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## SOME CONVINCING PSYCHIC PHENOMENA

It is altogether probable that investigators of psychic phenomena never hear of many of the most interesting cases that furnish convincing evidence of some of the facts taught by theosophy. One of these practical demonstrations has come and gone in Albany without being known outside the small circle that contained the chief actors. Nevertheless all the facts in regard to it may be easily verified by those sufficiently interested to take the trouble.

On the fifth day of February, 1908, Mr. John T. Dodds, a well known business man of Delhi, N. Y., suddenly disappeared and all efforts to trace him were unavailing. He had come to Albany and was last seen on Division street. He was in good financial condition and there was nothing in his life to support the theory of suicide. His relatives put detectives on the case and for a month they worked without the slightest progress toward the solution of the mystery. The man had simply disappeared and could not be traced. They finally came to believe that, for reasons known only to himself, Mr. Dodds had planned to thus abandon this part of the country; and there the case rested.

Among the detectives, however, was one who determined to see if psychic science could be of any assistance. He went to Mr. E. A. Doty, President of the Albany Lodge of the Theosophical Society, enquiring for a reliable psychic. He was referred to one in Syracuse and to another in Buffalo. Being too busy to make the journey himself, the officer turned the matter over to Mr. Doty and the latter, with the missing man's traveling bag as the only clew for the psychics to work from, visited each of them. In different language they told a story of the same purport; the man was dead; his body would be found in the river. Minute details of just how the tragedy came about were given. Mr. Doty returned to his place of business on the morning of March 20th, and casually related all these circumstances to Mr. George L. Flanders, First Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture. A little later the detective came in for the report. Upon receiving it he shook his head. The story did not tally with other things he felt certain about. "You are away off," he said; "That man is still alive." Mr. Doty declared his confidence in those who had given him the information and added, "It's your case, but if it were mine I should have the river dragged at the foot of Division street."

Now it is the business of a good detective to follow every clew to the end, or to prove its worthlessness, and so in spite of the fact that the story was not consistent with the theory upon which he was working he engaged men to begin the task of dragging the river the next morning. They set carefully to work at the point designated by Mr. Doty and in a very short time the grappling hooks brought to the surface the body of John T. Dodds.

## THE HORRORS OF VIVISECTION

Altogether too little is known by the public on the subject of the vivisection of animals. Most people innocently suppose that an anæsthetic is administered when a cat or dog is about to pass under the knife for a certain experiment. But this is emphatically contradicted by trustworthy witnesses. In countries where the law requires it there is, of course, at least a pretense of producing anæsthesia, but the animal in the majority of cases is not rendered insensible to pain. E. Lucas Hughes, M. R. C. S., an eminent English medical man, declares that "when a dog or other animal is strapped on a board with a muzzle or gag firmly binding its mouth and nose, it is impossible to give an anæsthetic sufficiently to prevent great suffering. It is all bunkum about animals having chloroform and the public has been completely humbugged by this falsehood."

In Paris there is said to be a reaction among the medical men on the question. Some of them are declaring that, reports to the contrary notwithstanding, not a single beneficial discovery has come of all the horrors of vivisection. In London two medical students have published a book under the title "The Shambles of Science," giving a detailed description of some of the experiments. It is the ordinary thing, they say, for an animal to be under the knife of the operator an hour and a quarter, and in the longer experiments for several hours. They point out that the condition of the nerves and the circulation of the blood cannot be normal when an anæsthetic has been given, hence it would interfere with some of the experiments. They are emphatically of the opinion that no practical knowledge is gained for the results of the experiments are conflicting and contradictory, the various experimenters arriving at antagonistic conclusions on the same points. They say that among the experimenters there is not the slightest pretense that such investigations are carried on to further the practice of medicine but that their position is that they have a right to make such experiments without any reference to immediate utility. That is to say, that just as a chemist would use his microscope, or an astronomer would leisurely search the sky with his telescope, they would grope among living nerves with scalpel and forceps for what they might, perchance, discover!

Our humane societies should turn their attention to the subject of vivisection and all humane people should be outspoken in defense of the defenseless. The brave and beautiful words of Ella Wheeler Wilcox should find an echo in every heart:

"I am the voice of the voiceless.  
Through me the dumb shall speak,  
'Till the world's deaf ear  
Shall be made to hear  
The woes of the wordless weak"

ARE YOU interested in such work as THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST is doing? If so can you secure a new subscriber for it? Such kindly assistance is of double service. It is a good thing for the new subscriber as well as for the cause.

THE newest Lodge of the Theosophical Society is that of Berkeley, Cal. Irving S. Cooper sent for the charter May 13, the application containing nineteen names. Our readers in that vicinity will be interested in knowing that the place of meeting is No. 2304 Fulton street, Berkeley, where commodious quarters have been secured.

## THE RATIONALE OF PRAYER

Most people, including probably thousands of church members, look upon prayer as an old-fashioned form that means but little and is seldom thought of as having any more effect on the course of affairs than the singing of hymns. And it is fairly certain that the average prayer does not; for its efficacy must be in proportion to the intensity of the desire that prompts it. Listen to the machine-like prayers offered at some of the churches, covering a varied program from thanking God that we live in a Christian country to expressing the hope that it will please Him to continue our abundant prosperity, and you may easily form an opinion about the efficacy of the conventional prayer. While that sort of prayer has done much to create skepticism the fact remains that prayers are answered and to those who have personal experience of the fact the unbelief of the great majority counts for no more than its stubborn skepticism about psychic phenomena in general. But while it is a well known fact to careful observers that some prayers are answered they know it is equally true that others are not; that the trivial petition often brings a response while another of great importance may not; and that even a selfish request for a material thing is granted, while a fervent petition that another's life may be saved is apparently unheard. The writer recalls the incident of a schoolmate recovering a lost hat, by a final resort to prayer, and of an acquaintance who took the wrong train and was left at a lonely station, as night was falling, praying for help and having a stranger step up to her immediately that she left the train, ask what he could do for her, and volunteer to drive her home without being asked to do so. Of course we all know of cases where the most fervent petitions that the life of another be spared were unavailing.

Such undoubted facts will lead to most erroneous conclusions unless the rationale of prayer is, in some degree, understood. Prayer is desire and desire must produce some result, although it may not always be a result that is visible, or that causes an effect in the physical world. Whether or not the desire is expressed in words can be of little consequence. Those who desire things, sooner or later come into contact with the objects of their desire. In this kind of fulfillment of desire, or response to prayer, the motive plays no part. Whether the desire be worthy or unworthy has nothing to do with its gratification. It may be for moral strength to meet a life crisis or, unfortunately, for money for one's selfish use; but the result is unaffected by the motive. But thus securing things by asking for them, by desiring them, is only one way in which prayer is answered and the success of the desire in gaining its end in such a case depends upon its intensity and the knowledge with which it is manipulated.

It would be difficult, however, to explain on such grounds the response to all prayers known to be answered, or the reason why others seem to bring no response. If desire brings its gratification why are not all demands answered? And if the intensity of the desire has anything to do with the matter how is it that trivial things are secured when a prayer for the life of another, a fervent petition into which all the power of the soul is thrown, fails of its purpose? There is certainly something more than one's desires to be taken into account. Our surroundings, our environment, our conditions, our karma, are playing their part; and the karma of our friend is playing its part. The praying man may ask for many things that can and will come to him. He may petition in vain for others that cannot. We

say that all things are possible to God. Would it not be good logic to qualify the statement? Are foolish things and evil things possible to God? If not, then there must be prayers that even God cannot grant. But one of the things that we should not lose sight of is that we are evolving will-power and that there must be a freedom of choice within the limits of the barriers formed by our karma.

We shall not be able to understand the answers to prayer unless we remember, also, that we are surrounded by throngs of invisible entities of various classes and of varying degrees of power and intelligence. We appear to be alone when we are not. To one with full clairvoyant sight even the lonely places are thronged. Some of these beings are human and some are not, but all of them may be of assistance to human beings on the physical plane, in some kinds of cases. The assistance that came to the lady mentioned above may easily have been help of this sort,—a strong impression made by an invisible entity on the mind of the man who volunteered to take her home. A human being in trouble, surrounded by such unseen entities, is something like a lone boy with his troubles in the midst of a throng of strangers. If his difficulties are great enough to attract their attention, and really serious enough to warrant it, some of them are likely to take time enough from their more important affairs to give him some help. He might encounter some who would think it the part of wisdom not to interfere. He might attract the attention of others who would think quite differently.

Perhaps it would not be far from the truth to assume that prayer is always answered to the degree that it can be answered. When we desire the impossible—and of course the impossible includes the things from which our karma debars us—it cannot be granted. We have set up the barriers that prevent it. We have generated opposing forces that overwhelm the present desire and render it impotent. We have placed ourselves temporarily beyond the reach of willing assistance. We pray fervently that we may not be separated from another when, in the far past, we have spurned this very soul,—and we must learn a needed lesson well. We long in vain for freedom from a besetting vice when, in the distant past, we have deliberately sought it and cultivated it,—and our prayer cannot be answered until the strength of the present aspiration equals the power of the old desire. But gradually the impossible becomes the possible or, speaking more exactly, the impossible of the present becomes the possible of the future, and the real truth is that all such prayers are answered,—in time.

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*Harper's Bazaar* is running a series of articles on the invisible world by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.

THE propaganda committee of Harrogate (England) Lodge, T. S., has had much success with what they call the "traveling library box." This consists of a small box containing a selection of elementary books on theosophy, and the propaganda committee referred to has eight of them in use. Where a group of people have been interested a box is left and the books are loaned out at a charge of two cents per volume per week. When a class is formed for systematic study in any place they lend them a library box and the money earned by it is used toward forming a permanent library of their own. Such a box contains from thirty to forty books and it will be seen that it does most useful propaganda work.

## LIBERTY AND THEOSOPHY

By DONALD LOWRIE

Liberty consists in self government—government of the mental process as well as of the physical body, implying an individualized governing power transcending what we call mind.

No man can be considered free who is unable to control his thoughts—though thought control can only be attained in degree. Absolute control of the sensory brain cells would mean disruption of mind and body. It has never been approached to any marked degree save by a few incarnate souls, amongst whom may be mentioned Jesus, Guatama Buddha and Sankaracharya.

A prolific and proficient writer along this and kindred lines has recently said, "There will be no real liberty until a man can live in his body as long as he pleases," which means that he must have it in his power to terminate the occupancy by other than physical means whenever he wishes to do so. This would be complete liberty. An incarnate ego cannot attain it, for incarnation is a karmic necessity, an imprisonment, and not until the ego has broken the karmic chain and evolved beyond the wheel of births can liberty be said to exist for him.

We see then that liberty is a relative term used to distinguish the various degrees of self-government which are manifested by different individuals.

Considered from these premises no man can be looked upon as free who is a slave to physical habits, or captivated by such vagrant desires as may steal into his consciousness and crave indulgence. As a general rule only such desires as are in accord with our mental vibration come to us, though it is possible to be so obsessed by a thought not in accord with our being that we may succumb to it and thus violate our very natures. It is quite safe to say, however, that the degree of liberty each one of us attains depends upon our inherent, or acquired, power to repulse evil thoughts and attract good ones. If the inherent strength does not exist—the result of evolution—it may be developed by rigidly excluding evil thoughts and welcoming good ones. This process will, in time, change the mental vibration so that it will respond to the good and repel the evil without consciousness of the fact on the part of the individual. If, for example, after a battle with the lower self, a desire to see a so-called enemy humiliated is replaced by a desire for his good, a definite stride has been made toward emancipation from the flesh—liberty.

That aspect of liberty which appeals most to every-day people like ourselves is the conquering of physical habits or tendencies which by common assent are called "bad." These are varied, subtle, and insidious; many of them masquerading under the guise of virtue. But while this desire to conquer the physical body is highly commendable and is really the first step toward a higher freedom, by far the most potent, the seat of sin, and the hardest to conquer is the mental habit.

In order that a clear understanding may be had it is well to distinguish between physical and mental habits. At first thought it appears that all habits have their inception and their strength in mind. This is not so. A hopeless dement has been known to retain a cigarette habit long after his brain was incurably impaired, unable to interpret either thought or physical impressions. The very apparent mental enjoyment afforded by the cigarettes in this case must have been a reflex, though the physical body seemed to be stimulated also.

Mental habits are those which appeal to and satisfy the mind—the intellect,—while physical habits satisfy the dense and desire bodies. Habits which are indulged with the least effect upon the physical senses may be termed mental habits. Gambling is a good illustration; sloth, pride, self-righteousness, are others. The list is a long one.

Compare tobacco chewing, as a habit, with gambling, as a habit. One is a direct yielding of the will to a physical craving, the other a lending of the body (by act or speech) to a purely mental one. A mental habit exacts a more abject slavery than does a physical one; it is a hundred-fold more subtle; a thousand times more tenacious. It is therefore necessary that we examine our thoughts, that we analyze what others call our "disposition" and endeavor to eliminate any tendency which we may find toward selfishness or toward our further self-enslavement.

The degree of liberty which an individual may attain during one incarnation is in direct proportion to his range of choice. "He is not free who is not free to stray." No greater fallacy has ever been entertained by man than that we may gain self control by the removal of temptation. True liberty depends on the development of the individual will through exercise. This development is augmented by diversity of experience. This means don't get into a rut; don't yield to circumstances: There are no circumstances save those we create by failure.

Physical or mental prisons are obstacles to the realization of liberty—not a deprivation of it as is so commonly supposed. The poet saw that which is not dreamed of in man's philosophy when he said, "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage."

Physical imprisonment is not a deprivation of liberty but it is a bar to normal evolution. The man in prison is limited in choice, is forced to go along a certain line, whether he wills or not. He may struggle against this coercion at first, but soon learns the futility of doing so and begins to drift along the line of least resistance. These limitations, these obstacles are not insurmountable, however, and the very fact that a man in prison is handicapped by not having diversity of choice makes the development of character in his case much more commendable than it is ordinarily; and esoterically considered may even indicate an advanced evolution, smothered by karmic law under physical impediment.

Those who dominate circumstances, physical or mental, evidence a marked degree of liberty. The man who is dominated by circumstances is a slave; the man who dominates circumstances and derives benefit from each experience he meets in life is a freeman.

There is no greater bar to the attainment of liberty than insanity. When the brain is so diseased, or abnormal, that mind is unable to manifest through it intelligently progress for the time being is completely blocked, because incarnation is for the purpose of learning lessons and working off karmic debts, and when the instrument ceases to respond to the forces that would use it for the attainment of these objects the imprisonment of the ego is nearly complete. This brings a new and tempting vista of thought before us, for insanity must be a karmic necessity itself. We cannot digress too far, however.

The faculty of reasoning, abstractly considered, is a limitation, for the mind really becomes the prison of the soul, and not until the soul is released from this prison—separated from the mutable—is freedom attained. This is nothing more nor less than the conception of the transitory and perishable nature of mind and the immutability of soul.

"Let us think of ourselves as we are in the perfection of our inner beings for our conception of ourselves moulds our thoughts, and as our thoughts are, so are we."

What the mind comprehends is limitation; what it conceives is liberty.

## THE NECESSITY FOR DEATH

By IRVING S. COOPER

With every slow sweeping stroke of a pendulum a helpless, wailing infant is born; with each return beat a gasp as the touch of death stills some human heart. In a single day 86,000 souls and untold millions of plants and animals pass through the change called death. Are we safe in assuming that such a universal process is based upon a profound necessity? Everywhere else in nature we find faultless law ruling every change from one condition to another; from rest to motion, from motion to rest, all growth, all decay are gripped by ceaseless law at their very commencement. Science has been unable to detect any frivolity or trifling in the works of nature; the moulding of a gnat's wing, the building of a solar system, the rounding of a pebble, or the destruction of a continent is but the further unfoldment of a deep, underlying purpose which is at once the motive and the mainspring of all growth. Is death an exception? Theosophy affirms that it is not.

Growth is possible because of death. The form dies, but the life expands because of the very breaking of the form. Death is liberation from an outgrown or wornout body, and liberation ever brings greater possibilities of development. A musician, no matter how talented, is always hampered by the limitations of his instrument. His fingers may tingle with the subtle witchery of vibrant harmonies, yet if the sounding-board of his instrument be warped and the strings of inferior material, the heart-stirring melodies within his mind can only find rude outward expression. Would it not be the most logical thing to lay down the old and take up a better instrument?

So in human life and, indeed, in all manifested life. Our physical body, an instrument of consciousness, after a few years of thinking life retards rather than aids our growth, since it cannot keep up with our mental and moral development. The matter of the brain no longer responds swiftly to every change in our consciousness which broods over it, but tends to confine its activity to certain channels only, thus forming habits. The easiest way to overcome this is to cast aside the hampering garment and to don a new one, after a period of rest.

This brings us to another point showing the necessity for death. All living things need rest, and do rest at intervals. The soul is no exception. Life on earth is strenuous, and after a few score years battling with the problems which constantly confront us death, or rest, is necessary. Sleep is to the body what death is to the soul. In both, rest is gained for the struggle of the next day. For lives on earth are but days in the greater life of the soul, and we commence each day or life just where we left off before. Life never dies; the garments only wither away to be replaced by others.

By living many lives on earth in as many physical bodies, which carry us into strange situations, wild adventures and romantic scenes, we are able to gain a wide and varied experience, impossible otherwise. But this presupposes death as a natural process; that each death is but a milestone marking the progress of a long pilgrimage. How impossible it is to fulfill every aspiration and desire while ensouling any one physical body! We desire to sing but can only croak; we long for love and honor but are so homely that others shun us, not sensing the true man beneath the repellant outer form; the wild forest and rugged mountains possess an overmastering attraction for us yet a physical malformity or weak heart commands "Thou shalt not." A series of bodies permitting us to manifest now this, now that power latent within, is the only scheme whereby we can grow wise in the wondrous lessons of this world. Eventually we will become fully rounded out, perfect and skillful in all things, solely because of the frequent changes in experience possible through death.

Man is indeed a great actor. Born that he may gain experience, his stage is the world, his plots are lives. Each time he identifies himself with his role, forgetting the player back of the mask.

One occasionally hears the thoughtless wish, "If I could only live a thousand years, how fast I would develop!" It is interesting to note how this would handicap evolution should it become a universal law in nature. We are told by those who are in a position to ascertain that approximately 60,000 millions of souls are connected with the evolution going on in this world. Of these about 1,400 millions are in incarnation at any one time. The number of souls connected with any planet remains practically constant although the visible population may vary from period to period. A mighty stream of lives is thus constantly coming into physical existence through birth, and a stream is passing into the subtler worlds through death. This scheme, which permits a short life of intense activity on earth to be followed by a longer period in the vaster inner worlds during which the experience gained can be assimilated, renders possible the quick evolution of the enormous number of souls estimated above. If each one of us lived on earth a thousand years, either the planet would have to be enlarged to obtain the same results or else a fewer number of souls could be connected with the earth. The same congestion would occur if pupils remained in a class-room for years instead of passing on from term to term. Economical nature never permits a waste of time or space.

Again, how many of us would like to have our relatives and acquaintances with us for a thousand years? Sometimes certain situations are hard enough to bear for ten years. How quickly, too, things become commonplace after we have known them for a long time. Death, followed by re-birth, gives us often a welcome and necessary change of environment, and continually presents life and nature to us in such new and attractive combinations that we learn through our very interest and attention.

By this system of a multiplicity of short lives lop-sided development is also prevented. The interests of a single life frequently carry us along one line of action to the exclusion of all others. The goal of evolution demands an all round development, perfection in all lines, not one. Therefore death, like the wise interfering hand of a teacher, stops our short-sighted efforts, and turns our attention during the next life into other needed channels.

To the eye, whose limited vision cannot pierce through the deceiving mists of physical matter, death is the end, is failure, is the cessation of all hopes, ambitions, aspirations; but with the keener gaze engendered by that



ancient wisdom, theosophy, death is birth into a greater life of larger possibilities; death is the springing of the released life from a wornout form, like the butterfly springs from the chrysalis. Why should we grieve?

## THE HIDDEN SIDE OF EVOLUTION

[Extract from a Lecture by L. W. Rogers on "The Hidden Side of Evolution."]

To suppose, then, that the vast cosmos exists to produce a single line of evolution and that the frail and imperfect thing we call man is its supreme product is laughable absurdity. If there is one thing more striking than another in the phenomena that surround us it is that diversity and profusion are the order of nature. No matter whether we turn to the animal, or the vegetable, kingdom we find a bewildering variety of life and the greatest profusion of production. Everywhere the universal life is seeking expression through a multiplicity of forms, and is manifesting itself in a gradation of intelligence that begins far below the point where the eye can see it and extends in orderly sequence far beyond the point where we can either see it or comprehend it. Either life is not eternal progress and evolution is not a fact at all, or else there is a gradation of intelligences corresponding in its scope to the universe. The law of proportion and of averages must hold good. As the animal's comprehension is to its small world, and as our own intelligence is to our larger world, so higher intelligences must be to their still wider environment.

Now, this not only commends itself to one's reason as the natural state of affairs, it not only has the endorsement of the scientific mind as the probable state of affairs, but it has been ascertained by occult investigation to the actual state of affairs. Quite aside from the other lines of evolution going forward on the earth, the human race itself has, as one would naturally suppose it must have, its evolutionary products above us as well as below us. Towering above and beyond us, as the solar system stretches beyond the earth, are the intelligences of humanities whose evolution was completed before ours was begun. In the hands of some of these, and lesser intelligences, rests the great work of guiding and directing the present human evolution. From these Elder Brothers of the race come the great religions of the world and in the scriptures of every one of them will be found more or less of a description of some of these higher products of evolution, called by various names in the various sacred books and known in the Bible as angels and archangels. But the workaday world is so completely absorbed in material affairs, and the facts are so obscured in mysticism and poetry, that even the Christians have generally come to think of this spiritual hierarchy as something very vague and far away, and as having little or nothing to do with human affairs. But they have very much to do with human affairs and some of their agents, while far beyond us in evolution, are nevertheless still human beings.

But leaving all mysticism entirely aside for the moment and looking at this question with the cold eye of science it is easy to see that evolution must have its products in the shape of greater intelligences than our own, and that these intelligences must have their work in the activities of the universe as well as we ourselves. Now, what would naturally be the work of those who are but a grade or two beyond us, who differ from us only

in a vastly superior intelligence, and a stronger and steadier benevolence, and who for the time being may, or may not, be living in a physical visible body? Can we not get an idea by asking ourselves what is the chosen work of those a lesser degree ahead of us in evolution but who still live among us and know but little or nothing more of the beyond than we do? What actually is the work of our greatest living souls, our thinkers, poets, philosophers, statesmen, scientists? Teachers, all of them, and leaders in human evolution. The teachers and the leaders of others not quite so far along, that is the position that naturally falls to the lot of those who rise to the top in their special lines of work.

So it must be, and is, for those still higher in evolution. In a somewhat different way they are still the teachers, the inspirers, the directors in human evolution. And step after step, rising from plane to plane, this gradation of intelligence, growing more and more spiritual, rises to the supreme heights we can not, as yet, comprehend. From these lofty heights come the spiritual impulses that guide the race, so far as the race can be guided without interference with its developing will power. It is only by this orderly gradation, so frequently mentioned, that such impulses can reach our groping humanity. It is very much like a great army that is in motion. There may be a number of directions in which it can move, some much more desirable than others. An order is issued by the staff of commanders; from them it reaches the brigadier generals; each general passes it on to the regimental officers; and so it travels on downward to the captains, the corporals and finally the privates, until the whole vast army knows it and it is a part of the intelligence of each. Only, in our evolution, it is not orders that are issued to be obeyed. That would destroy that priceless thing we call free-will. It is rather ideals that are issued, ideals that are set before humanity, ideals a little higher than the present accomplishment, and which our inherent divinity urges us forward to attain. This is the hidden side of evolution that the race feels, but does not see, and the visible results of which are everywhere apparent in the history of human affairs. \* \* \*

It may not at first thought be clear how such impulses are communicated to the race, how the minds of men are moved in a certain direction at a certain time. But this is because we overlook the fact that a mighty and resistless force can flow through a small point of contact. Look at the force we call electricity. A heavy car is loaded with a hundred people. The wire carrying the current touches the trolley-wheel in its groove, and where wheel and wire meet the surface of contact is no more than the end of a pencil. Yet the heavily loaded car can be shot forward over the hills and valleys like a thing of life. The point of contact between the dynamos and the wire-system of a great city may be but as the tip of your finger, but the moment you bring them together the metropolis is flooded with light. Even so the point of contact for a spiritual impulse may be a single individual as it was in giving the Christian religion to the world, as it was when Martin Luther became the instrument through which a counteracting influence met the growing tyranny of the Church, and as it was when John Brown became an instrument to arouse a nation from its callous toleration of human slavery and the paralysis of conscience that was growing out of it. These are some of the more striking instances in history. But in this, as in all other things, there is the gradation from the most spectacular and dramatic to the most inconspicuous. Every human being who is striving to live unselfishly is a point of contact for the divine impulse that forever seeks its way into the visible human

life. Every person whose heart beats in sympathy with suffering, whose generous nature is responsive to the heartaches of his brothers, whose sense of justice is shocked by the wrongs of others, may be used as a channel for pouring the light of justice and mercy into the world, for placing a higher ideal before the people. Such men as John Brown and William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips, by their earnestness and devotion, whether they know it or not, are lifting themselves into mental contact with higher intelligences and making it possible for themselves to become instruments for the enlightenment of the world.

### HINTS TO YOUNG STUDENTS—III

There is one thing the young student of occultism should not overlook, for its importance to him is tremendous. He should keep well in mind the fact that the development of the heart qualities is the very essence of real progress. He is likely to have the notion that it is all a matter of acquiring knowledge; that he can settle down to a study of the books and that the information he thus gets will solve all his problems; that there is nothing to do but to acquire a thorough understanding of occult laws and principles. But this is a grave mistake. A mere intellectual grasp of theosophy will be of little service to him. Indeed, if he does not live it as well as understand it, then occult knowledge will be a detriment to him. If he uses the information he acquires merely to get more from the material life for himself he would be more fortunate without it. A purely selfish use of anything is unfortunate but a selfish use of occult knowledge is most unfortunate. Such a course leads onward to a very great danger,—a peril that increases with every forward step in knowledge that is used for one's self. There may be swift progress in the acquirement of such knowledge but it is not spiritual progress. It is merely intellectual development; and it is only a question of time when the student who follows that course will likely find himself cut off from the life current of theosophy and left to hug his intellectual idols by the wayside,—the most fortunate thing that, under the circumstances, can happen to him. The other alternative is that he may go on in occult development and the acquiring of occult power for selfish use until he has brought upon himself the corrective reaction of nature for such misuse of her gifts,—a fate that sums up in one tragedy all the pains, penalties and horrors the imagination can picture.

Of course such a possible *finale* lies in the far away time, along the intellectual road, but that only serves to increase the present danger by making it appear distant, vague and uncertain. But the relationship between beginning and end is as certain as that between the placid waters of the Niagara river and the rushing falls a few miles below. A stranger on those waters, who had never seen the falls, would regard a warning as an impertinence. His boat would move obedient to the oars and there would be no more indication of danger than upon any other river. Should he choose to drift slowly down the stream he would be a very long time reaching the point where his speed would perceptibly increase. Then its steady acceleration would be so gradual that there would be no apparent cause for alarm until it had become too late for possible escape. No less directly connected are the trifling use of occult powers for selfish purposes and the great peril that is related to it. Make no mistake because the water is placid now. *The falls are ahead, nevertheless,* for all who follow the selfish course.

It is clear, then, that the young student cannot begin too early to consider this danger and to take the precautions that shall insure his safety. His unselfishness will be his protection. By its cultivation he fortifies himself; he insures his safety in advance. He should try to acquire the habit of thinking much of others, and considering their welfare. If he enters the Theosophical Society the chief reason should be because it gives him an opportunity to help humanity along in its evolution and he should think of the occult information he gets, not as so much personal possession, but as so much added knowledge and power with which to help others along. The desire to help should be cultivated in every possible way until it becomes the habit of the waking consciousness. There is an inner and outer courtesy. The outer concerns itself with forms. It follows certain conventions and gives evidence of being skilled in social graces and certain rules and usages that prevent friction. It is satisfied if it violates no law. The inner courtesy is born of a real regard for the welfare of others. The person who possesses it is thinking less of the rules and how he shall appear to others than of how he can be helpful to those about him; and nobody does, or can, possess this inner courtesy until he *feels* right toward other human beings. It is the very blossom of unselfishness. This mental attitude of helpfulness should be constant and enduring. It should be carried through the daily round of occupations. In the home, the office, the street, the theosophist should be keen and alert for every opportunity to be useful. He should cultivate both the habit of being helpful and the habit of utilizing every opportunity that comes to him.

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It is said that in all true schools of occultism there is a golden rule that insures the safety of the student; and this rule is that for every step taken in acquiring occult knowledge three steps are to be taken in perfecting his character. From this it will easily be seen that it is not enough to cultivate the habit of helpfulness. It is most excellent and necessary but there should be something more. The young student should work steadily at the development of the heart qualities, for his future safety lies there. What more can he do? His sympathy with suffering can be quickened and the heart made to keep pace with the intellect by practical work among the people about him wherever he may be. There are always the sick, the unfortunate, the blind, the aged and feeble. Every community has those who are confined to their homes by illness, accident or old age. Such people spend much time in lonely solitude. Those around them who are not in their condition are too busy to realize the situation. To an active person suddenly confined to a room by accident or by illness the hours of an afternoon spent alone seem endless. To an aged person accustomed to the more sociable ways of the past generation,—who feels that the world has moved on and left him—a call that breaks the monotony of a day with a conversation he can appreciate must be a boon. The young student of occultism who is looking for opportunities to be useful and for conditions that will quicken human sympathy need not look far. He can easily make up a practical working list by which he can daily give a half hour, or an hour, of thought and time to others entirely outside the line of what can be considered his duties or obligations. A cheery visit to the sick, a social chat with some person too infirm to go out, a trifling service to some unfortunate, are things of genuine value to him out of all proportion to their apparent worth. If he cannot, or thinks he cannot, give some daily time to such

benevolent work then let him at least see that no week goes by without some disinterested act performed for others.

There is nothing more necessary to the student of occultism than such practical participation in human affairs and yet it is a thing that is sadly neglected. There is no greater mistake than the belief that such work is unimportant, and can be left to the Salvation Army or the Associated Charities, and no more fatal blunder than the notion that time cannot be taken from study in order to give trivial assistance to our less fortunate brothers. That is just what *can* be done with the greatest advantage to ourselves. It is a clear case of the apparently longest way around being the shortest way home.

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### WORK IN THE FIELD

A monthly magazine is compelled to go to press so long before the date of issue that late news is an impossibility. In the last letter from the field I mentioned the second course of lectures in Boston as having just begun, but now Boston seems like ancient history because Cambridge, Springfield and Albany lie between it and the present point,—Utica.

The second course in Boston was in every way more interesting than the first. It is always more interesting to get into a better hall and before a larger audience. Two hundred was the utmost capacity of the Metaphysical Hall, whereas, in the larger one the best audiences were double that number. At the two question meetings (which were all that could be managed amidst other pressing duties) held in the commodious parlors of one of the members, there was an attendance of 40 and 50 respectively. One of those present who especially attracted attention was a woman 87 years old who seemed to be profoundly interested. On the second evening the elevator was temporarily out of order but the plucky old lady refused to turn back and with the assistance of a friend climbed the stairways to the sixth floor. Boston, with its thoughtful and genial people, was left behind with regret.

At Cambridge the New Thought Alliance had arranged for doubling the seating capacity of their rooms, having secured an adjoining room for the occasion, but this proved inadequate and a third room, held in reserve, had to be opened. The lecture was on reincarnation and was listened to with profound attention. The New Thought people are excellent material for the propaganda worker. I noticed in the audience a negro who had followed over from Boston, where he and his wife had attended every lecture in both courses.

Springfield and Albany were on the way to Utica so one lecture was arranged for each place. Dear me, but it's a pleasant variation to stop where there are theosophists, to be met at the station and carried off to somebody's comfortable home! The usual program is to leap from the train, chase down a street car, pump everybody for information about the place while committing to memory the names of the streets racing past, search out the temporary abode, and be hunting for a hall before the sun goes down. Then to have it all suddenly change into nothing to do but eat the meals provided, sleep under the roof already selected, to walk into the appointed place and find an audience assembled,—it gives one a comfortable feeling somewhat like finding a twenty dollar bank note that nobody is ill-mannered enough to lay claim to.

Springfield is a beautiful little city with a serene air about it that modifies the usual bustle of a place with 80,000 souls and gives you just the faintest suggestion of Puritan ancestors. There is a strong local pride noticeable and it's well justified by some strictly up-to-date buildings with such luxuries as automatic electric elevators that come to your floor when you touch the button, politely close the door after you, stop faithfully at the floor you indicate by pushing the button with the correct number, and never keep you ringing and waiting while the elevator man explains to the janitor just why he should vote for Murphy.

Holyoke theosophists organized Springfield and, under the energetic work of Mr. F. M. Livingstone, the young lodge has grown to a membership of 35. A number of the Holyoke members came over to the lecture and there were probably twenty-five or thirty invited guests present who asked many questions.

The new Lodge at Albany had but short notice that I could be with them at their regular weekly session but they sent out invitations and their fine little auditorium was crowded, seventy-three people being present. A number came from Troy and Watervliet. There is every evidence of virile life in this new Lodge and I shall be much surprised if it does not become a strong pillar beneath the theosophical roof. Some of those present that evening expressed to the president their intention to become members in the autumn.

Between the time of leaving Boston and reaching Utica so much work accumulated that the lectures here could not begin as promptly as usual. Then the right hall could not be found immediately and so the date for opening is May 24th which, at the time of writing, has not arrived. The intention is to go direct from here into northern Michigan so that the work need not be abandoned through the hot season, during which people will not usually venture into a hall in this part of the country.

L. W. ROGERS.

## VEGETARIANISM

In some parts of Europe horse flesh is sold as openly in the market as beef is in America. And why not, if we are to consume the flesh of animals at all? The horse is quite as clean as the ox and is far above the pig and all kinds of fowls in both cleanliness and intelligence. But Americans revolt at the idea of eating horses just as Hindoos do at the idea of eating the bodies of any animals. The French consume thousands of tons of snails, while the Americans consume hundreds of thousands of tons of oysters, which is no whit better from any point of view. The cannibals consume each other with equal satisfaction and enjoy better digestion. It is all a matter of habit,—and very bad habit.

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When it comes to laying aside the prejudices of long-continued custom and fairly analyzing the question the cannibal occupies just as logical a position as any other consumer of animals does. He feeds upon a creature of a higher order. That is the chief difference. He makes food of the enemies slain in battle while we slay our friends, the animals, to make food. So far as the quality of the food is concerned his is certainly at least as clean as ours. He eats the bodies of human beings because he likes them, and that is precisely why we eat the bodies of animals,—because we like them; not because there is not an abundance of other food; not because we cannot

maintain health and strength (with a very few exceptional cases) without them, but for precisely the same reason that a drunkard drinks: because it tastes good and he has not learned to control his appetite.

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Bernard Shaw, a philosopher whom some people mistake for a cynic, says he is a vegetarian notwithstanding the fact that a baby's cheek would make a very tender steak! The public reads and shudders. Yes, but only such heroic treatment can arouse people to thought, can awaken them to the enormity of the offense of calmly murdering and eating their younger brothers, the animals. Every day in every city of our land carloads of pathetic looking calves and lambs are carted to the shambles, where human beings leisurely slit their throats without the slightest thought about the misery it all causes. Is it necessary?

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## VEGETARIAN RECIPES

### ALMOND SOUP

1 onion; 1 pint of milk;  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint water;  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. ground almonds (blanched); bread crumbs or flour to thicken; pepper and salt to taste.

Stew the onion in the milk, gently, adding thickening and almonds at the last.

### NUT LOAF, No. 1.

2 cups shredded wheat; 1 cup walnut meats (ground); 1 egg; 1 cup milk;  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon baking powder; onion juice to taste, also salt and sage.

Mix the whole together thoroughly. Press into a baking dish and bake

### RICE AND CHEESE.

1 pint boiled rice; 1 cupful grated cheese; baking soda size of small pea; a dash of cayenne pepper.

Add the pepper and soda to the cheese; mix thoroughly. Place the rice and cheese in alternate layers in a buttered baking dish. Sprinkle bits of butter over the top and bake in a hot oven until brown.

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## THE "AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST" MOVES

The office of THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST has been removed from 22 Green street, to 496 Broadway, Albany. Our readers will have observed that the May number was late in reaching them, and those who had placed orders for the lecture "The Life Sublime," did not receive it at the time promised. The explanation is that the printer held the work back in order to take some other work that he could not get except by doing it immediately, meantime keeping the editor of the magazine ignorant of the fact. As soon as the true state of affairs had been ascertained, and it was clear that the delay was intentional and deliberate, the work of printing the magazine was given to another firm. A member of the Theosophical Society is now in charge of it and our readers can share our confidence that all will go well in the future.

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Two excellent contributions from new writers appear in this number. Both are young men. It is only about two years since one of them first came in touch with theosophical teachings. The other has been in the Society about five years. Both articles show the strength and original thinking that give promise of good future work, while that of Mr. Lowrie is a production so thoughtful and suggestive that it deserves more than one reading. If THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST accomplished no more than to call out and encourage such young writers it would be well worth while.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

[Questions for this department should reach the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST before the 15th of the month. Those not thought to be of general interest will be answered by mail if the necessary postage is enclosed for reply.]

"What is the best way to get rid of an ugly temper?"

Answer: The thoughtful student will not presume that he can say off-hand what is the *best* way to do anything, but some suggestions can be made on the subject. The unfortunate person who possesses an ugly temper should first reflect upon the fact that any sort of change in one's character is possible, a quick temper being no exception. Let him set out to remedy the evil with perfect confidence that he can produce the desired result as certainly as the tile-setter can work a given figure into a mosaic. The possessor of a bad temper is the victim of a habit, nothing more. It may be the habit of a lifetime, or of many lifetimes, but that only means that it is deep seated, not that it is incurable. The difficulty lies in the fact that the person in question is not yet in proper control of his bodies. He has for so long a time permitted his astral body to control him that he cannot now control it and is thrown off his balance by the lightest provocation. Now, as time goes on his difficulty increases, if he makes no effort to control himself, because every time he flies into a passion and the matter of the astral body is set into violent motion it is expelling, in some degree, that quality of the astral matter that does not respond to that particular class of vibration, and is attracting other astral matter congruous with that which predominates. On the other hand, every time he checks the desire to give way to anger, and thus prevents the matter of the astral body being thrown into this cyclone of passion, he is expelling a trifle of the undesirable matter and building in that of more harmonious quality. Obviously the thing for him to do is to firmly resolve in his calmest moments that he will not give way to the next irritating circumstance that he encounters. Let him try to be on guard, to anticipate the coming provocation. It is by no means probable that he will succeed in completely resisting it when it does come. The odds are ten to one that his temper will again overwhelm him in a flash, before he realizes it, for the long-time habit has built into his astral body the sort of matter that responds to provocation almost like gunpowder responds to a flame. But he will recover the sooner for having taken thought in advance and the storm, other things being equal, will be less severe. Immediately that he has recovered, let him reflect upon his failure, fully realize the difficulty of his enterprise and resolve more firmly than ever to become the master and fully govern his bodies. The more time he can give to calmly thinking about the desirability of this, and the folly of giving way to his temper, the better. Little by little he will thus gain the mastery and when he has finally, by his calm thinking and quiet resolution, as well as his efforts toward control at the moment of irritation, attracted to his astral body matter of the higher class in such quantity that it predominates, he will find that he can pass through the same old antagonisms with perfect poise and serenity. The time it will require will depend upon his earnestness and the amount of right thinking he is able to do on the subject.