find there are very few, who would not come back, if they could name the conditions. Now, that is just what Theosophy is trying to teach the world to day—that all of us are making the conditions for our future earth lives; that we are setting up the causes now, whose effects will manifest as our limitations and our environments. The Theosophical Society will have accomplished a great work in this century if this one idea is thoroughly grasped, that as a man thinks and acts to day, so he builds the conditions for his future earth lives. If we are having sickness and sorrow this life, we may be sure we have set up inharmonious causes in the past, and are reaping the discords now. So let us profit by our mistakes, and set up harmonious causes now and we can then look forward with pleasure to our future incarnations, when, having learned how to work in harmony with nature ourselves, we will have the privilege of helping our brothers, and showing all men that Re-incarnation is a law of nature and the hope of the world.

ANNE BRYCE.

“And even thou who worship other gods, with a firm faith in doing so, involuntarily worship me, too, O Son of Kunti, albeit in ignorance.”

“Even if thou art the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge.”

“In whatever way men approach me, in that way do I assist them; but whatever the path taken by mankind, that path is mine, O Son of Pritha!”—*Gems from the Bhagavat Gita.*

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.—*Bible.*

Editorial.

PERSONALITIES.

It is told of H. P. B. that once when particularly provoked at the littlenesses of some of the Avenue Road Household she exclaimed, "Oh, these blank blanked GEESE OF THE AGES!" It was a royal oath, and right royally sworn. The Geese of the Ages are still in the ranks of the Theosophical Society. We "honk" and hiss, and flap our wings, just as senselessly as though we had not the experience of the ages behind us to teach us better. Every mother's son of us must be the biggest goose in his particular pond, or else we stop working at once.

Which of us recognizes the meaning, the breadth and depth, of the theosophical movement? We all think we do, of course, and we all further think that things would rattle off at a much livelier gait if we were put in command, and our plans carried out. We are on exactly the same plane as the Methodist parson, who feels no sense of the ridiculous in advising confidentially with the Almighty every time he pops down upon his prayer bones concerning various matters, big and little, which he thinks need immediate attention. We prate of the Masters, and of their wisdom, but, if our actions are any clue to our secret thoughts, we feel that we could manage things to much better advantage than they.

Our great Society must not degenerate into a marshaling of Personalities; the army marching upon the hosts of evil must not be an undisciplined mob, each ready upon the slightest provocation (and oftentimes without one) to turn his strength upon his comrades, instead of expending it upon the enemy in front of him, whom he is pledged to fight to the bitter end. "Loyalty to the Leaders," is in every one's mouth, as indeed it ought to be, but it is too often but a shibboleth by means of which we deceive ourselves into thinking that we are loyal when we are not. Are we ready at all times to back our Leaders when we think they are mistaken? to snatch victory out of the jaws of defeat by our united strength and our single-hearted devotion, even though we believe the plan wrong? Or do we want the why and wherefore all explained before we are ready to obey a suggestion or request?

But it is not in this direction that lies our worst failure; it is in our disloyalty to each other. And the cause is always the same—vanity, jealousy, and *caput gigantea*. So eager are we for praise; to be recognized as a local leader—as the big goose in our little pond—that more than half our strength is neutralized. One-half? Nine-tenths would be nearer the mark. For our strength would be gigantic if we exerted it in perfect accord; if we all pulled one way, instead of each his petty personal way.

And if we cannot win in the struggle for the leadership, then we bloom out as occultists—see strange visions, and dream significant dreams! All born of the same selfish desire to outdo and outshine each other. Our brother's plan

is no good; ours all right. How horribly the mote shows in his eye; our beam is a thing of beauty and a joy forever. Jesus must have been dealing with personalities when he said, "Whosoever will be *chief* among you, let him be your servant." And Light on the Path, "Struggle for those things which will make you appear as NOTHING in the eyes of men."

It is the occult teaching of the ages—to sacrifice place, position, power, everything which pertains to the personality upon the altar of our devotion. The self of spirit and the self of matter can never meet; there is no place for both. When we are struggling to have our plans adopted *as opposed to those of others*, we can make no mistake as to our inner attitude; we are acting from the view point of self.

Brothers, we owe it to ourselves to rise above this petty personal attitude. Local leaders there must be, for every body of men must have a head, but these are not those who loudly demand, and perhaps assume, the most prominent positions. What man or woman among us always exerts an unifying action upon his Branch, whose presence means peace, who is ready to yield place or plan to another, who is so modest and unassuming that he passes almost unnoticed? That person is the true leader, though he or she may not know it. The leader or chief is he or she who is most impersonal, who has the fewest axes to grind, who works on careless whether his work is recognized or no; who is not eager to see his name in print, who cares little for praise and less for blame. In short the leader is one who has the least personality; let us learn to recognize and rally about him.

BRANCH REPORTS.

San Francisco T. S.—Branch study for the past month included "Will," by Dr. Henrietta Brown and Mrs. J. S. Bedford; "The Eternal Man," by H. Buntrock; "Cycles," by Miss Mercedes Burnham; "Unselfishness," by A. J. Johnson and E. P. Jones; "Man, the Creator," by Mrs. E. P. Jones and E. B. Rambo. Average attendance 109.

Sunday lectures: July 4th, "What is Conscience," Dr. J. A. Anderson; July 11, "The Ethics of Theosophy," Mrs. S. A. Harris; July 18th, "The Garden of Eden," Rev. J. S. David. Average attendance 177.

The Children's Class has studied, "The Pilgrim's Journey Godward," "The Real and Unreal," "The Magician Thought" and "Dream Life." The Beginner's Class has covered the subjects "Shells of the Dead Classified," "Consciousness in After Death States," "Cycles of Reincarnation," "Do We Know Our Friends in Devachan?" In the Secret Doctrine Class, study has been on "Maharajahs," "Lipikas" and "Hierarchies;" and in the Ethical Class the topics were "Spiritual Discernment," "Self Reproductive Thought," "Meditation" and "Invisibility." The total weekly attendance at all meetings was 400.

On July 4th, the monthly lecture was given before the Sailor's Union, on "Theosophy and Christianity," by T. G. E. Wolleb and A. J. Johnson.

In the neighborhood of 600 visitors per month call at the headquarters of Pacific Local Theosophical Committee. About 100 volumes are loaned out all the time, and for some time the books have shown from 30 to 40 new bor-

rowers each month. A proportion of this increase is due to visitors to the city, but perhaps half are residents of the city who are turning to Theosophical reading.

P. C. T. is trying to develop a system of correspondence between the Coast Branches. As a beginning in this direction all Western Branches have been invited to send in monthly reports of proceedings, and later it is hoped to develop a bureau for the exchange of papers, so that the good things of one Branch may become the property of all. In this way the weaker Branches may be helped by the stronger, and all come in close touch with each other.

LOS ANGELES BRANCH, LOS ANGELES, CAL.

Sec. H. B. Leader, writes: I enclose list of activities for the past month as follows: "The Power of Faith," H. A. Gibson; "Growth of the Inner Man," Bro. Lester of Pasadena; "The Relation of Science to Religion," H. A. Gibson; "Past, Present, and Future of Man," Dr. G. I. Mohn; "A Declaration of Interdependence," H. A. Gibson; "Our Idols," Miss A. A. Wheeler; "The Law of Liberty," H. A. Gibson; "Cataclysms and Cycles," Mrs. Giese. Our subjects for Branch meetings have been "Unselfishness," "Man, the Creator," "Theosophy and Christianity," and "Capital Punishment." All meetings were well attended, and there is no falling off in the work; we have many strangers come who display much interest. Bros. Gibson and Clark will speak at the University Extension Camp at Santa Monica, next week.

AURORA BRANCH, OAKLAND, CAL.

S. G. Atterbury, Sec., writes: Aurora Branch is doing active work and an effort is being made to establish a center in the Western Addition. Lectures given in May were: "Suicide," Dr. Griffiths; "Where to Find a Mahatma," J. Oettle; "Brotherhood, Karma, Reincarnation," Dr. Arnold; "Ideals," Mrs. J. D. Hassfurth; "An Old Testament Adept," Mr. Jones.

OBITUARIES.

Mrs. Lilian Elizabeth Malcom, daughter of Mrs. C. Skelton, passed out of this incarnation July 17th, after a very brief illness. The body was cremated July 19th, with Theosophic ceremonies. Brother Evan Williams conducted the service.

Mr. William K. Leverage, of San Francisco, died on July 15th, and was buried under Theosophic ceremonies July 17th. Brother Edward B. Rambo conducted the same.

REVIEWS.

**Tales of the Sun-Land*, and *Lo-To-Kah*, are two volumes of short stories by Verner Z. Reed. The material for these stories seems to have been gathered by a very close intimacy with the Indians of New Mexico, Arizona, and the southwestern portion of the United States, generally. They are an attempt to translate the folk lore of these, the most interesting of all the North American Indians, into the form of fiction. They portray that side of the Indian character which he usually keeps carefully concealed, and are therefore of great value on this account. The traditions, religious beliefs and so-called superstitions of these people are described, especially those of the Pueblo Indians, now so nearly extinct. The stories are superior, so far as literary merit is concerned and will prove interesting reading aside from the information they contain. The student who believes that religions, even down to Indian "superstitions," had a common origin, will find much in these stories to confirm

him in his opinion. The author at times rather strains the probable in dealing with incidents, but the stories are none the less interesting for this—which is often the only mark to distinguish genius from mediocrity.

*The Continental Publishing Company, 25 Park Place, New York. Price, \$1.25 each.

Theosophy for July has for its leading article "Visions of a Life," in which a writer, who will be very readily recognized under the initial of "P." and also by internal evidence, describes some wonderful phenomena of her childhood. The paper is most intensely interesting, and promises well for the future. Charles Johnson, our able Sanscritist, has an original translation of the *Vakaya Sudha*, or *Bala Bodhani*, ascribed to Shankara Acharya, and follows it by comments and explanations which make it a most valuable paper. Other articles are the "Problems of the Pyramid," by Major D. W. Lockwood; "Theosophy Generally Stated," by William Q. Judge; "Why I Believe in Reincarnation," by Doctor Buck; "The Teachings of Plato," by Prof. Alexander Wilder; "Principal or Sentiment," by Mrs. Keightley; "A Great Unpunished Crime," by J. M. Greene; "The Screen of Time," by the editor; "The World of Science;" "Literary World," etc. The number has more than maintained its high standard.

The *Irish Theosophist* continues Mrs. Keightley's comments upon the "Bhagavad Gita;" has a vision called "Maelstrom," by Cave; "The Age of the Spirit," an "Interesting Letter," "The Unconquerable," "Sir Robert Browning," "The Outlook," etc., and it is up to its usual average of excellence.

Ourselves for May and June contains portraits of Mrs. Tingley and Mr. Hargrove in the way of illustration, and a number of excellent articles. "The Theosophical Society" is particularly good. Fiction is represented in "A Cab Ride," and the "Beginning of the End." "What's in a Name," "From the Temples of Egypt," "The Higher Patriotism," "Theosophy of Islam," and "Simple Talk for Simple People," complete a very good number.

The *Australian Theosophist* is also filled with an excellent *menu* from the brain mind, "The Perceptibility of Man," "Color, What is It?"

The Grail for May is filled with its usual installment of short, sharp, crisp articles. There is a tendency, however, among its contributors to hide behind initials and *noms de plume*, which savors too much of the excessive modesty which caused the writer, in Dickens' story of Martin Chuzzlewit, to hide behind Suturb, or Brutus reversed, because plain Brutus was too thin a veil, or which caused a recent author to call his work Etidorpha, lest people should recognize that the real title was Aphrodite. They are few in the Society whose light shines so dazzlingly that it is necessary to lessen its brilliance behind such veils as C. J. R., or our old friend, "The Observer," "Capricorn," etc. There are besides one or two unsigned articles, while our old friend Herbert Coryn is alone neither ashamed, afraid, or too sensitive to affix the voucher of his name to that which he writes. Coming to the subject matter itself, "The Three Objects," and "A Daniel Come to Judgments," "What are the Qualities," "Kill out Expectations," are all good. But the very best is Herbert Coryn's paper upon the "Seven Principles," which is exceedingly well thought-out.

Received, The Humanitarian, Rays of Truth, Notes and Queries, The Herald of the Golden Age, The Thinker, Lucifer (Chicago), The Occult Review, Journal of the Maha-Bodhi Society, Mercury, Sophia, The Buddhist, Herald of Health, The Theosophist (Adyar), Child Life, Hayes Valley Advertiser.

A PARTIAL LIST OF BOOKS

ON THEOSOPHY AND KINDRED SUBJECTS,

To be Obtained Post-paid from the Pacific Coast Theosophical Committee, Room 30 Academy of Sciences Building, San Francisco:

Adventure Among the Rosicrucians.....	paper, 50c; cloth \$	75
Among the Gnomes (Hartmann).....		1.75
Animal Magnetism (Binet and Fere).....		1.50
Astral Light (Nizida).....		.75
Atlantis (Donnelly).....		2.00
Atlantis, the Story of (Scott Elliot) with maps.....	cloth	1.25
Bhagavad-Gita, American Edition (Judge).....	75c,	1.00
Buddhism (Rhys Davids).....		1.00
Buried Alive (Hartmann).....		.75
Christos (Buck).....		.60
Compendium of Raja-Yoga Philosophy.....		1.25
Conflict Between Religion and Science (Draper).....		1.75
Discourses on the Bhagavad-Gita (Row).....		.75
Dream of Raven, The.....	cloth	1.00
Dreams of the Dead (Stanton).....	paper, 50c; cloth	1.00
Echoes from the Orient (Judge).....		.50
Egyptian Book of the Dead.....		6.00
Elixir of Life.....		1.00
Esoteric Buddhism (Sinnott).....	paper, 50c; cloth	1.25
Five Years of Theosophy.....		3.25
From Adam's Peak to Elenhanta (Carpenter).....		3.50
From the Caves and Jungles of Hindoostan (Blavatsky).....		2.50
Gems from the East; a Birthday-Book (Blavatsky).....		1.00
Guide to Theosophy.....		1.50
Idyll of the White Lotus.....	paper, 50c; cloth	1.25
In the Pronaos of the Temple of Wisdom (Hartmann).....		2.00
Isis Unveiled (Blavatsky).....	2 vols., cloth	7.50
Jacob Boehme, Life and Doctrines of (Hartmann).....		2.50
Kabbalah Unveiled (Mather).....		3.00
Karma: a Theosophical Novel (Sinnott).....	cloth,	.75
Karma (Anderson).....	paper, 50c; cloth	1.00
Key to Theosophy (Blavatsky).....		1.50
Letters That Have Helped Me.....		.50
Life of Buddha (Lillie).....		2.25
Life of Jehoshua, the Prophet of Nazareth (Hartmann).....		1.50
Light of Asia (Edwin Arnold).....	paper, 25c; cloth	1.00
Light on the Path (M. C.).....	.25, 40, 75, and	1.00
Magic, White and Black (Hartmann).....	paper, 50c; cloth	1.25
Magical Writings of Thomas Vaughan (Philaethes).....		2.00
Magicians of the Blue Hills (Blavatsky).....		1.00
Man, Fragments of Forgotten History.....		1.25
Mysteries of Magic (Eliphas Levi).....		4.00
Mystic Masonry (Buck).....	cloth	1.50
Nature and Aim of Theosophy (Buck).....		.75
Nature's Finer Forces (Rama-Prasad).....		1.50
Neila Sen, and My Casual Death.....	paper, 50c; cloth	1.25
Nightmare Tales (Blavatsky).....	paper	.35
Ocean of Theosophy (Judge).....	paper, 50c; cloth	1.00
Occult Science in Medicine (Hartmann).....		1.25
Occult Sciences, The (Waite).....		2.25
Occult World (Sinnott).....	paper, 50c; cloth	1.25
Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms (American Ed.).....	75c,	1.00
Philosophy of Mysticism (Du Prel).....	2 vols.	7.50
Pistis-Sophia.....		2.50
Posthumous Humanity (D'Assier).....		2.50
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Secret Doctrine (Blavatsky) 2 vols. and Index.....		12.50
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[List of Books continued on last page.]

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The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy. By H. P. Blavatsky. New and revised edition, with Index bound as a supplementary volume.

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A Master Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology. By H. P. Blavatsky. Royal 8vo, 2 volumes, about 1,500 pages.

The Ocean of Theosophy..... \$1.00

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Reincarnation..... \$1.00. Paper, 50c.

A Study of the Human Soul, in its relation to rebirth, evolution, post-mortem states, the compound nature of man, hypnotism, etc. Proving the existence of the Soul, its rebirth upon earth, its state during the intervals of its earth-lives, etc. By Jerome A. Anderson, M. D.

Septenary Man..... \$1.00. Paper, 50c.

A study of the Human Soul, in relation to the various vehicles, or avenues, of Consciousness (technically known as the Seven Principles), by means of which it brings itself into relation with the Outer Cosmos: including a brief examination of Dream and the Problems of Heredity. By Jerome A. Anderson, M. D.

Letters That Have Helped Me..... 50c.

Compiled by Jasper Nierhand. Printed on handsome super-calendered paper, same size page as the *Ocean of Theosophy*. Light cloth with olive-green side stamp.

Karma..... \$1.00. Paper, 50c.

A study of the Law of Cause and Effect. By Jerome A. Anderson.

A Study of Man..... \$2.50.

And the Way to Health: By J. D. Buck, M. D.

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