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## RELIGION AND MORALITY

[From a lecture by Annie Besant on "The Deadlock in Religion, Science and Art," delivered in London May 16, 1909, and published in *The Christian Commonwealth*.]

Along another of the great Christian concepts there is much of trouble and of difficulty to-day. I take here for a moment one of a series of remarkable articles that appeared in the "Hibbert Journal" for January last, one perhaps of the finest numbers that have been issued in dealing with this question of the time. One of these articles has a strange title which marks out the crux of many a mind to-day; the title is "Jesus or Christ," not "Jesus Christ," not "Jesus and Christ," but "Jesus or Christ"; natural enough if it were written by a theosophist, but this is written by a minister of a Christian Church, and he confesses with wonderful candor and boldness the difficulties that all must face who are dealing on the one side with a spiritual ideal and on the other with a man. He asks whether the claims made are on behalf of a spiritual ideal to which provisionally the word Christ may be applied, or are they predicated of Jesus? He then goes through a number of these difficulties (many of you would do well to read the article at your leisure), pointing out in how many cases in the New Testament you come across limitations, acceptance of the thought of time, and many other difficulties which clash with the idea that this was Very God of Very God. "No condemnation," he points out, "in the Sermon on the Mount is passed on the harsh and cruel law of debtor and creditor, nor would efforts for legal reform find any encouragement from the words attributed to the Master here. On non-resistance and oath-taking the rule attributed to Jesus is absolute. Yet, as a whole, Christendom has openly violated it throughout its history." He then speaks of the view which is taken of man in relation to woman, of the "iniquitous principle of sex-inferiority as against woman," a principle that "has inflicted infinite suffering on half of the human race." And so he goes on, taking up point after point, and declaring that this conclusion can no longer be avoided—that to identify Jesus with Christ is to "make God a Being who is omnipotent, yet limited in power; omniscient, yet defective in knowledge; infinitely good, yet One who declines 'to turn any part of His knowledge as God into science for man.' \* \* \* It would be an abuse of language to say that this is a mystery. It is flat contradiction." Now when a clergyman can write like that in a publication that goes almost exclusively among the educated classes you can realize how great is the difficulty which is confronting

modern thought with regard to the personality of Jesus and the larger revelation of the Christ.

It is not possible that questions like this can remain always unanswered, that they should ever be asked and no reply be found. Christendom inevitably must work its way to some reasonable solution, and find how in that marvellous personality there was a divine revelation as men have hoped and believed, and how there is an answer, although orthodoxy as yet may not be prepared to give it. And if you pass from religion proper, as we may say, to that great domain of morals which is so closely bound up with it, see how difficult is the position at the present time. Now, since I was last here in London you have had a Moral Education Congress, to which no less than fifteen of the European Governments sent their best representatives. Intense interest was felt in the question of education as part of religion or apart from it. It is one of the most serious social questions of the day, one which society must answer: Shall morals be based on religion and sanctioned by religion, or can they find standing ground apart from, separate from it? Now the ordinary popular answer of the day is rather in favor of the second, that morals should find an independent ground, apart from the sanction of religion. And that is not unnatural, because the quarrels of religious bodies, their disputes over the question of education, have practically wearied the mind of England, and men and women get impatient with the struggles over trivialities where the moral training of tens of thousands of boys and girls, the future citizens of the country, is concerned. If you take that Moral Education Congress, the point was put very strongly and very plainly. Here, again, in this number of the "Hibbert" that I am dealing with we find a very brief article speaking of that and of the relation of education to religion; and the writer speaks of one remarkable speech at the Education Congress, in which it was declared that while children should be taught "the respect due to the idea of religion \* \* \* \* they are to be taught that the chief mode of honoring God consists in each doing his duty according to his conscience and his reason." Now that is a statement that would find very wide acceptance at the present day, and yet its value or its lack of value depends on two words, "conscience," and "reason." If the conscience be unenlightened there will be very little useful service done to man by the boys and girls who follow that conscience as men and women. The enlightened conscience is truly the foundation of a State, but the unenlightened may lead men into every kind of crime. The inquisitor followed his conscience when he racked the heretic and sent him to the stake. Laud followed his conscience when he persecuted, tortured, mutilated Puritans who would not bow before him. Conscience has committed the greatest crimes against nations and against individuals; conscience must be enlightened before it is set. And so also with reason. If the reason is developed, illuminated, cultured, trained, that reason might, indeed, be followed along the path

of light, but a reason that is not exercised according to the laws of logic and right thinking may be as irrational as though the name of reason were not applied to it. It is not enough to teach that men should follow conscience and reason, unless you train the reason and illuminate the conscience.

Now, how is that to be done? It has been done in the past by religion to a very great extent. Can society afford to try to teach morals apart from religion? Now difficulties naturally arise here, and the Bishop of Tasmania has very bravely drawn the attention of the Empire to the difficulty which is in the face of religious teaching. He points out that the Old Testament is not a book which, as a whole, can be used for the instruction in morals of the Christian child. Can the Old Testament, he asks, be used in that way? and the answer is in the negative. He points out that you can find in the Old Testament magnificent moral passages and splendid moral inspiration, but that is by a process of selection in which you apply the moral conscience to discrimination in ancient writings. Bishop as he is, he is brave enough to declare that the Old Testament as a whole ought not to find its place in the education of the child. Now, suppose that we admit—and most thoughtful people would admit—that you must select and choose carefully, that is not a sufficient answer to the question, Can you effectively teach the child morals without falling back upon religion? Are you prepared to admit that you can teach a certain class of virtues without religious sanction, those which are the favorite virtues, we may say, of the present day of competition and of struggle? You can teach a child to be prudent, thrifty, cautious; you can teach him the value of acquisitiveness and the duty of providing for the future. All that kind of virtues you may be able to teach on a purely utilitarian ground, as it is called, but, as is again pointed out in a remarkably able article on “The Social Conscience of the Future,” certain old-fashioned traits once considered to be virtues are now commonly accounted to men for vices. Non-resistance, for example, is now considered cowardice; meekness to-day is usually spelled weakness; taking no thought for the morrow is known as improvidence; unworldliness is generally viewed as a phase of sentimentality. That is all quite true. How are you going to teach the virtues that hitherto have been rooted in religion, virtues without which no State can endure? For you cannot teach the civic virtues on a basis of enlightened selfishness. That is a point that all educators of the young must remember. Self-sacrifice, compassion, the willingness to endure for the sake of others, the taking of the burden of the weak on the shoulders that are strong, realizing that duty is greater than rights and responsibility more vital than self-protection; how are you going to teach those virtues on the basis of selfishness? Now I have argued that in the old days, and have tried to show in the time when I was a sceptic that you might train people to self-sacrifice and self-surrender by an appeal to the

humanity within them and the sense of duty to the race, but that appeal fails the most readily in the cases where the virtues are most required.

It appeals to the noble, but the majority are not noble; it appeals to the unselfish and the heroic, but the majority are of mediocre courage and of very limited unselfishness. It appeals to those who do not need it, and it leaves cold and unmoved those who need it most. Will you go to the millionaire who has built up his vast fortune by the ruin of hundreds of families, and speak to him of the beauty of self-sacrifice and the splendor of self-surrender? The answer of people of the selfish type is, Why should I sacrifice myself for the future? or, as the witty Frenchman put it, "What has posterity done for me that I should sacrifice myself for posterity?" You may say that is very mean, very selfish. It is, but then those are the people who want that compulsory force of moral strength applied to them. Where are you going to find it? For without self-sacrifice no society is secure; without self-surrender of the small to the great, of the individual to the social self, there is no possibility of national life, and no stability in the social system, and those are virtues that grow out of religion, not out of what is falsely called utility. The greatest utility for the nation is that which understands the relationship between the part and the whole, and that is only taught by religion that knows the larger self, which knits man to the whole, makes him realize relationships, which makes him know he is not a creature of one little globe, but a creature of the universe, a cosmic life and not a planetary. That is learned by religion only and by the deathless immortality of the divine spirit in man; without that no morality will endure, and you will make a fatal blunder if because of the passing follies of religionists you throw religion out of its place in education, of which it is the inspiration and the strength. These are some of the problems you have to deal with in this deadlock, as I have called it, of religion. In fact, you want a new religious and moral synthesis, and you can not find that without the higher inspiration for which man is groping now.

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### THREE SIMPLE TRUTHS

By WILLIAM E. BARNHART

All knowledge may be said to be included in the three departments of learning known as religion, science and philosophy. A theosophical student, therefore, seeking truth along all lines, and with universal tolerance, is equally interested in these three departments of learning, and he finds truth in the gospel according to St. John, and in the Bhagavad Gita; in the writings of the church fathers, and in Emerson and Plato; in astronomy, in geology, in art, in mathematics, and in the philosophy of Kant and Hegel. Wherever the hand of God hath wrought he seeks for truth. To become a theosophist is synonymous with becoming a student,

for theosophy is not a philosophy or a religion that he who runs may read. It contains truths, however, so simple that the least developed may draw from them much spiritual help and growth; and it contains truths so profound that compared with them the deepest scholastic philosophy is but a shallow pool.

Let us consider three simple truths which all can comprehend, and which the great religions of the world have accepted, and, with more or less limitations to suit man-made creeds, have taught; but which theosophy accepts in their entirety without limitations, and with all their logical consequences and conclusions, and we will endeavor to briefly outline the theosophical philosophy as the same is contained in these truths.

These three simple truths stated in the simplest language are: "Man is immortal;" "God is good;" "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

"Man is immortal." This simple truth, with its logical conclusions, and as forming a part of the theosophical philosophy, is more completely expressed and unfolded in the words of a great teacher, as follows:

"The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendor has no limit."

All great religions teach the immortality of the soul; and if they do not all do so in all instances in their exoteric teachings, that is, teachings intended for the public, the masses, they at any rate do so in their esoteric teachings, that is, teachings intended for the student and those more intellectually and spiritually developed. The Christian religion, with which in this country we are more intimately concerned, teaches man's immortality, but, as now publicly taught, does not carry the teaching to its necessary logical, scientific and philosophical conclusions. It is a philosophical axiom, as plain as the mathematical axiom that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, that that which has a beginning in time must have an ending in time. We cannot conceive of an infinite or eternal thing with a time limitation, or with a beginning or ending. Therefore, if the soul is immortal, it did not come into existence in this physical life by any arbitrary exercise of absolute power, such as by special creation, but must have pre-existed from all eternity. Theosophy recognizes this philosophical concept as absolutely true, and its conception of man is that he is a "divine fragment" emanated from God, not created by Him, but a part of God, an emanation from Him. This "divine fragment," technically called the "monad," being of Him and in Him, is, therefore, and always has been potentially divine, and through the operation of Universal Law, through ages upon ages, upon planet after planet, in world system after world system, He, the monad, evolves by gathering and assimilating experiences, by overcoming the matter side of nature, passing through what are known as the elemental, mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, ever onward and upward, slowly but surely, to the human kingdom; and will continue to evolve, as evolu-

tion never stops or rests, ever onward and upward, slowly but surely, until spirit is triumphant over matter, and his potentially divine qualities have become active powers. Then he has become perfect, even as his Father in heaven is perfect, and he passes out of, above and beyond the human kingdom into what may be called the superhuman or divine kingdom, and still he continues to evolve as his future "is the future of a thing whose growth and splendor has no limit."

Theosophists are, therefore, fundamentally evolutionists. In their philosophy of evolution, however, they differ very materially from the so-called scientific evolutionary school of Darwin, Spencer, Fiske and others. Theosophists postulate an enormously longer period of time in which evolution in this world system has been at work. Their evolution is much more complete and far reaching than the commonly accepted scientific doctrine. Scientific evolution recognizes merely an evolution of bodies, or, as theosophists term them, forms, while theosophy teaches an evolution of life, consciousness, as well as of forms.

The forms we occupy are but the temporary garments of their potentially divine indwellers. The forms, of course, have reached their present stage of adaptability and perfection through evolution, but the indwelling life or consciousness also through the same law of evolution has reached its present stage of development, intellectual and spiritual. Theosophy, therefore, teaches an evolution of life, the "monad," the spirit, as well as an evolution of bodies or forms.

Any thinker, who is not a materialist, must recognize that there is in the universe spirit as well as matter; that these two are the two necessary opposite poles of Being, one the life, the other the form side of all manifested existence.

All natural laws are universal. This is a self-evident truth, for we cannot conceive of a law of nature working intermittently, taking a rest, or being in any way limited within its sphere of activity. Theosophy recognizes such laws as the expressed will of God, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Logically, then, there must be an evolution of life, consciousness, spirit; for this is the real, the immortal part, as well as an evolution of form, the merely temporary garment worn by the life to contact the physical worlds.

The law of evolution, as thus taught by theosophy, makes plain the many unsolved problems of evolution as but partly comprehended and taught in the physical sciences. The evolution of the life, the consciousness, is the real purpose of the law, as taught by theosophy, which is that the evolving life may grow, expand, develop through experiences, and thus convert potentiality into active powers; and this can only be accomplished by means of material contact through forms. By material contacts through forms we do not mean to indicate that such experiences are only obtained in the physical world, in these physical garments we are here and now wearing, and which we call our bodies. But in the higher

worlds, invisible to physical perception, spirit, in order to manifest, must still be encased in forms, although these forms will be composed of more subtle kinds of matter than what we know as physical matter; as, for instance, in the astral and heaven worlds the consciousness manifests in forms made up of the matter of those worlds, or planes of nature. Consciousness, no matter how highly evolved, cannot manifest except by playing upon matter, setting up vibrations; and these vibrations underlie all phenomena on all planes of nature, and, therefore, in the higher worlds as well as in the physical world.

While this simple truth, "Man is immortal," as more fully unfolded as previously quoted, does not specifically teach reincarnation, yet it logically implies and contains it. The law of reincarnation is that the "I," the indwelling "divine fragment," dwells in the flesh, not once, but many times, returning to earth again and again, and many times again, as long as physical experiences are needed for growth, returning in different personalities, adding a little in each personality it ensouls to its stores of experience, which it converts into wisdom, until it is finally triumphant over physical matter, and returns not again to physical existence, but enters into the eternal peace, there to continue to evolve on higher levels, as "its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendor has no limit."

Philosophically, immortality implies pre-existence, and pre-existence implies reincarnation. In Oriental countries where, among the educated, reincarnation is almost universally accepted as a law of nature, a word is used to express it which is usually translated as "transmigration," meaning the passage of the soul from one body to another. This word as now commonly used in the English language conveys the idea of the possible passage of human souls into animal bodies. On account of this meaning oftentimes given to the word, theosophists use the word reincarnation; as the theosophical philosophy teaches that the "divine fragment," the "monad," having in the onward sweep of evolution entered the human kingdom, cannot ever return to a lower kingdom; and once a man, always a man, until the human stage is passed, and the super-human or divine stage is reached.

There is an evolution and a dissolution of forms, for when a form or class or family of forms has answered the purposes of the evolving life it in time passes away. Of this the rocks, the geological deposits, contain innumerable examples. So with nations and civilizations. They come, live awhile, and pass away, leaving their cities and the records of their achievements buried in the drifting desert sands. But the evolving life that uses these forms as its instruments never grows old, never decays, but, having learned the lessons to be learned in the forms that have passed away, in new and better forms it presses onward and upward, though with infinite slowness, perhaps, as seen by our limited vision. God does not grow old. Evolution is always a forward, never a backward movement,

and the phenomena of dissolution are but a phase of evolution.

In the light of the law of reincarnation, when fully understood, taken together with the law of karma, the theosophical term for the third simple truth aforementioned, life ceases to be an enigma, and the nature, method and purpose of life, existence, is rationalized and made plain.

We will now pass to the second truth, "God is good," which simple truth, as forming a part of the theosophical philosophy, is more completely unfolded by a great teacher, as follows:

"The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception."

Let us briefly see what we can learn from this second simple truth.

First: The principle which gives life, which is God, is omnipresent; is immanent in all nature. In our solar system, the Solar Logos, who to us is all we can conceive of power, wisdom, glory or goodness, and to us is Almighty God, is immanent in all matters and force throughout the system; matter is the form side of His being, and force is the life side, the expression of His will. He is everywhere, in all, and is all; in Him we live, move and have our being. Is this orthodox or is it pantheism? What matter it by what name we call it? The heterodoxy of to-day is the orthodoxy of to-morrow, and so on and on. Creeds come and go, but this concept of the immanence of God in all nature philosophically is, and must ever be true.

Second: God is eternally good. Some things we know, as the philosophers say *a priori*, that is, without being reasoned out. We call this intuition, and when applied to ethics, conscience. Theosophy defines such knowledge, which surpasses reason, as the essence of experiences brought over from past lives, or the wisdom the ego has stored up in his long pilgrimage through past lives, and which he is able to impress on these dull physical brains of ours. Now, God being immanent in all nature, and being eternally good, all things must be good, and "whatsoever is, is right." We must, therefore, modify our ideas of good and evil, for evil then becomes, as it were, a lesser or a kind of good. In this physical world, rightly called a world of sorrow, we see, if we do not ourselves individually experience, so much suffering and sorrow, so much sin, so much seeming injustice, that at first view a man might be considered unbalanced, who stated that there was good in evil or that evil was good. But so it must be, for God is in all, and, therefore, in the evil as well as in the good, and he is eternally beneficent.

One can only obtain a rational conception of good and evil in the light furnished by the law of reincarnation, and the law of karma, our third simple truth that we reap what we sow. This sowing, which causes the suffering and sin of to-day, may have occurred a physical life or several lives ago. The terms good and evil, or right and wrong, are relative terms; what is good and right in one country or age of the world, or in



one stage of development, becomes evil and wrong in another country or age or stage of development. That which works with the upward evolutionary force is ever good, though to our limited vision it may appear as evil; that which works against this force is evil, and yet it is a lessor good, for by overcoming it we grow and evolve. Our vices, by being overcome, become stepping stones to our virtues. What is a virtue but a vice overcome? We grow by putting forth effort in overcoming, and evil is, therefore, a necessary factor in evolution, a submerged or hidden good. Remember that it is he that overcometh that becomes a pillar in the temple of God, and goeth no more out; for by overcoming he has finished his human evolution and passed on into higher activities.

We will now pass to the third great but simple truth, which, in the language of St. Paul, is: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

This simple truth is also more completely unfolded by a great teacher as follows:

"Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself, the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment."

Theosophists call this truth the law of karma, karma being a word from the Sanscrit and expressing in itself all that is contained in the saying of St. Paul, and the more detailed teaching just quoted. Karma is the law of cause and effect, or the law of equilibrium, or, as stated by Emerson, the law of compensation.

Theosophy teaches that this law is a universal law of nature, and, therefore, operative throughout the universe, spiritually, morally, mentally, emotionally, as well as physically. That this law is universal in the physical world is taught by science; and, in fact, without its universal operation in the physical world, science would be impossible. This law is recognized as a universal law, applicable, as a universal law must be to be universal, to mind and consciousness, as well as to matter, by all the great religions, but with more or less limitations. Science never attempts to curtail the operation of, or limit, a natural law, but religious creeds have a habit of so doing. For instance, in the Mohammedan religion, belief in the law has resulted in a belief in destiny, the fact being overlooked that each man himself and not God makes for each man his own destiny; and this erroneous belief or interpretation of the law has resulted in loss of individual effort and, consequently, in a decadent civilization. The true idea of karma is expressed by the poet:

"Look; the clay dries into iron, but the potter moulds the clay;  
Destiny to-day is master; man was master yesterday."

We to-day are bound by the destiny we ourselves created yesterday; to-morrow is our own, but we are to-day making the destiny that will bind us to-morrow. We are the slaves of our yesterdays, but the master of our to-morrows. These words yesterday and to-morrow must not be taken too literally, as our yesterdays run back to the commencement, and our

to-morrows forward to the end of our human evolution. The law of karma can only be intelligently comprehended, as applicable to conditions, circumstances and environments of our present physical lives, when taken in connection with the law of reincarnation. What we are physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually to-day is what we ourselves have earned and made ourselves in the past; and this past extends backward not to our birth into this physical life alone, but backward through all our many past incarnations, since we evolved to the human stage. When the ensouling life is evolving in the animal and lower kingdoms, the evolutionary force presses ever onward; but when the ensouling life enters the human kingdom, free will, and with free will, karma, enter as factors, and these factors hasten or retard evolution, as they work with or against it.

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## WHY THEOSOPHY IS NOT ANTI-CHRISTIAN

BY IRVING S. COOPER

People who declare with authority that theosophy is antagonistic to Christianity are those who have never studied theosophy. It is a significant fact that the ardent Christian who takes up the study of theosophy becomes more attached to his religion than ever. This fact has been noted also with the followers of Krishna, Gautama Buddha and Zoroaster. Each found within the religion learned at his mother's knee, profounder depths and greater beauties than he had before suspected. Theosophy is able to illuminate all religions and is antagonistic to none, because it is the synthesis of the essentials of all religions.

In their essentials all religions are one. In their formal creeds and ceremonies they vary. Religion is the channel through which the love and reverence of man for that greater than himself can be expressed. The language, symbols and methods may be greatly different but the inward attitude is the same regardless of race. Our difficulty lies in confusing essentials with outward forms.

Theosophy is built up of essentials, not creeds or rituals. These same essentials are found in Christianity as in every other great world religion. It will be necessary then, in order to see whether theosophy is anti-Christian, to look for that which is permanent in Christianity and to put on one side all that which has clustered around this true, living heart by the accumulation of centuries. "Christian" is a broad, inclusive word. It must embrace every church which yields allegiance to the Master Jesus, and not one alone. Viewing the problem in this light lifts our eyes from the dusty little pathway we have been treading through life's vineyard and causes us to look across the sunlit expanse and see the many other paths all converging toward the House of Rest beyond.

In this necessarily brief comparison of the teachings of theosophy and Christianity, fundamentals and not details will be touched upon. All

supposed antagonism melts away like mist if it is seen that the basic principles of both are the same.

The very essence of theosophy is the unity of God, the one universal Life that is everywhere. He is in all things, flooding all space with His love. Nothing is bereft of His presence, for truly "in Him we live, and move and have our being." Nature is thus lifted up to God, but God is infinitely greater than nature; all the countless mighty worlds express but a portion of His glory. The theosophist may dream of a vast, unmanifested existence of which God is the embodied part, but this idea is well known and accepted in theology under the name of the Absolute. So we find nothing here that is antagonistic to Christianity.

This one Life when It pours down Its energy into matter appears not in one but in three forms, the "three in one" of the Christian trinity. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit corresponds to Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma of the Hindu, to Ra, Osiris and Horus of the Egyptian, to Anu, Ea, and Bel of the Chaldean and to the First, Second and Third Logos of the Theosophist. The word "Logos" which is sanctioned by the Fourth Gospel when it says, "In the beginning was the Word (Logos) and the Word was God," is preferred by the theosophist to any other term because it does not antagonize the adherents of any religion. If Christian terms were used the Hindu would believe that theosophy was trying to convert him to Christianity; if Hindu terms Christians would cry that theosophy was trying to change them into Hindus. A neutral word conveys the idea without causing misconceptions.

The next point of likeness between Christianity and theosophy is that both believe in ministering hosts of angels and archangels. Far more emphasis is laid upon this point in theosophy than in modern Christianity, but this was not always the case with the latter. If we turn back to the neglected writings of the early fathers of the church, we find them mentioning this very point as of high importance. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, writes in a letter the following words which indicate so clearly how much of the ancient wisdom has been lost to the modern churches: "Might I not write to you (members in full standing in the early church) things more full of mystery? But I fear to do so, lest I should inflict injury upon you who are but babes. \* \* \* For even I, though I am bound for Christ and am able to understand heavenly things, the angelic orders, and the different sorts of angels and hosts, the distinction between powers and dominions, and the diversities between thrones and authorities, the mightiness of the aeons, and the pre-eminence of the cherubim and seraphim, the sublimity of the Spirit, the Kingdom of the Lord, and above all the incomparable majesty of Almighty God—though I am acquainted with these things, yet am I not therefore by any means perfect, nor am I such a disciple as Paul or Peter." It is evident that the theosophist, in reviving interest in ideas studied by the highest in the early church, is not outside the pale of Christianity. We shall find, indeed, if

we take up the study of comparative religions, that all the great faiths of the world affirm the existence of spiritual intelligences, greater than man, stretching in rank after rank of increasing splendor from man up to the very throne of God. The belief in their ministering care over man preserves the mystical element in religion, and fosters the sense of reality in the spiritual life impossible to gain otherwise. God is too profound an abstraction for the average human mind to grasp, and because we have eliminated the guardian presence of radiant angels from our mind, we are forced either to rank materialism or to a crude anthropomorphic conception of God. To the theosophist the daily ministering of angels is a living reality, and the joy that fills his heart with realization of this fact casts a warm glow over every event of the day. We are not left alone in darkness. If we listen and live we shall hear their soft voices and gratefully acknowledge the gifts they bring to us.

Christianity and theosophy are also one in affirming the unity of the human spirit with God. Do we not remember the earnest prayer of the Master in His hour of trial, "that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they may also be in us." A unity which nothing can break, a link which no storm of life can crush. We are one with the Father in our innermost essence; if not how could we ever know him? This recognition of divine ancestry is the very heart of the spiritual life; its realization the consummation of earthly experience.

"Do theosophists believe in prayer?" is a question frequently asked. That depends upon what is meant by prayer. If by prayer is understood the asking for material benefits, the voiced longing for physical objects, then the theosophist decidedly does not believe in it. But if by prayer is meant the glad opening of the soul to God, the joyous offering of one's life and efforts to the Supreme, if it means quiet meditation upon the divine perfection and beauty, then the theosophist most assuredly believes in prayer. If God is the loving Father as our lips so oft proclaim, if His watchful mind knows the fall of every sparrow, cannot we trust our life in His hands without prompting Him to our needs? If we really believe in God we cannot pray for material ends. True prayer is the aspiration after the knowledge of God, seeking to know His nature, to image a portion of Him within our own heart. Is this anti-Christian?

Around the doctrine of the atonement has swirled more acrimonious debate and bitter skepticism than any other phase of Christian belief. This occurred because it contains an imperishable idea clothed by theological acumen in an unlovely and unacceptable garb. It is unknown to many that the present form of presenting the idea of the atonement was not accepted by the early church but was coined by Anselm in the eleventh century. This theologian worked out the remarkable and to many people repulsive conception that the atonement of Christ was a sort of legal compact with a *wrathful* God, in which the suffering body of Christ was offered up as a vicarious substitution for the sins of mankind, so that if

any man believed on Christ he would be absolved henceforth of all responsibility for his sins. The early church believed, on the contrary, "that Christ, as the representative of humanity, faced and conquered Satan, the representative of the dark powers, who held humanity in bondage, wrested his captive from him, and set him free." When we are distressed over the interpretation of a fundamental belief, if we would take the precaution to trace that interpretation back to its source we would be saved much inner suffering. The atonement of many modern churches was born of theology, not Christianity. Do we not feel at liberty then to question the validity of the interpretation though not of course, the central idea, which is, that the Christ in coming to us, performed one of the greatest acts of sacrifice. That He acted as a revelation of God to us, and that through Him humanity was brought closer to God. Many ministers of Christendom are writing in this vein now. Are they anti-Christian?

Then the theosophist cannot be called anti-Christian for presenting his interpretation, which is this: The atonement of the Christ lay in the pouring out of His life and strength for men, sharing with them His wisdom, sacrificing the bliss of Heaven to go forth into the darkened world of men, in order that He might teach them the way and the life. He is one with all of us because we share His unity with the divine. He lives in our sins that He may aid us to cleanse them away; He shares our sorrows that we may be the stronger to bear them; He mingles in our happiness in order that we may learn to greet the source of all happiness; He encourages us when faint hearted and despairing; brings humility in the hour of boasting; inspires the whole world to follow Him as He treads the path of service. The atonement lay in the giving of the over-brooding spirit of the Christ to lighten the heart of each toiling man; it was an outpouring of a divine life for the helping of the world. To the theosophist, as to Paul, the Christ is more an inward presence than an outward Savior, and the true life is one that invokes the descent of the Christ spirit to guide each act and thought.

The theosophist does not consider that Christ was unique in the history of the world, the *only* Son of God, for other great world religions also have their Avatars, who are the embodiments of the Second Person of the Trinity. Surely Christianity cannot deny to other religions what it considers as its most precious teaching. Furthermore, truth can never be anti-Christian! So while the theosophist reverences and gives full homage to the Founder of Christianity, still he recognizes the existence of other great Teachers, Masters of Wisdom and Love, and pours out his gratitude at their feet also. Is this anti-Christian? By what authority can reverence, homage and gratitude be so considered?

Nor can the theosophist concede that Christianity is a unique revelation to man. Truth and a study of the past forbids such a narrow statement. When we think of the swarming millions of the earth, only a small portion of which profess Christianity, when we contemplate the untold billions

that lived and died upon this globe in the thousands of centuries that antedated our era, when we realize how like a grain of sand our earth is suspended in the midst of mighty celestial suns in turn but a puff of dust in the aura of God, we must admit that the belief that a religion started but yesterday in cosmic time was the only revelation of God to man is childish. We are children, spinning childish tales, while the Great Ones stand silently by, tenderly watching and guiding; speaking only when the time has come for some new lesson or when we are in danger of making some mistake. But They have spoken many times, not once as we believe, for we are heedless and forgetful of the past.

We come now to a doctrine where there are apparently no points of agreement between theosophy and Christianity—that of reincarnation and karma. Theosophy affirms, in common with some of the great world religions, that one life on earth will not develop the soul to its full stature but that it must and has lived many lives of experience in human bodies, gradually growing from ignorance to knowledge; that we are truly “sown in weakness, that we may be raised in power,” each life on earth commencing where the last one ceased. It is further affirmed that each act, thought and desire brings its inevitable result, “that whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap.” Is such a logical conception of soul growth anti-Christian? What meant the Master when he said, “But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listeth. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.” This is a distinct statement that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elijah. There are several other statements scattered throughout the Bible which indicate that reincarnation was not unknown to the Jews and, indeed, Josephus states that it was well known among them. Avoiding all such arguments, however, which are open to discussion, we may well ask, believing as we do in the justice of God, how we can be born to such terribly unequal opportunities, unless we in some way deserve them. If we do not deserve the conditions surrounding us at birth then we must be the helpless victims of some demoniac power. But if we are but reaping the harvests sown in the past—to use the image of St. Paul—by the circumstances which surround us in the present, then we see the firm, sleepless justice of God ruling every circumstance of our lives. No longer chance, no longer an inscrutable Providence whose workings we cannot fathom, but purpose is seen, ceaseless law whose workings are clearly understood. Did Christ ever declare that we should not try to know the laws of God? Rather does He declare, “Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.” How can any truth be outside Christianity? If, then, reincarnation is seen to explain many a dark problem of life’s opportunities, and reveals the justice of God shining even in the midst of pain and suffering, should we reject it, simply because the modern churches are silent? The Bible contains but fragments of the sayings of the Master.

A great deal is said and written in theosophy about the unseen worlds around us. Has Christianity no corresponding interest? As usual we find hints of what was once full knowledge among the early Fathers. The Catholic church draws a distinction between purgatory and heaven, thus claiming the existence of two distinct realms which lie beyond the gate of death, while the Protestant speaks of an intermediate paradise lying between earth and heaven. The theosophist is not in the least anti-Christian then, when he refers to the astral and mental worlds which exist around us. Admittedly, in theosophy, a very full and vivid description of these worlds are given, but that is due simply to the fact that Christianity is relying solely on fragmentary tradition for its information, while theosophy observes directly the realms described. We may rest assured, that if the seers of old could investigate them directly, we ourselves may unfold the same powers if we live lives of sufficient purity and self-control. If one really in the depths of his heart, trusts the promises of the Master and seeks to find spiritual insight, *he does find*.

If spiritual insight be gained, what then? Ah! Then he will realize as never before the mighty sacrifice made by the Master Jesus for the helping of the world. He will no longer regard the Master as a far off historical personage, but a living Teacher, who has watched and sought to guide the spiritual movement which is His through all the centuries. He will dimly feel how great the burden that rests upon those mighty shoulders, the burden of responsibility. For we are told that the law is that He who starts a spiritual impulse in the world must remain in physical embodiment and guide that movement until its last adherent has passed away or left the faith. The sacrifice did not consist in a few short hours of agony on the cross but centuries of life on earth bound by the limitations of matter. The responsibility for every deed done in the name of Christianity rests upon the Master; the blood stained pages of religious history, the cruelties and ignorance of the past, the intolerance, narrowness and pride of the present, tell how great is the load He is carrying. Still He serves us, tenderly drawing us along the path of spiritual attainment or lashing us out of our lethargy by the whip of the higher criticism, even as He drove the money-changers out of the Temple. For 'tis the Master, not the Book, that is the rock of Christianity. We forget the *living* Teacher and base our faith upon a perishable record of His sayings.

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## REINCARNATION IN THE BIBLE

References to reincarnation occur in the Bible more frequently than is commonly known but most people, while familiar with the passages, are quite unable to comprehend the meaning unless they are familiar with the fact that reincarnation was a part of the early teaching of the Christian church and that a belief in pre-existence was common a couple of thousand

years ago. There seems to be no other explanation whatever for such passages as the following:

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."—Malachi iv, 5.

"And if ye will receive it this is Elias which was for to come."—Matthew xi, 14.

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

"And they said, Some say that Thou art John the baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets."—Matthew xvi, 13 and 14.

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

"But I say unto you, that Elias has come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

"Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist."—Matthew xvii, 11, 12 and 13.

"And King Herod heard of him; for his name was spread abroad; and he said, That John the baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

"Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, that it is a prophet or as one of the prophets.

"But when Herod heard thereof, he said, it is John, whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead."—Mark vi, 14, 15 and 16.

"And as Jesus passed by he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

"And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin this man or his parents that he was born blind?"—John ix, 1 and 2.

## THE EVOLUTION OF VIRTUES—IV

### TRUTHFULNESS

Truthfulness, like purity, is one of the absolute essentials to occult progress. Whoever would know the truth must be truthful. We cannot comprehend reality until we are, ourselves, sound and true and genuine to the heart's center.

The average man of the world little realizes the extent of his falsity. He thinks falsely, acts falsely and speaks falsely, with little thought that he is doing anything wrong. He habitually represents himself to be different from what he really is. He always tries to give the impression that he is better than he knows himself to be. He does not admit even to himself that he is what he is. He puts aside unpleasant characteristics and closes his mind against them. His life among others is a perpetual masquerade. To prevent others knowing the truth about him he cheer-



fully lies whenever he thinks it necessary as a part of the program of concealment. He acts as well as talks in a way calculated to mislead people, and bring them to erroneous conclusions about him and his affairs. It never occurs to him that he should, under any circumstances, admit that he has been in the wrong or even that he has made an error of judgment. If his quarrel with another has become known he takes great pains to show that it was entirely the fault of his enemy. If he has circulated a story detrimental to another, and later finds it to be untrue, instead of setting it right, as far as he can, he thinks only of justifying his criticism by trying to find some other damaging facts about his victim to help show the probability, at least, of his first statement being reasonable! In any event he will not permit anybody to think that *he* is in any way to blame for any trouble that exists, and whenever he is connected with any controversy or difficulty with others he insists upon ignoring that axiom of nature that there are always two sides to every question. He fully believes that in thus getting credit for being a better man than he actually is—a person without fault or frailty—he is promoting his own welfare; and if somebody should suggest to him that his truest self-interest could be better served by being perfectly candid and truthful even about himself, he would probably think it very foolish advice. Just like the man, with a different kind of moral weakness, who steals another's money, he feels certain that he is "getting the best of it" and that the saying "honesty is the best policy" is only a maxim for fools instead of a literal fact in nature. It has never occurred to him that in deceiving others he is blinding his own eyes, blunting his own perceptions, dulling his own intuition, and that in masking himself he is placing a mask over those very truths of nature which are a necessity to his higher development. It is true that he may lead others to believe him a better man than he is and that for a little span he may strut in his disguise of false-righteousness; but he pays a fool's price for the vain folly and the law of adjustment, whether in this incarnation or another, will finally bring him the bitter humiliation necessary to arouse him from his false attitude toward life. His account of vanity and humility will finally balance and cancel itself and he will awake to the fact that his foolish untruthfulness has cost him dearly—that it has retarded his progress in a way that is worse than merely to have remained ignorant of nature's choicest wisdom, though that in itself is a heavy misfortune.

One of the things that first impresses those fortunate enough to come into touch with teachers of occultism who are direct pupils of the Masters of Wisdom is their exceeding care to avoid the slightest misunderstanding about what they say—their painstaking precautions to prevent anybody getting from them a wrong idea about the facts as they are—an exceedingly difficult thing to do with some careless students. Thus intense is the feeling of responsibility on the part of those who know the occult results of the slightest misleading of others. The informed

occultist instead of ever trying to make himself appear before the world better than he is, in any trouble with which he might be connected, does not attempt to defend himself *even when entirely blameless*. He knows perfectly well that what people think him to be just now is of extremely small importance, while what he really is is of transcendent consequence. He will set right any erroneous impression if he can without augmenting the trouble, but not for the good opinion and the applause of the whole world would he say or do anything that would be the slightest misrepresentation of the truth. The more one knows about occultism the more scrupulously accurate he must necessarily become in the minutest degree about the most trivial things, for he has learned that only as he lives truth shall he know it.

Somebody has invented the convenient and comforting phrase, "a white lie." But occultism knows no white lies. It is quite color blind on the subject of falsehood. The essence of untruthfulness is deception and deception is unjustifiable. The manner of accomplishing the deception is wholly immaterial. It may be only by a smile or a facial expression of surprise, but if it misleads it is no less a lie than if plainly put in words. Of course there are impertinent persons who take the liberty of interrogating people about things which are none of their business, but the victim of their inquisitiveness is under no obligations to satisfy their curiosity; still less to take upon himself the misfortune of mis-statement in order to prevent them learning facts they have no right to know. There is such a thing as erring in the direction of shrinking from wounding the sensibilities of those who have none toward others. A person who is indelicate enough to pry into another's affairs has forfeited his right to delicate consideration, and to weakly submit to his meddling is only to encourage him in such reprehensible conduct. But if one has not the courage to thus defend his own right to privacy he can at least remain silent rather than utter an untruth in order to protect his personal affairs from vulgar curiosity. There are times when absolute silence is most commendable, when one is justified in disregarding a direct question and declining to utter a word on the subject.

One of the guiding rules in spiritual progress is familiar to everybody: "Cease to do evil." It is necessary to watch the outgoing energies and to see to it that they are in no way destructive. Now, thoughtless untruthfulness is one of the unsuspected directions in which thousands of good people continue daily to do evil and bring misfortune to others and to themselves. Putting aside the more obvious forms of falsification, that scarcely require comment, there still remains that which is the more dangerous just because it is less pronounced and is veiled under the conventionalities of polite usage. How easy it is to indulge the pernicious habit of flattering another and saying falsely pleasant things about him in order to be agreeable and to make him friendly! We praise his song or his essay extravagantly when we know well enough that it was only

ordinarily good; and in doing that we cultivate his vanity, if he has that very common weakness, and lead him to place a false valuation upon his accomplishments and to foolishly attempt something for which he is not competent. We observe a young person with an aptitude for writing or speaking and we laud his performance in such extravagant fashion that he feels that what he had only half suspected must be true and, acting upon our false praise instead of his own opinion, he concludes that he is an undiscovered genius and forthwith makes an egregious ass of himself. We often excuse our inclination to flatter with the thought that it is well to stimulate others. The truth is that it would be much kinder to gently criticise our friend's work and help him to appear to better advantage in the future instead of to worse. The truth cannot do him harm if it is tempered with real sympathy and we are prompted by a genuine desire to help instead of to please. Flattery is always detrimental and to it many a young man and young woman owes later failure and humiliation. Left to themselves they might have gone soberly forward in useful work; but, inordinately praised and flattered, they soon rise to dizzy heights of complacent conceit from which, in time, they are sure to tumble with a disillusioning shock that may completely discourage them.

Anything that creates or perpetuates false conceptions and false sentiment is a detriment to humanity. We are being continually misled by one-sided or exaggerated statements about individuals and groups of individuals. In this way personal antagonisms and class hatreds are created and national disputes and suspicions grow into armed hostility and the atrocities of war. It is an old saying that a half truth may be the worst of lies. To unduly exaggerate one feature of the truth destroys the truth; because it gives the mind an impression, a conception, that is wholly false. An intense partisan is invariably untruthful, however little he may suspect it, for he is incapable of looking at a given condition with calm and balanced judgment. Not recognizing the truth that there are always two sides to every problem he does not observe the whole set of facts in their true proportions and his presentation of what he really believes to be the facts is therefore unintentional misrepresentation. For this reason novels and magazine articles written to arouse public opinion on some great question are usually out of balance and do not give us the truth. They often create false conceptions and engender much bitterness and hatred to be added to the weight of the collective karma.

Our daily social life, also, is full of false standards and is narrowed and demeaned with petty deceptions; and of course it is as useless as it is false and hollow. Nothing can be worth while that does not in some way promote the welfare of people or living things. The person who would find a satisfactory life must have his every thought and act ring true to the genuine in human nature. He must acquire again the candor and truthfulness of childhood and cultivate his sympathy to the point that prevents such candor being harsh and brutal. He must continually guard

his thoughts, his speech and his acts to see that no shadow of untruthfulness is in any of them. Only he who can live a perfectly open, candid life with no motive disguised, no action cloaked and no thought concealed, may hope to reach the very heart of nature's wisdom and comprehend it.

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*[Those who desire to accomplish more in the understanding of this article than can be done by reading it, and to make the virtue of which the article is the subject a personal possession and a living force in their lives, should devote ten minutes each morning, for a week or more, to quietly thinking about it to the exclusion of all other subjects and then, throughout the day, make a strong effort to put it into practice at every opportunity that occurs.]*

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## THE NEW THEOLOGY

At this distance we get only faint echoes from a titanic conflict that is raging in the religious life of England and which is known as the "New Theology movement;" but on the ground where this battle is being fought between the forces of progress and the hosts of conservatism it is the one great event of the time. And well may it thus be considered for it inaugurates what is probably a more important epoch in church history than that older revolt led by Martin Luther. It is a movement destined to have tremendous influence in reshaping religious conceptions and in revitalizing religious life and giving it new force and meaning.

What, then, is "The New Theology?" It is merely the oldest theology made vital and actually carried out in practice. The oldest Christian theology, that of the early Christian fathers, with its definite teachings on the literal immanence of God, and all that of necessity goes with that noble conception of life, is being revived and *lived*, is being carried to its logical conclusion in daily life.

All great reformatory movements spring up and take shape about some master mind, and the leader and central figure in the New Theology movement is the Rev. R. J. Campbell, pastor of the City Temple, London, the great Congregational church that has long enjoyed world-wide fame. Mr. Campbell is one of those remarkable men who appear only at long intervals in the world's history. To look at him is to instantly recognize his greatness. In him are combined towering intellect and intense spirituality — that marvelously even balancing of brain and heart qualities so rarely found in the world. Although his hair is snowy white he is still under fifty and his mental and physical activity is in striking contrast to his delicate, spiritualized face and form. The amount of work he accomplishes is incomprehensible unless one takes into account the occult reasons why it is possible. With all the work and cares inseparable from the ministry of a great church he preaches two sermons Sunday

and another at noon each Thursday, for the convenience of business men, for the City Temple is in the heart of London's busy streets. Besides these three original sermons weekly, so full of spiritual force that they are not easily described, he is constantly lecturing in various places in England and Wales, writing special articles for the newspapers and magazines, producing books and pamphlets, and yet manages somehow to take a personal part in the work among the poor of London's slums; for he is always intensely practical and his preaching all centers in an earnest insistence that Christianity is a life to be lived to the uttermost and that only in its living can it be truly understood.

The New Theology movement is stirring England to its depths. It is a country where official Christianity, in full pomp and power, is solidly entrenched; where there is a distinct aristocracy in the upper circles of the church; where the form has outgrown the life and the church has become largely an automatic and meaningless piece of machinery. Against this state of affairs Mr. Campbell is leading a mighty revolt that our children's children will read about as one of the great religious reformations of history.

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## WHAT THEOSOPHY DOES FOR US

[From that useful and practical little book, "An Outline of Theosophy," by C. W. Leadbeater, we reprint a part of a chapter that sets forth some of the benefits of theosophical study, showing the different outlook upon life it gives one.]

It must already be obvious to the careful reader how utterly these theosophical conceptions change the man's entire view of life when he once becomes fully convinced of them; and the direction of many of these changes, and the reasons on which they are based, will have been seen from what has already been written.

We gain from Theosophy a rational comprehension of that life which was before for so many of us a mere unsolved problem — a riddle without an answer. From it we know why we are here, what we are expected to do, and how we ought to set to work to do it. We see that, however little life may seem worth living for the sake of any pleasures or profits belonging exclusively to the physical plane, it is very emphatically worth living when regarded merely as a school to prepare us for the indescribable glories and the infinite possibilities of the higher planes.

In the light of the information which we acquire, we see not only how to evolve ourselves, but also how to help others to evolve — how by thought and action to make ourselves most useful, first of all to the small circle of those most closely associated with us, or those whom we especially love, and then gradually by degrees, as our power increases, to the entire human race. By feelings and thoughts such as these we

find ourselves lifted altogether to a higher platform, and we see how narrow and despicable is the petty and personal thought which has so often occupied us in the past. We inevitably begin to regard everything not merely as it effects our infinitesimal selves, but from the wider standpoint of its influence upon humanity as a whole.

The various troubles and sorrows which come to us are so often seen out of all proportion because they are so near to us; they seem to obscure the whole horizon, as a plate held near the eyes will shut out the sun, so that we often forget that "the heart of being is celestial rest." But theosophical teaching brings all these things into due perspective and enables us to rise above these clouds, to look down and see things as they are, and not merely as they appear when looked at from below by very limited vision. He learns to sink altogether the lower personality with its mass of delusions and prejudices and its inability to see anything truly; we learn to rise to an impersonal and unselfish standpoint, where to do right for right's sake seems to us the only rule of life, and to help our fellow men the greatest of our joys.

For it is a life of joy that now opens before us. As the man evolves his sympathy and compassion increase, so that he becomes more and more sensitive to the sin and sorrow and suffering of the world. Yet at the same time he sees more and more clearly because of that suffering and understands ever more and more fully that, in spite of it all, all things are working together for the final good of all. And so there comes to him not only the deep content and absolute security which is born of the certainty that all is well, but also the definite and radiant joy derived from the contemplation of the magnificent plan of the Logos, and of the steady unflinching success with which that mighty scheme moves to its appointed end. He learns that God means us to be happy, and that it is definitely our duty to be so in order that we may spread around us vibrations of happiness upon others, since that is one of the methods by which we may lighten the sorrow of the world.

In ordinary life a great part of the annoyance which men feel in connection with their various troubles is often caused by a feeling that they come to them unjustly. A man will say: "Why should all this come to me? There is my neighbor who is in no way a better man than I, yet *he* does not suffer from sickness, from loss of friends, or loss of wealth; then why should I?"

Theosophy saves its students from this mistake, since it makes it absolutely clear to them that no undeserved suffering can ever come to any man. Whatever trouble we may encounter is simply of the nature of a debt that we have incurred; since it has to be paid, the sooner it is cleared off the better. Nor is this all; for every such trouble is an opportunity for development. If we bear it patiently and bravely, not allowing it to crush us, but meeting it and making the best of it, we thereby evolve within ourselves the valuable qualities of courage, perseverance, determin-

ation; and so out of the result of our sins of long ago we bring good instead of evil.

As has before been stated, all fear of death is entirely removed for the theosophical student, because he understands fully what death is. He no longer mourns for those who have gone before because they are still present with him and he knows that to give way to selfish grief would be to cause sadness and depression to *them*. Since they are very near to him, and since the sympathy between them and himself is closer than ever before, he is well aware that uncontrolled grief in him will assuredly reflect itself upon them.

Not that theosophy counsels him to forget the dead; on the contrary, it encourages him to remember them as often as possible but never with selfish sorrow, never with a longing to bring them back to earth, never with the thought of *his* apparent loss, but only of their great gain. It assures him that a strong, loving thought will be potent factors in their evolution, and that if he will but think rightly and reasonably about them he may render them the greatest assistance in their upward progress.

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[AN OUTLINE OF THEOSOPHY: cloth binding, 25 cents. postage 3 cents. Address, Theosophical Book Co., 98 Jay Street, Albany, N. Y.]

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## A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY

In this little volume of 128 pages tastefully bound in dark blue cloth and sold, at cost, for fifteen cents (including postage) there is crammed more information about theosophy and the Theosophical Society than any other book of its size in print. It consists of extracts from the writings of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, in connection with clearly written paragraphs, on special topics, by Dr. Weller Van Hook and Mr. C. Jinarajadasa. It is interesting to glance over the contents.

After an excellent definition of theosophy as science, religion, philosophy and art, several pages are given up to the description of man and his bodies, the inner worlds in which he lives and the inhabitants of those realms. Reincarnation and karma are explained, psychic powers and occult physics touched upon. The structure of matter is shown, illustrated by a drawing of an ultimate physical atom. The relation of theosophy to spiritualism and masonry is explained. Then follows a valuable set of articles on the theosophic life, the care of the body, meditation, contemplation leading us up to the discussion about the Masters of Wisdom. A splendid article showing the value of theosophy in daily life completes the body of the book. After this is given a brief history of the Society with an outline of the life of H. P. Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater and Mr. Jinarajadasa. The names of the sections of the Society in the various parts of the world and of the Lodges in the United States are next tabulated. Finally we are given information about the formation of a Lodge and how to join the Society.

We heartily recommend this book to those just becoming interested in theosophy or as a gift to a friend whom you wish to interest. It will be forwarded any where postage free within the postal union by sending fifteen cents to Dr. Weller Van Hook, 103 State St., Chicago.

## THE OLDEST THEOSOPHICAL MAGAZINE

The oldest theosophical magazine in the world, as well as the best one published, is *The Theosophist*, edited by Annie Besant and printed at Adyar, Madras, S. India. It was founded by Madam Blavatsky and Colonel H. S. Olcott, and is now in its thirtieth volume. Besides having Mrs. Besant for its editor it has a corps of brilliant contributors among whom are C. W. Leadbeater, Johan van Manen, Dr. F. Otto Schrader, G. E. Sutcliffe, Arnold S. Banks, and many other scholars and writers. At present Mrs. Besant is furnishing a series of papers on "The Science of Peace," while Mr. Leadbeater is contributing monthly articles on the results of special and recent investigations in occult matters. The magazine has been enlarged to 130 pages and the price is only \$3 a year, postpaid. This periodical, invaluable to all students of occultism, can be had by purchasing a foreign money order for twelve shillings at any post office and mailing it, with your address to *The Theosophist*, Adyar, Madras, S. India.

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## THEOSOPHY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. W. B. Fricke, whose advent in South Africa we had been expecting for some time, arrived in Durban, Natal, early in March. On the tenth a reception was given him by members and friends at the home of Mr. G. Williams. Mr. Fricke delivered some six lectures to the public in Durban which were fairly well attended. Study classes were held in which the members took keen interest. On the third of April Mr. Bell took Mr. Fricke to visit a settlement working for the co-operative system at Phoenix. They have a printing department which issues *Indian Opinion* and does all kinds of printing and publishing. Living is very simple and their wants are few.

On Easter Monday Mr. Fricke traveled to P. M. Zurg where he lectured to a goodly number assembled to hear him, his subject being "Shall We Live on Earth Again?" On Wednesday he departed for Graytown and lectured there on the same subject. After his return to P. M. Zurg he was given an "at home" attended by some fifteen people, among whom was a Brahmin, who was visiting the Indian people in the town. At this gathering the application for a Lodge at Pietermaritzburg was signed by twelve members. Several also signed applications for fellowship in the Society. On Sunday Mr. Fricke delivered a lecture to some three hundred, or four hundred, Indians at the home of Mr. C. Mulliah. On Monday he lectured again to Europeans upon "Exertion or Destiny," the Swami above mentioned occupying the chair. Tuesday night was taken up with a meeting for answering questions. On Wednesday evening another lecture was given on the subject "Reincarnation." The inauguration of the P. M. Zurg Lodge took place on Friday. A second meeting of the Lodge took place on Sunday afternoon when, after refreshments, Mr. Fricke read a lecture entitled "The Coming Cycle," which he explained had been delivered by Mrs. Besant to the delegates at the last Convention of the Indian Section. That evening he departed for Pretoria, arriving there safely on Monday night.

Martzburg, Natal, S. A., May 7, 1909.

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Spiritual progress is not always the same as goodness and self-sacrifice, although these must in due season bring about the former.—*The Doctrine Of The Heart*.