

# The American Theosophist

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## KARMA AND FATALISM

By DONALD LOWRIE

Probably the most difficult problem confronting the new student of the wisdom religion is the apparent similitude between that comprehensive rationale of life which we designate as karma, and the wavering, unsatisfactory and illogical doctrine called fatalism. The tendency of the average person to consider them synonymous is natural; but the student of theosophy must distinguish between them clearly before he can hope to progress intelligently. If a human being is destined to be born into a certain family and environment, and has no voice in determining either, may he not logically be called a victim of fate, and is he not justified in passively yielding to the circumstances in which he finds himself? Our orthodox friends, who pay others to think for them, will say it is the "will of God." Theosophy answers in a more satisfactory and convincing way. Upon the basis that the doctrines generally embraced under the Theosophia teachings afford the most reasonable exposition of the apparent anomalies of life, and that as such they should guide us until something more satisfying is found, let us apply them to the matter in hand.

Nothing ever "happens!" There is no such thing as "chance!" There is no "fate!" All events are the manifestations of inexorable law—law which is kind because of its inexorability. The word fate, as generally understood and accepted, implies a blind, reasonless, uncaused, uncausing and totally arbitrary power or force which strikes, mauls and kills us at random. The word karma stands for just, logical, intelligent and immutable law. A man passing along a street encounters a runaway horse and tries to stop it. He is knocked down and sustains a broken leg. Apparently this "happens"—it is called an "accident." In its ignorance, and to facilitate the exchange of ideas, humanity has invented these words and gives them definite meanings, but all words are arbitrary and have nothing in common with cosmic law. As a matter of fact the horse had been running away and the man had been being knocked down and receiving a broken leg for centuries; the "event" had been taking place for ages, waiting for his arrival; birth is the guarantee of death, and the moment of death already exists for each of us. The broken leg, and death, are not fate, but law.

Suppose a hungry, homeless dog makes an intuitional miscue and sidles up to a cruel man for compassion and succor. The man's "natural tendency" to be inconsiderate and cruel to animals causes him to kick the dog, though he *knows* he should not do so. At that instant he not only effects a cause but causes an effect; he creates a moment of insanity which goes to swell the accumulation of similar acts on his part, and though, owing to incompleteness, or to other debts which have pre-

cedence, it may be a thousand years before he arrives at his self-created insane manifestation and goes through an incarnation or part of an incarnation on a level lower than that of the so-called brute creation,—as a dement,—he will none the less surely get there. It is the law. All comes back to us. Love is most to the lover—hate is most to the hater.

If a ball is thrown into the air we *know* it will come back to earth—we do not doubt the law—we cannot, for it has never failed us. Knowing that the ball will return to earth it behooves us to avoid its descent. This we can do quite easily because we can watch the ball and get out of its path. But if the ball is thrown into the air and we are not aware of it and it strikes and knocks us down, is not that fate? No. The ball was not thrown into the air by another—it was thrown by self. Perhaps it has been in the air centuries. It is not the ball that strikes us but a returning manifestation of sin, the effect of some remote, self-created cause. And even though the lower consciousness, not remembering the cause, may feel undeservedly injured, the ego, serene, with consciousness extending back through the ages, registers the experience and takes the lesson home. These registered experiences go to determine the “inherent characteristics” of the following and all subsequent incarnations. Question this and you reduce the cosmos to chaos, manifestation becomes meaningless and “God” a monster;—because “God” is always loaded with the inexplicable.

“But,” someone persists, “would it not accelerate evolution and be more just if we (meaning the lower self) *remembered* throwing the ball into the air in the long ago? Would it not be better if the results of all our acts and thoughts occurred at once?” If such were the case there would remain no reason for continued manifestation, all life, all evolution, would necessarily cease at once. Cause and effect would fuse. The ultimate would be at hand.

Causes, especially in the concrete, are beyond *human* ken. We can only speculate, from our limited, concrete standpoint, on the causes which result in the hair-breadth escape of a “bad” man and the miserable death of a “good” one. If two men rush for a railroad train and one of them, being intoxicated, is left behind, while the other, on an errand of mercy, is maimed for life in a smash-up half an hour later, but one rational explanation can account for this apparent good and bad “luck,”—that it was lawfully necessary that one should be crippled and the other experience the shock of having so “miraculously” escaped a similar “fate.” Of course he has not “escaped” anything—but he thinks he has, and the thought, though erroneous, is essential to his normal evolution and he will so continue to view the vicissitudes of life until evolution has swept him to the portals of a wider and truer comprehension.

Let us take another concrete case. “A” is a telegraph operator whose work requires close attention. Familiarity breeds contempt, however, and gradually he allows himself to become careless. Owing to his neglect two trains crash together killing a score of his fellow beings, maiming many others, and bringing woe and sorrow into a hundred hitherto happy homes. Realizing the enormity of his offense and in fear of the consequences he travels as a fugitive to another country. Under an assumed name he settles down, and though his carelessness remains as a dominant characteristic, it never causes him any great degree of sorrow; he is successful, lives long, and dies happy. Two thousand

years from now a man, through the carelessness of a deckhand, is destined to fall from an aeroplane and be mashed to pulp on the rocks thousands of feet below. It is "A." At the future instant when the disruption of body and ego occurs—in that pregnant instant which we call death—the sin of carelessness will be seared into the consciousness, the higher consciousness, and the ego "A" will ever afterwards be careful and considerate of others—it will be his "nature."

There is no waste in nature. We have no useless experiences. Ripe karma determines the general outline of an incarnation, certain experiences are inevitable, but we always have it more or less in our human power to modify this inevitableness, and we always have our destinies in our own hands. The egos born into the world as human beings amongst the bourgeois in France during the decade from 1760 to 1770 were destined to be drawn into that horrible vortex of human passion—the French Revolution, but there is no question as to the fact that many of them accelerated their evolution by scores of incarnations, perhaps, owing to that inevitable experience. Strenuous times afford the best opportunity for working off karmic debts—the sin essence of many lives may be liquidated by a supreme moment of self-sacrifice. It was the law that they should be born into that period; it was also the law that each one of them had it in his power to make the experience beneficial or detrimental. If all law was suddenly suspended throughout the universe we would be the victims of an unknown, unthinkable condition, which, for want of a better name we might call fate. But as long as there is an iota of manifested law just that long must we, as reasonable beings, bend to the conclusion and find refuge in the fact that law is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient.

The *motive* behind what you *do* to-day is the parent of what you will *be* to-morrow. Those who are apparently "lucky" in this life, committing what we call "sin" and yet enjoying material prosperity and happiness, are not to be envied; rather they are to be pitied, if envy or pity are at all admissible. Those of us who are meeting adverse karma with knowledge and understanding, no matter how adverse it may be, are the ones to be congratulated, for the student of the wisdom religion can never really be of service to his fellows until he has tasted the bitterness of selfishness and drunk deeply from the cup of human woe. A man can never really be happy until he has graduated from his own weaknesses, and he cannot graduate under the inexorable law without having a *bona fide* right to do so. So let us all be of good cheer. Let us meet whatever the law has in store for us (our own children) with fortitude and grace, deriving the greatest amount of good from each experience, and ever striving to fit ourselves to help others. "Fate" is a chimera; the law, karma, is absolute good.

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Speak! History! Who are life's victors?  
 Unroll thy long annals and say,  
 Are they those whom the world calls the victors,  
 Who won the success of a day?  
 The Martyrs or Nero? The Spartans  
 Who fell at Thermopylae's tryst  
 Or the Persians and Xerxes?  
 His judges, or Socrates? Pilate or Christ?

ANON.

## MEDIUMSHIP AND CLAIRVOYANCE

By IRVING S. COOPER

It is well at the outset, for sake of clearness, to distinguish between clairvoyance and mediumship. A clairvoyant is one who, by *innate capacity*, is able to see objects in this and in subtler surrounding worlds, which are invisible to normal human eyes. By means of this enlarged vision the future can be calculated and the distant past observed. Even as an arc light illuminates a far greater area than a candle and thus defines what the latter left obscure, so does the mind, working with more delicate senses than the physical, understand more of the causes which produce earthly events. This power is not a gift from the outside, it is not due to the influence of another intelligence, but is resident within the clairvoyant as much as the faculty of ordinary sight is with us. High clairvoyance, such as few people possess now, is the first appearance of a new sense, which later will become the common inheritance of the entire human race. Its development is as significant of the coming course of evolution as was the formation of the first eye.

On the other hand a medium is not the active agent in obtaining the facts, making the observations and thinking the thoughts which are given out during a seance, but is one who simply gives up his body for the use of another personality. The clairvoyant is an *active observer*, the medium is a *passive transmitter*.

Our chief difficulty in understanding mediumship is that we do not make vivid to ourselves the fact that the physical body is only an instrument, not the man. We can hardly reassure ourselves that we can live apart from the body, that we are spirits now, as much as we ever shall be, and possess a subtle spirit body in addition to the physical. We should look upon our physical body simply as a sensitive garment, by which we, as spirits, can act upon the world, and through which the world can react upon us.

Death is but the permanent casting away of this robe of flesh. It does not change the *man* any more than the loss of his coat would. His character remains the same: sensual in the astral world if sensual here, spiritual beyond death if spiritual here. Sleep is a precisely similar process to death, only that the man returns to his body at day-break instead of leaving it for all time. During the day we control the body as a rider his horse; it is necessary at night to leave it in order that it may rest. Witness how fatigue comes when we have been awake all night. Through custom, at night we are able to pass out of our body without difficulty and leave it resting on the bed, while we busy ourselves with the interests of the surrounding invisible world. It is not so easy to retain consciousness, however, during this process of withdrawal and to remember what we have done during the night; in other words to be conscious during the entire twenty-four hours even though the physical body sleeps for eight hours of the period. Still more difficult is it to leave the body deliberately during the daytime, when we are no longer aided by habit, and to release our hold so skillfully upon the distracting turmoil of this world that we are able to respond to the subtler realities of the next without experiencing a moment of blankness during the transition.

A medium is one who can vacate his body easily, leaving it untenanted upon the couch or chair. Is it any more strange for another in-

telligence to enter and wake it than for its rightful owner? When the keyboard we call the brain is played upon by another thinker, of necessity the thoughts, language, actions and even appearance must change. The body is but the transmitter of impulses generated by the man himself. Change men and naturally the entire expression of the body changes.

The physical body is moulded readily by the overshadowing thinker, although we commonly assume that it is characterized by great stability. Everyday expressions like, "His face became distorted with anger," "Her whole appearance changed," "He was bowed down with grief," "Her face was radiant with joy," indicate our unconscious recognition that the body follows every change in the thinker. How plainly character is etched on the features and betrayed by our bearing! Every brutal passion, every compassionate thought swiftly engraves its respective symbol on our responsive bodies; each habit of thinking and feeling influences directly the deposit, particle by particle, of matter in the bodies of man. A body is really nothing more than a vortex of vibrating matter, held in form by the central self, and organized into organs to act on and to be acted on by the outer world. The body vibrates in response to each change in the self; the latter changes with each vibration of the body initiated by the external world. Thus we readily see, that when another personality takes possession of a man's body, that body quickly responds to the different character, thoughts and emotions of this personality.

A clairvoyant also may and frequently does possess the power to leave the physical body at will and range the astral and mental worlds in search of information. During his absence his body is not ensouled by another personality but remains quietly slumbering in trance. His power of observation, however, on the inner worlds is dependent entirely upon his growth and development, and long and careful training is necessary before much reliance can be placed upon his statements. Close observation and keen vision are rare amongst us here. How much rarer they must be in the subtler worlds, among the few who have become aware of the existence of those regions, where we have to evolve several new faculties in order to interpret correctly the nature of the objects seen there.

High clairvoyance thus signifies a wider expansion of our intelligence. This growth in vision must not be confused with ordinary psychism. At one period during the development of the human race when the sympathetic nervous system played a more important part than it does now, astral vision was a faculty common to all. Later, this rudimentary clairvoyance or psychism, was swamped under the materialistic sway of dawning intellect. Thus knowledge of the worlds invisible to the physical sight disappeared while man made a necessary step forward in his evolution. Now that intellectual mastery has been attained by the foremost of the race, now that mind-development as a stage in evolution has nearly been accomplished, we are slowly awakening to the fact that the senses may be transcended and invisible worlds brought into the ken of our vision by the exercise of a high clairvoyance, working through the highly organized brain and spinal cord. Most of the untrained clairvoyants around us are but using this lower psychism, and that is the reason why they have so little control over the working of their power. A clairvoyant of the higher order is ever master of himself and of his faculties, and his mind and emotions, fed by the re-

splendent depths his awakened faculty permits him to explore, are thronged with thoughts of service to darkened humanity which is groping its way so painfully toward the light. Pure and lofty emotions, disciplined and concentrated thought, a body sensitized by clean food, aspirations toward unselfish service to humanity are the best means of awakening within us this slumbering faculty.

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## THE GOSPEL OF JOY

By VILLA FAULKNER PAGE

"When did the sun of joy forget to shine upon the world that the shadow of sorrow so enwrapped it?" asked one. It never forgot to shine, dear heart, we answer; rather, it was not risen. Ere the sun of cosmic light appeared darkness was on the face of all the world; its rays, new-risen, invested with light "the rising world of water, dark and deep." So that realm where in evolution's process the spirit is to become regnant lifts itself from the gloom and chaos of the material as the beams of soul-light appear. Happiness, joy, alike represent growth, unfoldment. They are elements of that being, for the attainment of which we strive; since happiness consists in being. The individual whose soul is in its primal stages of unfoldment, glimpses that state and not knowing its own power of realization cries out for happiness. "It is my right," he says, and all blinded by the rain of tears to the only path by which happiness may come seeks it at the dictate of sense, its only known guide; only to find, on grasping, the thorn of pain which the rose of promise hid.

We demand joy as our birthright, not dreaming of the esoteric meaning of that demand. We demand not a mere passive joy but a positive, vital joy, an ecstasy which alone, says Emerson, is life. The old time teaching which knows life only as "a vale of tears and sorrow" sternly rebukes all this yearning of the soul, and as a final crushing argument against joy's claim points to the Man of Sorrow, the "perfect'st type of all," the one who knew no joy. What answer remains for the pious, seeking heart? Clearly none. So it takes up the burden of the old song, "my life is an eternal woe!"

But what of the denial spoken by the matchless life of the One of Nazareth? What of the witness of his matchless words? Do you count the sacrifice by which you give to your dearest friend, a grief or a joy? Does a mother hold and hoard as grief the pain, the nights of watching, the years of ministry? Not so. We give, we make sacrifice for those we love and count it all a joy. Here is one who by the supreme gift of life would attest the love of the infinite heart whose throb he was:

"O heart I made, a heart beats here!  
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in my self!  
Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of mine,  
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,  
And thou must love me who have died for thee!"

Out of the sum of our human experience we give the lie to the claim that aught save infinite joy can follow infinite loving and infinite

giving. Man of sorrows? Nay! Rather, prince of joys! Listen to this: "These words have I spoken unto you that *my joy* may be in you and that *your joy* may be made full." And again: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your hearts be troubled!" Would the Son of Man give as a heritage a joy, a peace, less than a perfect joy and peace? Man of sorrows? No, no! A thousand times no! Prince of peace and prince of joys.

The Psalmist chanted: "Jehovah is the portion of mine inheritance. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places. Yea, I have a goodly heritage. \* \* \* In thy presence is fullness of joy, in thy right hand there are pleasures forever more."

The Master's one great claim and teaching was His oneness (and ours) with the Father, and the reality of the kingdom of God within us. If Jehovah be our portion, if we be one with God the Father, if the kingdom of heaven be within us shall not the joy which was with God before the world was, be ours as well? or is its vision, its glory, no more than fabled song with which to lull an infant world to a sleep of living death?

Awake! O heart of the world! These were words of life, they live as well to-day! Enter into the gates of your kingdom and know the joys of your inheritance.

"But the deaths, the wrongs, the sins," you urge. Only a passing to more life—only a good unfinished—only a darkness before a dawn which shall flood the soul with light.

"God's in His heaven! All's well with the world!" I give you joy!

## CLAIRVOYANCE AND CLAIRAUDIENCE

By HILDA HODGSON-SMITH

Of all the psychic powers which are beginning to manifest in mankind at the present day none is usually more bewildering in its complexity, and the great field of research which it opens out, than the faculty of clairvoyance.

Very many persons to-day are in some measure clairvoyant or clairaudient, although with most this power is not yet under full control and usually appears spasmodically and is not always of equal value in the information it affords. It has been the fashion in the past to scoff at or ridicule those who had psychic powers, and the materialistically minded were very ready to point out that people only saw "visions" or heard "voices" when they were physically out of order,—were at high tension or under nervous strain. Now although it may be true that in the past this heightened condition of nervous sensibility has been the requisite condition for manifestations from a higher source, that merely means that the ordinary physical consciousness has found it difficult to maintain the normal balance between the muscular and nervous systems under the rush of new vibrations which overpowered it. But with patience, perseverance and practice, there is no reason to doubt that we shall be able to adjust ourselves to the subtler vibrations from higher planes and thus avoid being neurotics. It is not to be expected that we should be able at once to adjust ourselves. Any new physical exertion

tires and exhausts the muscles so that we feel weary; but that does not mean that we should desist, but, rather that we should go on until we have accustomed the muscles to the new exertion demanded of them.

This should be an encouragement to those who are becoming clairvoyant when they are at first apt to be upset by the unfamiliar nature of what they see and the effect it produces upon them. With time and patience this faculty shall be perfected and shall be of inestimable service to the race.

There is another demand that is made of the clairvoyant which seems, also, to be quite unreasonable, and that is that if anyone is at all clairvoyant he ought to be able to tell people anything they want to know,—ought to be able to recover stolen property, discover lost persons, etc., etc. Now such a power as this, of such a range and extent, is surely very rare and demands an enormous development and training. Because a person can see your aura and can tell you therefrom certain things about your character is no reason why you should expect his power to be capable of ranging the universe in your behest.

The first thing to remember in considering this question is that there is clairvoyance of very many different kinds and that one person may possess one particular kind and be able to work very well with that and yet be unable to employ the power, as yet, in other directions. Thus, some individuals possess this power only when in the hypnotic trance, others possess a power of internal autoscopy, others astral vision which enables them to see the invisible world and its inhabitants, while some have clairvoyance into space and can see events taking place at far distant spots while others, again, can employ a power of looking into the past; e. g. through psychometry, or of reading into the future like those possessing "second sight."

Perhaps it will make clearer the very great differences in these various forms of clairvoyance if we take them up separately and consider what is the range of each. First, the power to "see" in the hypnotic sleep; much information about the past, absent from the waking memory, has been recovered in this way and persons, under direction, have often quite accurately described places and scenes afar off. Mrs. Besant relates an incident in one of her books in which Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, who had the power of throwing his wife into the hypnotic trance, on one occasion asked her to visit a certain newspaper office in London and describe what she saw. In the course of her description she called out that a certain typesetter had put one of the letters in upside down in a particular word in an article she was "setting up" for print. Next day the arrival of the newspaper containing the article in question confirmed what had been witnessed.

Another form of this power which is being recognized by the medical profession to-day and is being utilized in the diagnosing of disease, is the faculty certain individuals possess of looking into their own bodies with a vision analogous to that of the X-ray. The scientific world has given a learned name to this species of clairvoyance and it is known as "internal autoscopy."

We next come to the power to see astrally, that is to respond consciously to the subtler vibrations of the astral world, which surrounds us like a fine atmosphere, and to register such fuller vision in the physical consciousness. Anyone looking at an object with astral vision would see it free from the delusion of perspective and with its surface walls forming no barrier to the examination of its interior structure. When



this faculty becomes more frequently employed there will be a new and much completer examination possible of physical matter and its properties, and physics and chemistry will receive an impetus in a new direction.

This astral vision also enables its possessor to see the aura,—that subtle emanation of the invisible nature of man, vibrating and scintillating with color—of which mention was made in a previous article. This power also opens up the way to all to come into contact with the invisible world and its inhabitants; that world in which many elemental and non-material beings exist and to which those who leave the physical world, at death, pass. Much interesting information relative to after-death conditions has been revealed by those trained clairvoyants who have scientifically cultivated this power.

The power to see events taking place afar off—what we might term “clairvoyance into space” is not at all an uncommon power. Some clairvoyants require some object belonging to a person in order to see what he is doing in some distant place, but to others no such link is necessary and pictures are often seen in the air by the clairvoyant which accurately mirror what the person in question is engaged with. A man I know was, on one occasion, in America when the room he was in faded away and he seemed to be looking into a room which was unfamiliar, while yet its objects were known to him, and where he saw his mother lying in bed. Afterward, investigation revealed that his mother had been ill at the time of his vision and had previously removed to a new house, the room she was occupying being recognized by her son, on his return to England, as the one seen clairvoyantly from America.

No less remarkable is the power of “looking into the past” which only the trained clairvoyant of a very high type possesses completely, but which many persons possess partially. A physical object, as in psychometry, often forms the link whereby the past conditions through which it has passed may be recovered, the object forming the means whereby the psychometrist may get *en rapport* with past events.

“Clairvoyance into the future” is another branch of the same power but this, also, is not usually at command. Sometimes in dream, sometimes in vision or in distinct pictures, a coming death has been seen and warnings of disasters have been received which, in certain instances, have been sufficiently powerful to result in action that counteracted the end foreseen.

Closely allied with clairvoyance is clairsaudience, though the two do not always accompany each other. To a few, however, “voices” and “messages” and “sweet music” from the invisible are the ways in which the sensitiveness that is coming to the race is first manifested. Care is needed in all these manifestations of subtler forces because we are treading a hitherto untrodden realm, and because therefore we have no previous accumulated experience to gauge our impressions by. But that is no reason why we should desist from using any power we possess, but only a plea for greater caution, greater discrimination and less credulity than is, as a rule, manifested in this domain. Communications from the invisible worlds are not necessarily of any higher value than communications from individuals here, and we must sift all the information that comes to us through these new channels by the light of our reason and intelligence if we would walk in safety and security on the upward road.

## BROTHERHOOD THROUGH LANGUAGE

By A. P. WARRINGTON

It is very apparent that out of the great stream of force which is being poured down upon the world for the purpose of stimulating the manifestation of Universal Brotherhood among the world's peoples, there will be found branches operating in many directions, and most prominent among these, would seem to be that movement which seeks to unify the world's peoples through the means of a common, auxiliary speech. I refer to the Esperanto movement. Although this propaganda has only been actively agitated within the past few years, yet it has grown to such proportions that there is scarcely a country of the globe where some effort is not being made to spread its influence. One can scarcely take up a newspaper that he does not read that some Association or Society has adopted Esperanto as its auxiliary official language. The Christian Endeavor Society, the Universal Peace Movement, the Roman Catholics, the Knights of Pythias, business bodies and other organizations are being daily added to the list of those institutions which are adopting the new tongue. We even learn, although how authoritatively, I cannot now assert, that one country has adopted Esperanto as a language to be taught in the schools, and it is well-known that it is recognized by the London Chamber of Commerce as one of the world tongues. These and other like facts would seem to indicate that Esperanto has come to stay, and bids fair to play an important part in the world's life drama. Not only is a universal auxiliary tongue ideally possible as well as desirable, but it is practical and commercially valuable, and since the solution which Dr. Zamenhof has given in the form of Esperanto seems to be widely acceptable, and as the brotherhood feature of the propaganda has gone far towards arousing a zealous enthusiasm for the rapid and widespread growth of the movement, doubts could hardly seem to be rational as to its ultimate success, or that any time and energy devoted to its propaganda would be wasted upon a temporary fad.

The chief attraction that the movement would have for theosophists lies in the fact that our own movement, being committed to the principle of brotherhood, ought to lend encouragement to all other world-wide movements which are working for the same end. And furthermore the knowledge of the new tongue on the part of theosophists the world over, would serve greatly toward facilitating inter-communication between the members of different tongues, and especially so as to our literature and conventions. In this day when the triumphs of transportation and transmission have reached such a high degree of attainment, the world's peoples have been brought vitally in touch with one another, and when the last obstacle of lingual inter-communication is removed, little else will remain to be done in order to enable the races to realize even in the outer sense that we are in fact one great family.

Another point of interest to theosophists is that the Esperanto reading public, being already imbued more or less with the idea of Universal Brotherhood, are perhaps quite ready to accept the teachings of theosophy, and the world-wide magazines which are published in that tongue would doubtless receive and print accurately translated articles on theosophy from time to time, thus aiding us in expanding our propaganda and making mutual our respective efforts.

It would perhaps interest our members to know that the following resolution was adopted at the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Australasian Convention of the T. S., as reported in the May number, 1908, of *Theosophy in Australasia*. "That it be resolved that each Esperanto Circle should be invited to appoint one representative correspondent in each State, who would in turn correspond with an Esperantist member at Headquarters; the correspondence to form an initial step towards some such organization as a "Theosophical Esperanto Association of Australasia," a title which the Universal Language might render less cumbersome and more harmonious. The purposes of such an association might be thus suggested: (a) To introduce Theosophy to the Esperanto Societies in Australasia (perhaps the Southern Hemisphere). (b) To assist, by translation and correspondence, Theosophical propaganda in countries where Esperanto is already introduced, but where geographical and lingual conditions have hitherto constituted hindrances to the spread of Theosophy."

It is hoped that all members of our Society who are interested in the Esperanto movement and find themselves in position to take active steps towards helping it along, will communicate with Mr. C. L. Guttman, who is acting as secretary for the T. S. Esperanto League of America, which it is proposed to form, perhaps as a branch of the T. S. Order of Service.

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### HINTS TO YOUNG STUDENTS—V

The young student of theosophy should read much but think more. He could get along without reading if books on occultism could not be had, but he could not get on without thinking if all the books ever written were at hand. There is a close analogy between the growth of the physical body and the growth of the soul. For the body to grow requires both eating and digestion. Of course there can be no bodily growth whatever without digestion and assimilation. By digestion the food is reduced to the condition in which it is available for body building and by assimilation it is built in. And precisely so it is with soul expansion. The raw material of facts, principles and experiences must undergo a certain process before they are available for soul growth. Reading and observing are merely the acts of collecting soul food. If we do nothing more it is as though one should eat when, through some physiological derangement, the function of digestion is suspended. There could then be no gain to him from it and no growth on account of it. The mind is to the soul what the stomach is to the physical body, the laboratory of preparation. The mind takes the accumulation of facts, principles, observations and experiences, and from the whole mass extracts conceptions, new views of things, new understandings of life,—extracts the very gist of the totality of perception, and this essence of the whole is then ready for assimilation by the soul, ready to be built into the causal body. By the action of the mind the rough material for soul growth has been transmuted and made available; and without such action that material in the rough could no more be utilized for soul growth than fruits and vegetables, as such, can be built into the physical body. Mind action then, is not merely important; it is absolutely necessary.

Whatever the time may be that one can set apart for occult studies each day there should be a reasonable portion of it given up exclusively to quiet thought into which no reading is permitted to intrude. It is a common error for those just becoming interested in theosophy to bury themselves in some book during every moment that can be snatched from pressing duties. This eager desire to read everything on the subject within reach is most commendable and the burning zeal that grasps at every possible acquisition foreshadows rapid progress; but the sooner that zeal is directed into channels along which it may make the most of the energy expended the better. To this end a certain definite time should be determined upon for quiet thinking about the higher life. A half-hour is not too much but twenty, or even ten, minutes is much better than nothing. The hour at which it is desirable will naturally vary with the habits and duties of different people; but it should be at that part of the day when there is the most freedom from one's daily activities and the least liability to interruption. Noon time may be desirable for some. Early twilight may be better for others. The hour of retiring for the night will probably be the most convenient for many. This time for quiet thought should not be made a substitute for morning meditation if the student is fortunate enough to be giving a few minutes to that shortly after rising. It should be a period of tranquil thinking and aspiration rather than of strenuous will-compelling mental effort. The mind can dwell upon what has been read during the day and the facts and principles set forth by the author, or at least some of them, can be recalled, pondered over and applied to what one knows of life through personal experience. A part of the time can be given to the experience of the past twenty-four hours. The mind can run back over the winding path traversed during that time, the people met, the things said, done, thought and desired, and each can be considered in the light of the higher life. Was the conduct all that could be desired? Was an opportunity to be helpful overlooked? Was any word spoken that were better unsaid? Was any thought entertained that should not have been harbored? In short, did you live up to your highest aspiration or was there a weak point to be carefully strengthened for the morrow? In thus pondering over the reading and the experiences of the day, and renewing the determination to live up to the highest one can conceive the half hour speeds swiftly and pleasantly past and by the wondrous alchemy of mental action the various rough metals of experience have been transmuted into the gold of spiritual growth.

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The entire time of this meditative fragment of the day should not be given to retrospective thought. At least a few minutes should always be devoted to pondering over the inner life and the purpose of existence. This will prove a source of real strength,—a living spring of progressive energy. Think upon the desirability of the higher life and of the transitory nature of everything in the visible world. Reflect upon the swift flight of time, the ever-increasing speed with which the years are rolling by; upon the fact that the physical life is as short as it is important and that whoever would use it wisely has no time to lose from what remains. Consider the utter uselessness of striving for wealth, of accumulating fortune, large or small, of giving more attention to the physical body than will keep it in health and comfort; and let the fact that all energy beyond that expended upon physical things, to accumulate them and

ke care of them, is worse than wasted; for it is thought and energy vested in the perishable,—time and energy that could be utilized in the useful work of helping others forward, which incidentally builds into our own soul the things that do not perish but which will multiply our strength and widen your field for future lives. Reflect upon the superiority of many warm friendships to material possessions; upon the desirability of sterling character qualities; upon the fact that every virtue, grace, power and attribute of character built into one's self during this physical life becomes an eternal possession,—a never-failing source of sunshine and joyousness through all future lives. Recall the most care-free, joyous, exalted moments of your conscious existence and reflect that that condition should be your normal physical life,—that life rightly lived is joy, although the vast majority do not suspect it, and that a far happier life than the imagination can picture can be yours in the near future if the aspiration to live up to the highest that is in you is assiduously cultivated. For at least a few moments daily give free rein to your imagination and let it picture the future field of your activities,—build the stage upon which you shall play the drama of your lives. Refuse to live within the narrow walls of this one incarnation. Sweep them aside and realize that this little life is but the dull and gloomy morning of the coming radiant day. Plan not for this small hour but count the lives that lie ahead as a part, with this, of one imposing whole. Look forward to future lives as youth looks forward to maturity. Make your plans for the remainder of this incarnation as in the closing period of school years one plans his life's career, shaping his present energies to serve his future purpose. This daily glimpse of wider fields in which the seeds of present thought shall blossom into deeds of worth in future lives will, in time, fan the faintest aspirations into steady flame and give the inner life a reality that enables the student to comprehend something of the delusive character of the physical existence with its false standards that lead the unwary astray.

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### EDITORIAL

It is with profound regret that we learn of the intention of the enemies of the present administration of the Theosophical Society to renew the warfare that has, during the past two years, nullified some of the most useful activities and deprived the world of the services of one of its greatest teachers. The public announcement of this determination will revive much of the bitterness that characterized the months preceding the late presidential election. Such violent personal antagonisms are certain to work great injury to the Society with the public which has a right to expect us to practice brotherhood as well as teach

It is a time for calm thinking and careful speaking on the part of all of us, a time for the exercise of all the self-control we can command. The people who have declared for war are, like the people of the southern states in our Civil War, very much in earnest. They are evidently persuaded that they are doing the right and necessary thing,—in fact so fully persuaded and so completely engrossed in their efforts to establish their contentions that they seem to have overlooked some of the plain principles of fair play. For example, in the publication issued in

May (with the promise of others to probably follow) a belated copy which has reached this office, they reprint some of Mrs. Besant's letters of 1906 *without a word of explanation that they do not represent present views*. Most members of the Theosophical Society of course know that those letters were written at a time when Mrs. Besant was relying upon information that misrepresented the case and when the facts were not fully before her; that she has since completely changed that position, which was based upon a misrepresentation of the facts and has publicly and repeatedly acknowledged her error and done everything in her power to set it right. But while most members know this there are many of the younger members who know nothing of the matter at all, and to all of them, at least, the publication as it stands is the veriest misrepresentation. Under the caption "Members Addressed" the authors say: "We desire especially the names and addresses of new members."

The most comforting reflection about the matter is that the party is in a hopeless minority and there is no reason to believe it will survive the next convention. Three times it has been overwhelmingly defeated. During the year that preceded Mrs. Besant's election as president it had possession of the official organ of the Society,—it used it! One would have supposed from surface indications that the American Section was against Mrs. Besant almost to a member. When the vote was counted it was found that she had practically 100 votes for her to one against her. Again, when the Convention met in September in Chicago, the old administration that had so determinedly opposed her was swept from power in a day and relegated to obscurity. Once more, when a new attack was made by objecting to Mr. Leuba becoming a contributor to *The Theosophic Messenger*, and the matter was referred to the membership the result was an overwhelming defeat for the objectors. By a vote of more than four to one the Section sustained the administration. And yet, astonishing as it may seem, this fighting minority, now dwindled to a pitiful 285 votes, is again inviting the Society to try it on once more!

Verily, he is a wise man who knows when he is whipped.

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## VEGETARIANISM

The theosophist who is a vegetarian is usually impelled to this course by three chief considerations. The first is purely ethical. He declines to have conscious life sacrificed for his gratification. He becomes one who works with evolution, not against it, and he refuses to permit any act of his to interfere in any degree with evolving consciousness. The second reason is that he desires a perfectly sound healthy physical body and he knows that by excluding flesh from his diet he is erecting a safety-wall across the highway travelled by devastating microbes of many diseases. The third point is that in his deliberate purpose to increase his usefulness by developing, as rapidly as reasonably may be, the power to function consciously in the invisible world,—to extend the horizon of his consciousness until it includes at least the astral and the physical worlds as one—and he knows that to do this to the best advantage he must have not only a healthy body but a clean and sensitive one that has calm and steady balance as well.

strength; and he knows that while each of these three things is in itself a good and sufficient reason for being a vegetarian, the three combined make an irresistible appeal to his judgment and his conscience.

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It would be most interesting to have a list of the diseases that even the most hard-headed of the medical men now admit either have their origin in the custom of eating meat, or at least are made worse by it. Perhaps one of these diseases which is most common is rheumatism; and the persistency with which some of the sufferers cling to a meat diet, after knowing that it is the source of the supply of the uric acid that gives them so much pain, is indeed pitiful. A person who was complaining of constant rheumatic pains remarked to a friend that life was made miserable by it. "Well," said the friend, "it's just so with my wife. The doctor told her to live without meat and she would be much better and perhaps entirely recover; and she does it for a while and gets relief, but she can't resist going back to meat and enjoying it until she can't stand the rheumatic pains any longer and then gives it up again." What a pitiful confession of slavery to the appetite! To gratify the palate for the moment future comfort, health, peace, tranquillity, usefulness, is weakly sacrificed with full knowledge of just what is being done. The present life is filled with misery and the foundation is being laid for still greater future suffering.

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The meat-eating habit very naturally strengthens the lower desires and it is just here, in the desire nature, that the would-be occultist has his hardest battle in the great struggle for self-mastery. In the first place his willingness to have animals slaughtered for his sense-gratification is a manifestation of selfishness, an agreement to the infliction of pain for his pleasure. Then building into his body the material that has long been receiving the vibrations of animal impulses and passions has an effect that is quite in keeping with that selfishness. That meat is also a stimulant is well known. Like alcoholic drinks it spurs on the appetite and the habit of over-eating is almost unconsciously acquired. The vast majority of people would be dumfounded to know what a small quantity of food is really required to keep the body in perfect health and strength; but they cannot know while meat is a part of their diet, except by careful observation. Perhaps we should all be much surprised, too, to know how much of ill health is the result of too much food. It is not over-stating the case to say that often one meat eater will consume as much food at a meal as three or four vegetarians. Some months ago it was the writer's fortune to sit at table for a number of days beside a lady who was a fair example of our upper middle class; a well educated, well bred (?), kindly woman of middle age, with plenty of money. There were no marks of dissipation on her face and yet she consumed quite regularly, together with an enormous dinner, a quart bottle of champagne! a feat one would suppose impossible without intoxication and yet the fair dame managed it without the least apparent difficulty; and while she was easily the star of the table there were several others who seldom missed a course of the long and elaborate menu. Some allowance should be made for the sea appetite, but the same sort of gorging may be observed in lesser degree at any of our hotels and cafes patronized by those whose abundance of cash permits the appetite

to have free rein, where many kinds of meats and wines are the very heart and center of the heavy meals. Who will say that any degree of spiritual progress is possible under such circumstances? One intuitively knows that spirituality lies in the opposite direction, though it should never be forgotten that insufficient nourishment, through a badly balanced or scanty vegetable diet, is a mistake in the other direction almost as serious as that of gorging. The body must be strong and well and therefore the food supply must be wholesome and abundant. The body must be trained into control, not starved into subjection.

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By adopting vegetarianism those who would spiritually advance are discarding one of the old customs that is full of lurking dangers to the physical body and which subtly conceals an even greater evil,—the unnoticed tendency to strengthen the material desires and blunt the finer sensibilities.

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### NEWS NOTES

The H. P. B. lodge of London, one of the youngest of the theosophical lodges in England, recently had a lecture by Dr. Baraduc, the celebrated French scientist, who illustrated his discourse with many remarkable photographs showing the outlines of thought-forms.

The editor of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST has attempted no new propaganda work, partly on account of the hot weather and partly because of the necessity of finishing certain literary work, in hand, before the beginning of autumn activities in the lecture field.

Mr. C Jinarajadasa delivered a course of theosophical lectures at the Green Acre Conferences, at Eliot, Maine, July 12-20. This organization is a fellowship maintained by voluntary contributions and is composed of people of all shades of belief, thus affording excellent conditions for propaganda work.

Mr. James I. Wedgwood recently delivered a lecture on "Auras, Halos, and Colors: Their Occult Significance," before a very large audience composed of the members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, the full report of which later appeared in *Light*, published in that city. The lecture is an excellent one and propaganda work of that sort must have great value.

The annual election in the British Section of the Theosophical Society, the result of which was officially announced July 4, was characterized by an unusually vigorous campaign, the contest for the office of general secretary being between Mrs. Sharpe, who was announced as the candidate in harmony with the new president of the society and Miss Spink, the incumbent, who was regarded as representing the organized hostility of the British Section that has astonished the rest of the theosophical world by the bitterness of its opposition to Mrs. Besant. Mrs. Sharpe was elected.