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THE HIDDEN SIDE OF LIFE

By C. W. LEADBEATER

There is a hidden side to everything. To put the same idea from another point of view, the senses, by means of which we obtain all our information about external objects, are as yet imperfectly developed; therefore the information obtained is partial. For example, what we see in the world about us is by no means all that there is to see, and a man who will take the trouble to cultivate his senses will find that in proportion as he succeeds life will become fuller and richer for him. For the lover of nature, of art, of music, a vast field of incredibly intensified and exalted pleasure lies close at hand, if he will fit himself to enter upon it; above all, for the lover of his fellow-man there is the possibility of far more intimate comprehension and therefore far wider usefulness.

We are only halfway up the ladder of evolution at present, and therefore our senses are only half-evolved. But it is possible for us to hurry up that ladder—possible, by hard work to make *our* senses *now* what all men's senses will be in the distant future. The man who has succeeded in doing this is often called a seer or a clairvoyant.

A fine word that—clairvoyant. It means "one who sees clearly;" but it has been horribly misused and degraded, so that people associate it with all sorts of trickery and imposture—with gypsies who for ten cents will tell a maidservant what is the color of the hair of the duke who is coming to marry her, or with establishments in Fifth avenue where for a five-dollar fee the veil of the future is supposed to be lifted for more aristocratic clients.

All this is irregular and unscientific; in many cases it is mere charlatany and bare-faced robbery. Not always; to foresee the future up to a certain point is a possibility; it can be done, and it has been done scores of times, and some of these irregular practitioners unquestionably do at times possess flashes of higher vision, though usually they cannot depend upon having them when they want them.

But behind all this vagueness there is a bed-rock of fact—something which can be approached rationally and studied scientifically. It is as the result of many years of such study and experiment that I state emphatically what I have written above—that it is possible for men to develop their senses until they can see much more of this wonderful and beautiful world in which we live than is ever suspected by the untrained average man who lives contentedly in the midst of Cimmerian darkness and calls it light.

Two thousand five hundred years ago the greatest Indian teacher, Gautama the Buddha, said to his disciples: "Do not complain and cry and pray, but open your eyes and *see*. The truth is all about you, if you will only take the bandage from your eyes and look; and it is so wonderful, so beautiful, so far beyond everything that men have ever dreamt of or prayed for, and it is for ever and for ever."

He assuredly meant far more than this of which I am writing now but this is a step on the way towards that glorious goal of the perfect realization. If it does not yet tell us quite *all* the truth, at any rate it gives us a good deal of it; it removes for us a host of common misconceptions and clears up for us many points which are considered as mysteries or problems by those who are as yet uninstructed in this lore. It shows that all these things were mysteries and problems to us only because heretofore we saw so small a part of the facts, because we were looking at the various matters from below, and as isolated and unconnected fragments, instead of rising above them to a standpoint whence they are comprehensible as parts of a mighty whole. It settles in a moment many questions which have been much disputed—such, for example, as that of the continued existence of man after death. It explains many of the strange things which the churches tell us; it dispels our ignorance and removes our fear of the unknown by supplying us with a rational and orderly scheme.

Besides all this, it opens up a new world to us in regard to our everyday life—a new world which is yet a part of the old. It shows us that, as I began by saying, there is a hidden side to everything, and that our most ordinary actions often produce results of which without this study we should never have known. By it we understand the rationale of what is commonly called telepathy, for we see that just as there are vibrations of heat or light or electricity, so there are vibrations produced by thought though they are in a finer type of matter than the others, and therefore not perceptible to our physical senses. By studying these vibrations we see how thought acts, and we learn that it is a tremendous power for good or for ill—a power which we are all of us unconsciously wielding to some extent—which we can use a hundred-fold more effectively when we comprehend its workings. Further investigation reveals to us the method of formation of what are called “thought-forms,” and indicates how these can be usefully employed both for ourselves and for others in a dozen different ways.

The occultist studies carefully all these unseen effects, and consequently knows much more fully than other men the result of what he is doing. He has more information about life than others have, and he exercises his common sense by modifying his life in accordance with what he knows. In many ways we live very differently now from our forefathers in mediæval times, because we know more than they did. We have discovered certain laws of hygiene; wise men live according to that knowledge, and accordingly the average length of life is decidedly greater now than it was in the middle ages. There are still some who are foolish or ignorant, who either do not know the laws of health or are careless about keeping them; they think that because disease germs are invisible to them, they are therefore of no importance; they don't believe in new ideas. Those are the people who suffer first when an epidemic disease arrives, or some unusual strain is put upon the community. They suffer unnecessarily, because they are behind the times. But they injure not only themselves by their neglect of the conditions caused by their ignorance or carelessness often bring infection into a district which might otherwise be free from it.

The matter of which I am writing is precisely the same thing at a different level. The microscope revealed disease germs; the intelligent man profited by the discovery, and rearranged his life, while the unintelligent man paid no attention, but went on as before. Clairvoyance reveals thought-force and many other previously unsuspected powers; once more the intelligent man profits by this discovery, and rearranges his life accord-

ingly. Once more also the unintelligent man takes no heed of the new discoveries; once more he thinks that what he cannot see can have no importance for him; once more he continues to suffer quite unnecessarily, because he is behind the times.

Not only does he often suffer positive pain, but he also misses so much of the pleasure of life. To painting, to music, to poetry, to literature, to religious ceremonies, to the beauties of nature there is always a hidden side—a fullness, a completeness beyond the mere physical, and the man who can see or sense this has at his command a wealth of enjoyment far beyond the comprehension of the man who passes through it all with unopened perceptions.

The perceptions exist in every human being, though as yet undeveloped in most. To unfold them means generally a good deal of time and hard work, but it is exceedingly well worth while. Only let no man undertake the effort unless his motives are absolutely pure and unselfish, for he who seeks wider faculty for any but the most exalted purposes will bring upon himself a curse and not a blessing.

But the man of affairs who has no time to spare for a sustained effort to evolve nascent powers within himself is not thereby debarred from sharing in some at least of the benefits derived from occult study, any more than the man who possesses no microscope is thereby prevented from living hygienically. The latter has not seen the disease-germs, but from the testimony of the specialist he knows that they exist, and he knows how to guard himself from them. Just in the same way a man who has as yet no dawning of clairvoyant vision may study the writings of those who have gained it, and in this way profit by the results of their labor. True, he cannot yet see all the glory and the beauty which are hidden from us by the imperfection of our senses; but he can readily learn how to avoid the unseen evil, and how to set in motion the unseen forces of good. So long before he actually *sees* them he can conclusively prove to himself their existence, just as the man who drives an electric motor proves to himself the existence of electricity, though he has never seen it and does not in the least know what it is.

We must try to understand as much as we can of the world in which we live. We must not fall behind in the march of evolution; we must not let ourselves be anachronisms for lack of interest in these new discoveries, which yet are only the presentation from a new point of view of the most archaic wisdom. "Knowledge is power" in this case as in every other; in this case, as in every other, to secure the best results, the glorious trinity of power, wisdom and love must ever go hand in hand.

THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST FOR OCTOBER

The October number of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST will contain: "The Result of Theosophical Study," by C. W. Leadbeater; "Great Teachers Often Storm Centers," by F. Milton Willis; an interview with C. Jinarajadasa on Reincarnation; the second installment of "The Occultism in the Shakespeare Plays;" a write-up of the Chicago Theosophical Convention and articles by the editor on vivisection and cremation.

THE MORAL ASPECT OF VEGETARIANISM

By DONALD LOWRIE

Those who believe flesh eating essential to the proper nourishment and vigor of the human body frequently refer to vegetarians as cranks and faddists, yet a vegetable diet may be irrefutably defended from all viewpoints while flesh eating cannot logically be defended at all. Herbivorous animals are industrious, hardy, healthy and intelligent, while the carnivora are lazy, vicious, subject to disease and notoriously stupid. The horse, the ox, the camel, the elephant, and even the scantily-fed reindeer subsist on vegetable food and on it perform arduous and sustained labor in the service of man, and it is well known that these animals exhibit a high order of intelligence and tractability. The meat-eating animals are sluggish, sleep twenty hours out of every twenty-four if unmolested, and during the four hours of activity prowl for food and manifest a truculency seldom if ever seen in the herbivorous species.

When all the facts are dispassionately examined the only ground on which the flesh eater can justify his diet is that it augments his manifestation as a thinking, self-conscious entity—the attributes which differentiate him from the brute creation. But when we stop to consider that the flesh eaten by man is almost invariably that of herbivorous animals—transmuted vegetable matter—this attempted justification falls flat, and the meat eater, spite of human incisors (which are an effect and not a cause), is left without a single support. A beefsteak has never yet been transmuted into logic.

During a winter trip across the continent some years ago an incident occurred which is well worth recording. As the train came to a stop at a remote siding the ears of the passengers, who were just seating themselves for the noon repast, were assailed by a storm of bellowings, a wailing from a thousand bovine throats, a multisonous low of misery so intense that it is still vivid. A long cattle train was on the siding. The wind, a cruel, below-zero, sleet-laden blast, was mercilessly beating against the exposed "stock cars" where the imprisoned "beasts," with anguish-drawn tears frozen on their dumb faces, crowded together in a vain effort to keep warm, and moored their impotent protest against the monstrous wrong being done them—done them in the name of civilization. Inquiry developed the fact that a wreck along the line had "stalled" the cattle train; that it had already been in the siding several hours, during which the animals had had neither food nor drink, and that there was no telling how much longer they would remain there.

The windows of the dining car looked out upon this concentrated suffering, yet clean-cut men, dainty women and little children calmly continued eating flesh which had gone through this same purgatory of sacrifice ere being slashed out of life by the butchers. During the two hours the overland remained the animals kept up an ever-increasing call for succor until even the most indifferent passengers were forced to take notice, and when the journey westward was resumed the noise followed, as if in mournful protest that the slight comfort of human proximity and the partial protection from the wind which the passenger cars had afforded was being taken from them in their dire extremity. Poor, poor creatures! Can any greater travesty on our boasted refinement, intelligence and morality be imagined?

Every day thousands of animals make similar, frequently worse, journeys to satisfy the public appetite,—to furnish food for the "Gods in the making" which we are so prone to call ourselves. Animals are jammed into modern cattle cars so that it is impossible for them to lie down, some-

times remaining on their feet for days without sleep, tortured with hunger and thirst, and crazed with heat or cold (as the case may be)), from which there is no relief. Let no man sneer because the vegetarian quietly and unostentatiously gives daily evidence of *his* protest against such barbarity. Railroad corporations are not over-solicitous for the welfare of a lot of "beasts" which are being transported to the slaughter place; and even the roads which provide feed, watering and exercise stations have no responsible supervision at the points where this is supposed to be done, and indolent train hands frequently neglect to attend to the work properly, and if the station is remote and it is night when the train arrives sometimes neglect it entirely. There is a continual cry for cheaper meat,—which means less care, less consideration for the living, conscious entities slaughtered to supply it. Every meat eater is a *particeps criminis* in this daily horror. A man will hotly interfere with a driver who beats a horse, even go out of his way to have him haled before a magistrate and punished, then go home and with a self-satisfaction at duty well done sit down and eat the flesh of an animal which has suffered tortures an hundred-fold more acute.

The abattoir (so called to soften its sanguinity) presents a moral phase of the matter which it behooves every so-called Christian and moralist meat eater to ponder. The men, women and children who engage in this soul-stupefying work, this sickening preparation of carcasses for food, are as surely contaminated physically, corrupted morally, and stunted intellectually as they would be if employed in the mythical Hades itself. Every person who eats meat encourages this demoralization, this degeneration of those who prepare it. No man has the moral right to expect another to engage in an occupation which he feels he could not engage in himself without loss of self-respect and moral status. Twist this as you will, it is incontrovertible, and the man who compromises with it is a moral coward. If you believe it there is no course left for you save vegetarianism.

One does not have to be a vegetist to sense the mighty wrong which is being done. Every living creature has an inherent, inalienable right to live out its natural life-span, and interference with nature has never yet accrued and never will accrue to man's benefit. A visit to a slaughter place is worth while. The visitor can only contemplate with horror the cold-blooded, heartless and sanguinary snuffing out of life which takes place before him. It is done with scientific swiftness—not in mercy to the animal, but because of the "speeding," that terrible charnel-house fever with which the unfortunate Jurgis became infected. In the stock yards it is a common sight to see a steer "run amuck" on being unloaded from a train after a long, grinding journey, and often one animal stampedes thousands. Only one who has witnessed and felt the utter demoralization of man and beast at such a moment can appreciate the horror of it. The doomed creatures act for all the world as if they know what is in store for them. And who, when we stop to consider the trenchant astral conditions enveloping such a place, dare assert that they do not? It is said that the animals begin to exhibit fear at a distance of fifty miles from their execution place, and that this fear grows upon them as the distance lessens. This, and the effects of continued slaughter on the bovine group soul, opens up an interesting line of thought for the occultist.

The animals we kill for food are the ones which serve us most in life. The cow gives us milk, the sheep gives us wool, the chicken furnishes eggs. As for the hog—read Charles Lamb's dissertation on roast pig and extract the moral. It is claimed that meat eating gives man physical endurance and strength. As a matter of fact meat is a stimulant, and stimulants are

not foods. The Japanese fought the Russians on a diet consisting chiefly of rice. Dabee Chowdray Palwan, the strong man of India, has been a vegetarian all his life. He is now fifty-seven years of age and lifts a thousand pounds easily. Instances of physical strength and endurance on a vegetable diet could be given endlessly.

If a human being was raised to maturity on vegetable food and then forced to eat a slab of flesh there is small doubt but that it would produce dire effects,—probably acute sickness. On the other hand, if a human being was raised on a strictly flesh diet, he would undoubtedly exhibit all the characteristics of the tiger, hyena and other brute carnivora. Meat eating has become almost second nature with occidentals, but the time is approaching when we shall look back upon it with the same wonder which we now accord the barbarities of the dark ages.

CONSCIOUSNESS

[*Second Article*]

By CALVIN LOUIS CURTIS

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the Soul;
* * * * *
Know then thyself. Presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man."

The human body is a center of conscious activity and its mission is to gain experience for spiritual evolution. This body is an atom of the larger world in which it lives; this larger world is a cell in the solar system which itself is but an organ of the Kosmos to which it belongs. The structure of the human body, like that of the Kosmos, is built up of corpuscles, atoms, cells and organs, each of which is a conscious center of active life—a microcosm of the macrocosm. All these are but parts of one stupendous whole vitalized and energized by the one conscious life which we call God.

In this paper we assume that consciousness is continually active on five different planes of existence. By planes we mean different degrees or states of consciousness, caused by the different density and different quality of the matter in which consciousness is at work. No difference of location is implied as the planes interpenetrate one another, as do heat, light, and air, all occupying one space. Each of these five planes is divided into seven sub-planes, but this fact only enters incidentally into this discussion. The two lower planes—the emotional, or astral, and the physical—may be classed together as the lower group—the group of desire, sensation and action. The three higher planes, of which the lowest only occupies our attention at this time, may also be grouped together as spirit, intelligence and mentality—the atma-buddhi-manas of theosophy. Each of these conscious plane groups is provided with a dynamo, the combined operation of which changes this consciousness into self-consciousness, perception, emotion and thought. The dynamo provided for the lower group is called the brain, that for the higher group the mind.

It must be remembered that the machine called the dynamo, which is here used as a symbol, does not make electricity; it creates nothing. It simply changes the unmanifest electric waves into manifest electric currents. This it accomplishes by changing the vibration and composite combination of the unmanifest electric waves, setting free its force as manifest power.

This may be done by means of mechanical or chemical activity. Now this is just what takes place in the individualized human consciousness by means of the dual dynamo called the brain-mind. While the instruments are separate—occupying different planes—each performing a different office, still their utility depends upon the collaboration existing between them.

Consciousness, like electricity, is omnipresent, ever awaiting the dynamos to set it free as self-consciousness, perception, emotion, thought and intelligence. It is also dual in its nature, being composed of a pair of opposites—positive and negative—creative and destructive, love and hate, good and evil. The higher group consciousness represents the positive and the lower group the negative. The brain occupies the lower plane of the lower group and is more responsive to impacts from its own plane than from other planes, the responsiveness being less and less as the ascent is made from plane to plane. The mind is also on the lowest plane of its group, responding more freely to the lower group than to the higher. This is in accordance with the law of vibration—that vibrations passing from a denser to a rarer medium increase in intensity while those passing from a rarer medium to a denser one decrease in intensity.

Before passing on to the use and operation of these instruments it may be well to dwell for a moment upon the relation existing between man and his bodies and instruments. We must closely distinguish between the real man, the thinker, and the bodies in which he dwells. We must discard the idea—if we have it—that the body is the man, that the brain is the source of intelligence. The unthinking person and even the new student is prone to identify himself with the physical organism, as this is his vehicle of manifestation, considering all else within himself as unreal and visionary. This attitude will change as he goes on in his study and meditation—the latter being more useful than the former—but his growth will be more rapid if he accepts on faith the existence of his various bodies and higher powers.

As we grow in the inner perception we shall find that we have two bodies playing a prominent part on the physical plane instead of one—a visible body of contact and an invisible body of desire and sensation. On the mental plane we also find two—the mind body serving the four lower sub-planes and the causal body the three higher sub-planes. This causal body is the dwelling place of the thinker, the real man, the incarnating principle; so the causal body lives from life to life. The mind body, an instrument of the thinker, is the vehicle of thought—the dynamo of assimilation and the connecting link between the positive and the negative forces. The mind body has no part in reincarnation—each new organism having a new mind body—but meets dissolution in Devachan after giving up its experience to the ego.

The purpose of the physical body is to contact the material side of life, to gratify legitimate desires, to aid in the uplift of humanity, and thus learn the material lessons of life. The purpose of the mind body is to contact matter on its own plane, glean its lessons, and change all these lessons of consciousness into thought forms and vibrations for the good of humanity and the progress and development of the ego.

The chief means of contact of the physical body with the outside world is through the avenues of the five senses. The dynamo, the brain, is connected with these inlets for outward impacts by means of nerve wires that extend from the appropriate group of brain cells to each of these sense instruments, carrying the messages to the dynamo; it also receives impressions of desire and sensation from the consciousness on the astral plane.

These set the dynamo in motion, producing a corresponding change of consciousness in the brain which sends synthesized messages on to the mind. Here they are further co-ordinated and built up into complex units of perception, emotion and thought forms, which are sent to the world through the brain as potent, living entities of thoughts.

Many persons even of the educated class are wont to consider thought as something intangible, impotent and visionary, simply because they cannot hear it, see it, smell it, taste it, nor touch it with the finger. The same wise people have no doubt about the reality of a current of electricity, although the same conditions exist in relation to it. They say: "Oh, electricity is a different matter. While we do not sense the thing itself, we do sense its effects on every hand."

And that is just where the analogy holds good. One who looks about him may sense the potency of thought within and without. No one doubts that the current of electricity is as real, tangible and enduring as the metal of the machine which sends it forth, but many, while conceding the reality of the brain, deny the reality of what it sends forth. Thought is a tangible, creative force a thousand times more subtle and important than electricity, which is blind, senseless and destructive. Each one is transmitted through its own medium to any distance, but electricity requires delicate mechanical devices, nicely attuned to each other for sending and receiving, while nature has provided thought with instruments well adapted to these purposes.

As thought has its inception in the physical organism there arises the importance, nay, the necessity, that we have fine, vigorous bodies, active, smoothly running dynamos and cleanly simple habits of life, in order to attain the best possible results. Here the question of diet presents itself. The cells which compose the body and brain are continually dying and being replaced with new ones. The nature of the food we use determines the quality of these new cells, at least in part. The man who sincerely desires to increase his peace and happiness in the present life and lay up treasures for lives to come will eschew the use of stimulants, narcotics, animal flesh and all other unwholesome foods and drinks. He will seek to control his selfish, abnormal instincts, give up vicious habits, curb his unruly temper, set love in place of hate, serenity in place of violence. These measures steadily carried out will change the bodily consciousness and flood the mind with harmonious vibrations.

If we accustom our minds and bodies to any special line of action, gratification or thought, this soon becomes a habit and at length a fixed trait of character. It then requires no conscious volition on our part to reproduce this condition of activity. In fact it often requires strong effort on our part not to reproduce it. Those of us who have formed vicious habits and afterwards sought to abandon them found this out to our sorrow. As evil habits are built up by indulging evil propensities, so they may be destroyed by refusing this indulgence. When evil thoughts and vicious practices have been carried to excess they drown the voice of the thinker in a flood of evil, leaving the unfortunate a victim to his lower consciousness.

There are two instincts in the physical consciousness that modern civilization has a tendency to pervert or abnormally develop. These are the instinct of self-preservation and the sex instinct. The former in a normal state stimulates us to care for our bodies, to provide for the future, to make homes for our loved ones, to lead active, useful lives. When this instinct becomes abnormally developed it becomes selfishness, greed and cruelty. The sex instinct when in a normal state is still more fruitful in higher joys. It forms the basis of civilization, the fountain of love for

wife, children and parents, the foundation of the home, the bond of union between the sexes, and is a symbol of the creative force of love divine. But when in an abnormal, perverted state it is the bane of the human race, more destructive and debasing than all other evil forces in man. It degenerates the bodily consciousness, destroys the activity of the brain cells, corrupts the mind and diverts the creative energy from its normal channels to one set of organs where it is wasted, leaving both body and mind feeble and debilitated.

The negative pole of consciousness is in the lower group, being made up of desires and sensations which cause actions. Its nature is determined by the quality of the material of the organism, by diet, by habits and by our thoughts. The positive pole is in the lower sub-planes of the mental plane and its nature is determined by the quality of the negative consciousness, the quality of the mind stuff, and the degree of influence exerted by the thinker. The ego manifests in the mind as choice, compassion and intelligence. Thought is a potent force—exerting an influence not only over the individual but over others as well—and its nature is determined by the sum total of our consciousness. In a highly-developed person the positive pole predominates and we say he is a good man. The will, the directing aspect of the thinker, controls his instruments; thought and action are in conformity with the higher principles—love, compassion and intellect. In the masses, however, these forces are so evenly balanced that the man is continually changing from one side of the moral line to the other and his character is largely determined by his environment and the temptation it offers him. Many a man is virtuous and honest because no temptation is offered him to be otherwise, but it will take such a man a long time to reach perfection. In a person of a low development the lower consciousness predominates and we call him a bad man.

The man who realizes his destiny, his place in nature, the possibilities that lie before him, and the means by which he may attain them, always has it in his power to choose the path he will pursue. This choice must not be a superficial one, a lip service, but a choice from the heart. He must daily live the higher life, think the higher life, and be the higher life. Oft he will slip and fall, but persistence and patience will win, for good habits become traits of character as well as bad ones.

The first essential in growth toward self-control is to listen to the still, small voice of the silence, for this is the whisper of the thinker. The whisper may be faint, for it must penetrate a wall of gross matter, but unreal as it may seem it is the most real of all things in this stage of life. We should cherish and follow it, for it is our only faithful guide to the light of knowledge. It will lead us out of the darkness of ignorance,—the sum of all miseries—into a knowledge of ourselves, which is power and happiness.

The query is often heard: Why waste so much valuable time in the study of consciousness and kindred subjects when there are so many evils and wrongs in the world crying to be righted? It is because so much evil and wrong are in the world that makes these studies necessary. "The proper study of mankind is man," to the end that he may better his condition. We must know the nature of evil that we may find a clue to its cause and remove it. The inexorable law of causation governs our lives, and though we do not see the cause we suffer the effects. To learn the cause and work in harmony with the law, instead of against it, is the true secret of happiness. For centuries we have sought to check evil by repression and brute force. In all ages this has been and will be a lamentable

failure, for it is seeking to overcome the law, instead of moving onward with it. Is it not about time to turn about and study this mighty force we can never quench, and learn to seek its assistance on our upward way

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

THE OCCULTISM IN THE SHAKESPEARE PLAYS

By L. W. ROGERS

A consideration of the occult teaching to be found in the Shakespeare plays need not involve the question of their authorship. Perhaps most students of occultism who have given any time to the examination of the literature of the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy have found such powerful arguments pointing to Bacon as the author that the matter is, for them, settled. Be that as it may, the present article is not concerned with the authorship of what the world of letters is substantially agreed in regarding as the most wonderful and profound delineations of human nature extant. Whoever produced them they are our possession, for our instruction and entertainment. Regardless of their origin we can study them for their intrinsic value,—especially for the great heart-lessons they teach—and reflect that such gems from any other pen would have like worth.

That the author of these plays was no ordinary mortal the most superficial reader knows and that his marvelous knowledge of nature extended beyond the physical world is at once obvious to the student of occultism who reads them. He "holds the mirror up to nature" in such fashion that it is difficult to understand how even the materialistically blinded can fail to see beyond the boundaries of the purely physical and grasp the fact that we are being given a truer picture of mother earth than material senses can paint. The occultism in the plays is altogether too extensive and too prominent to be called incidental. It stands out, bold in its challenge, in the most important of them, in both tragedy and comedy, and is a fundamental part of their life and purpose. There are some who may see a deep undercurrent of mysticism in his work, not to be grasped without the faculty of reading between the lines, but aside from that some of the plays teem with the most obvious occultism. In three of his greatest tragedies—and it is worthy of note that they are precisely those that are most popular in our materialistic age—the return of the dead is introduced, while in the plays as a whole we have nearly the entire catalogue of occult phenomena. There is definite prophecy of the future exactly fulfilled, there are descriptions of clairvoyance, prevision in dreams, ceremonial magic, the control of the elements by an adept and descriptions of the nature spirits. In short from the solemn tragedies of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* to the rollicking comedy of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* his stage is peopled impartially with the varied denizens of both worlds. In a limited article one can do but little with a subject upon which a volume might be written with profit, but some of the striking occult features in a few of the plays can be dealt with, and we shall see that the great poet-dramatist possessed a knowledge of the invisible side of nature as complete and accurate as that transcendent comprehension of human nature that has been the marvel of his critics. His occult phenomena may be examined in the light of the latest investigations without revealing any inconsistencies in them, while his fairies in *The Midsummer Night's Dream* and in *The Tempest* violate none of the principles familiar to the theosophist but possess precisely the characteristics, power

and limitations of the nature spirits described by the present day investigators.

It is an amusing fact that our materialistic friends often quote the phrase, "that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns," as some sort of evidence that the author of *Hamlet* was a materialist! It certainly ought to be clear enough to anybody that, since this expression occurs in a soliloquy by Hamlet, it does not necessarily represent the belief of the author any more than Othello's murderous language proves that the author believed that wives unjustly suspected of wrongdoing should be strangled to death by jealous husbands. Why should we presume Hamlet to represent the author's beliefs any more than Richard or Iago or even Caliban? Hamlet is a man of indecision, doubt and inexperience, and the language fits him. At that moment he had evidently had no personal experience with the invisible world. A little later even he could not have used the expression above quoted, for his father *did* return from "that undiscovered country."

Those who would find for the introduction of such a phenomenon as materialization in these plays some explanation that is consistent with the idea that "only children and old women believe in ghosts" will assuredly have trouble enough in any attempt to erase the occultism from *Hamlet* and have anything left. It is not trivial or incidental. It holds the very center of the stage. There is no loophole of "hallucination." The ghost is seen and identified by others before Hamlet meets it. In this matter the author makes "assurance doubly sure" by having for one of the witnesses a skeptic who is convinced by his own eyes. The communication between Hamlet and the ghost is by no means trivial or casual. The whole future of the tragedy turns upon this pivotal point. Hamlet shapes his program by the information thus received. Through this materialization he comes into possession of the proof that his father was murdered and learns by whom and in what treacherous and cowardly manner it was accomplished. Hamlet applies physical tests to this psychical information and, thus getting full confirmation, he carries out his plan of revenge.

Now, why should the great dramatist introduce the ghost unless it is his desire to give us a glimpse of the borderland,—to present all the actors vitally concerned in the drama, whether visible to physical sight or not, and to portray their passions and emotions as they are, with their intimate connection with, and possible influence upon, the visible world? It was certainly not necessary to invent a ghost in order to acquaint Hamlet at this particular moment with the method by which his father was murdered. It could easily have been done by some secreted servant who observed the uncle's act,—after the method of the more materialistic dramatists who, with more regard to startling effects than to exact representations of nature, are never at a loss for means to lay bare a secret, and, if need be, to make uncertain threads meet, can create a few spies out of hand while you wait! If the purpose of this master dramatist was not to give us a picture of human life that reaches beyond the visible, to describe the passions and emotions as surviving the loss of the physical body, then the bringing forward of the ghost violates one of the first principles of dramatic art: the introduction of the superfluous,—of a thing that is not required for the comprehension of what is to follow. Unless the purpose is akin to that above indicated the appearance of the ghost is a clumsy, absurd blunder; and so free are the Shakespeare plays from any artistic flaws that when anything is found in them that does not play a necessary part in the whole,—does not contribute a ray of light toward the complete illumination of the

subject under consideration—the critics conclude it is one of the many interpolations that have crept in since the plays left the author's hands. So the only logical inference to be drawn is that all the varied occultism to be found in the plays is there for a purpose,—the very sane purpose of giving us a full and faithful picture of things as they really are and not as those who have but partial sight imagine them to be.

[*To be continued.*]

HINTS TO YOUNG STUDENTS—VI

One of the essentials in spiritual progress is the giving out of what is received. Without such giving there can be no real growth. There may be the accumulation of certain knowledge, but it will prove as worthless to its possessor, who relies upon that to carry him through, as gold would be to a man perishing alone in the desert, where all his life-long accumulations of money would avail him nothing,—could not procure him a crust of bread nor a single drop of water. No, spiritual growth can never come of the accumulation of occult information,—of probing into the secrets of nature and adding one fact to another until the possessor feels that he is well versed in mystic lore. To grow spiritually means to live more vividly, to have a greater life capacity. To accumulate much knowledge and to make spiritual progress are two very different things. It is not facts we need so much as capacity to live, to love, to know the joy that we are now unable to comprehend. An infant a week old has five senses and is equipped with motor and sensory nerves; but it has not yet developed to that stage of its physical existence in which they are available for the enjoyment of a more abundant life than that it is living. Therefore it cannot live the wider, keener life of the healthy adult who finds manifold pleasures in physical existence. It cannot even comprehend that wider life. The difference is merely one of *capacity to live*. Still greater is the difference between the man who is spiritually undeveloped and the one who has evolved the capacity to know the higher joys of the universe. One is a spiritual infant, with inherent but dormant faculties. The other is the spiritual adult, whose developed faculties give him a capacity to live and enjoy life in a way that is as little comprehended by the ordinary man of the world as the pleasures of literature, art and music are unknown to the infant in its cradle. The baby inhabits the same world as the adult and precisely the same sights and sounds are about him, but he has not, as yet, the capacity to appropriate them. In the very house he inhabits there may be libraries of choice literature, and art treasures of exquisite beauty, while some master musician thrills all who listen with divinest harmonies; but they simply have no existence for the infant because he has not the capacity for a life so full and rich. Ability to receive, to respond to that which exists, is the measure of one's life.

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To grow spiritually is to develop one's latent capacities, to enlarge the horizon of consciousness and to come into completer accord with the life-stream that pulses through the universe. It is not a process of accumulating information, or accumulating anything; but rather of getting rid

of the impediments that obstruct the life-stream,—that shut us out from the cosmic life-rhythm—that compel the universal life-tide to flow about us instead of through us. To get spiritual knowledge and keep it, instead of being the method of spiritual growth, is one of the impediments that shuts out the life-current. A truth discovered should become a truth promulgated. Pass on the thought if you would receive more. Treasure no spiritual knowledge as a personal possession if you would not be cut off from the source of wisdom. One grows most, spiritually, when the life-stream flows most through him to others. One who seeks to have and to hold is like a pond without an outlet, covered with its green slime of impurity. He represents spiritual stagnation. One who receives and gives again is like a lake from which springs a noble stream to quench the thirst of parching fields beyond. It is to the pond what sunshine is to shadow—what health is to disease. The pond is not without a certain phase of life. In its putrid waters swarm myriads of animalculæ and from its reeking surface arises the effluvia of fever. It is a noxious sort of life,—the individual life turned inward upon itself. There can be no true life without outward activity. Life and activity are inseparable. The ocean is the antithesis of the stagnant pond. All that the ocean receives from the countless rivers it gives back to the skies. It is the eternal rebuke of both selfishness and inaction. Its ceaseless tides and currents are the rhythmic pulse of health. From the land it receives, purifies and returns the gift. The miserly pond becomes stagnant in a week—the generous ocean never.

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The stream must flow through the mind, not stop there, if spiritual growth is to begin and continue. Ways must be found of handing on the gift, of letting the light shine, of being an instrument for the illumination of others. No person *can* get something for nothing (although he may foolishly believe he can) or get help without helping. If he has already had some light it only signifies that he had a claim upon nature that has thus been paid. It may have been established without thought of what was occurring, but it was due him and payment was inevitable and as natural as the rising of the sun or the coming of the summer. But the fact that some light and help have come does not prove that they will continue if the gift is received as a matter of course and thought of as a personal possession that concerns nobody else. To the universe every soul is important and one cannot be more important than another. Why, then, should anybody imagine that spiritual truth is for *him* rather than for the scores who can receive it through him?

* * *

There are some games that reverse the common rule of procedure and the winner is held to be he who can first get rid of all the points he holds. And so it is with things spiritual. Progress is by a reversal of the common rule of procedure of the physical world. It is not by grasping but by giving that we get more,—that we finally win. Only by the process of giving can the aspirant gain. He cannot get the full benefit of a spiritual truth until he has given it to others. The more he gives the richer he becomes. He cannot pass knowledge on to others without getting more wisdom from it himself. The effort to enlighten others increases his own illumination, and the more he gives the more he gets. His very forgetfulness of himself

in the work of enlightening others gives the conditions that insure his rapid progress.

* * *

Of course one should never make himself a nuisance by talking theosophy to anybody and everybody in season and out. Judgment and discrimination must guide him. There are people to whom theosophy can be explained with as little profit as one can urge the beauties of the landscape upon his horse. The majority of people can no more receive theosophy *directly* and shape their lives by its precepts than a Fiji savage can see the necessity for daily baths and libraries. As the savage must evolve a long way before he even understands what civilization is, so most people must pass through much bitter experience before they begin to see the purpose of physical existence at all and to understand that there is such a thing as a life that is not centered in material things and material pursuits. But certain it is that in every community there are a few people who can receive theosophy, as theosophy, as a philosophy of life, as the science of the soul, while almost everybody can receive it indirectly; that is, accept something of its principles when they are not labeled "theosophy," and when they are unaccompanied with any effort to induce them to accept a new and strange view of existence that suddenly upsets all their established ideas. There are always opportunities everywhere to give some light to others, for all are struggling with their personal problems; and if we see that we cannot give one who is groping in the dark the light of the entire philosophy we can usually at least give him a suggestion that will help. Suppose, for example, that a friend has a grievance against somebody and blindly and foolishly determines to "get even," and nurses his wrath against a hoped-for day of vengeance. We can at least declare our belief in the folly of such a course and express admiration for the magnanimity than can ignore a personal affront. We can always talk tolerance where there is narrowness, justice where there is oppression and mercy where there is cruelty. Without dogmatically arguing our beliefs we can quietly let it be known that we are theosophists, when it is appropriate to the occasion, and modestly but unhesitatingly champion the truth as we see it when the opportunity occurs. Most important of all, we can constantly be in that helpful frame of mind that is always ready to give freely to others all that we have been given, for that is a step toward the goal of perfect illumination.

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER WRITTEN TO A PRISONER

If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him like a shadow that never leaves him.

DHAMMAPADA.

"The task of choosing one of two ideals is certainly most difficult and puzzling. Sometimes, however, it is possible to so place ideals that they can be viewed in a direct line, and one path may be followed while a double achievement is accomplished. The evil conditions which you so earnestly desire to assist in abolishing, exist because those who are in power lack the attainment of your own ideal—moral and spiritual self-culture. So long as such people are in control these conditions, or similar ones, are liable to be in existence. They may be hacked out of physical sight for a time by ideated, good-intentioned persons, but in the unseen deep within men's hearts are the live roots of these conditions. Therefore, the true reformer must know well the human heart—he must understand the workings of the human mind and he can obtain this knowledge only by comprehending the operations of his own mind and heart. The entire field is within his range for all human minds are identical in substance;

but they differ in expression because it is a matter of minimum, maximum, and degrees between, of training.

"The noblest men are the output of the mind's best activities; the most ignoble humans dam back their powers and expose disease-reeking mud flats. Men have the power to choose, but past actions repeatedly performed, either in this life or in a previous one, have created tendencies which force and drive the vitality in the direction of the good or toward the evil. So an upright course demands great effort on the part of those who, in the long ago, formed the habit of being evil. Such need all possible help, but the ordinary person can render little assistance. (Only one who has rightly expanded morally, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually can effectively serve the error-burdened.) Of all the occupations in life, the most productive, exalted, and gladdening is that of the skilled physician to the bewildered sin-sick. The patients are countless and everywhere, but their ailments are one. The man at the top has the same malady as the man at the bottom, only the disease is not seated in the same spot and he manages to keep his feet and walk longer in the open.

"To be of any actual benefit to another, one must have some understanding of how the other man views life, for it is utterly futile to offer him what he will not or cannot take. Whatever he receives must be shaped to fit his own particular mentality. Truth is one but it enters the mind in various garbs. To some it appears wrapped in soft silken garments; to others it comes like a phantom shape, so little of earth is about it. To every willing man truth becomes visible but he has to see it where he is, and according to his mental space and atmosphere. When truth permeates our ideals they are our saviours; but no ideal is really ours until it is firmly grasped and set in the life. It must control and color the acts of the body, the voice, and all thought. At first it is like a guest in the house, but gradually the guest becomes the master and sways the entire household. So ideals should be of so lofty a character that all one's powers can be safely surrendered to them. One of the ideals you mentioned is of such an order—self-development.

"Rightly pursued, it means the highest service that one can render in the world. But sometimes this ideal is pursued in such a manner that development is arrested by the fascinations of occultism. The psychic powers are viewed as toys and wonders, and not as useful instruments for promoting higher development. As occultism is a phase of mentality and not the ultimate, only a partial unfoldment is attained. As an aim, it is a thoroughly selfish pursuit—a self hunt for self ends, and mean curiosity, fondness for the marvellous, and love of exploration are oft times extremely active and destructive factors. The not-self is expanded, and the self remains unknown. But in true self-development a craving for truth, and sympathy for the world are the urging forces. To know and then to help—is not this the way of the Great Ones? A man's development rings like a bell in all his work, and it is this that chimes into other men's hearts and intelligence, and leads them toward the good. No ideal is beyond the attainment of the mind that conceives it and one's highest should be his star.

"If you are devoted to self-culture for the sake of truth and broad service, your lower ideal can also be realized; for the burnished intellect, penetration, and enlargement of heart gained through self-training, give grace and power to all activities. Your lower ideal taken as the only aim will be much like attempting to suppress bubbles on the surface of boiling water. For so great an ideal as the unfoldment of the whole man, reverently offer your body, the voice, and your mind to truth; stand firm and your work will call you. This is renunciation, service, and true happiness—may you realize this most exhilarating and clarifying of ideals."

"I am quite interested in Mr. B——, and wondering what sort of something he finds in Warren's book. It is strictly head literature—the heart doctrine is scarcely mentioned and so it is an ill-balanced presentation of the subject. Soon I hope to send a different work which will give Mr. B—— another view-point."

"Regarding the dangers in 'Raja Yoga,' I did not mean that *knowledge* can injure, for that is impossible. It is the *method* used to *obtain* knowledge that sometimes harms. The condition of one's body retards or accelerates progress in meditation and in externals; for while the Absolute is uncaused, the *realization* of the Absolute is *caused*, and is effected on this causal plane. The body and mind are our only working instruments for the supreme end and they must be intelligently protected."

Failure, even in its worst light, is but the absence of strength enough to successfully meet a test.

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Nobody is competent to judge an error who has not made a similar one.

NEWS NOTES

The Lotus Journal for August contains the second, and last, installment of a lecture by Mrs. Besant on "Religion and Psychology," which has not before been published. While the *Lotus Journal* announces itself as a magazine for children and young people it has something of value for all and often an important lecture or article that cannot be obtained elsewhere. The subscription price is but 85 cents a year, the address 42 Craven Road, Paddington, London W, England. The AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST will be pleased to forward orders.

The annual convention of the American Section of the Theosophical Society, which meets in Chicago, Sunday, September 13, may be one of the most noteworthy in many years. If it does nothing more than witness the end of the controversy that has distracted the Society for more than two years its delegates will deserve the thanks of everybody concerned. There is no good reason why it should not mark the opening of an era of the greatest growth in membership the American Section has ever known.

A movement is on foot to organize a group of students at Kingston, N. Y., among the readers of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST and others who became interested in theosophy during a course of lectures delivered there last February. Those interested can make inquiries of Mr. Ernest F. Ayers, 35 Lafayette Ave., Kingston.

The enterprising lodge of the Theosophical Society at Edinburgh, Scotland, undertook the presentation of an Ibsen play to the public and it was not only a dramatic and financial success but must have directed most favorable attention to the theosophical movement.

Recording Secretary Fricke, of Adyar, India, has been commissioned by Mrs. Besant to proceed to South Africa and organize and stimulate the growth of the South African Section of the Theosophical Society.

A large amount of theosophical literature has been translated into Spanish during the past year and put into circulation in Spain by the lodges of the Theosophical Society of that country.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"If all events are the manifestation of inexorable law how can we always have it more or less in our human power to modify the inevitableness?"

Answer: Events are the results of complex causes. At a certain stage these causes culminate in the visible manifestation called an event. Up to a certain point they may be modified by new forces being generated. But a time comes when they cannot be affected,—when it is a case of "ripened karma." So both statements are true. We are subjects of inexorable law, which brings us precisely the fate our past thoughts, desires and acts have determined our present fate must be; but we are generating new causes all the time and these are fixing our future "fate" and at the same time modify that part of all past causes we have generated that is still susceptible to such influence. It is not our present fate but our future destiny that we have in our own hands. We are now determining what our fate in coming incarnations shall be. In that we have great latitude but in modifying this life we have little scope for we are free only within the self-imposed limitations arising from our course in past lives. The inquirer should read "Karma," by Annie Besant.