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ACCIDENTS, CATASTROPHES AND CATAclysms.

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We all have stood appalled at the tremendous loss of life in the earthquake in southern Italy, when 200,000 people perished; the culmination of a recent series of catastrophes, such as Mt. Pelee, San Francisco, Valparaiso and Jamaica, and many of us remember similar occurrences; that of the Straits of Sunda, for instance, when 80,000 people lost their lives. When these terrific happenings occur they may well make us pause and wonder why such things can be. In what way can we reconcile such apparent horrors, the seemingly needless loss of life and suffering, with the conception of a just and merciful God of whom the Christian scriptures assure us that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge. The Christian church has no explanation. All it can say is that it is the will of God and a mystery, but no thinking person can be content with this assertion. Such occurrences are diametrically opposed to the idea of a God who is love, mercy and justice; and this becomes doubly apparent when we remember that according to Christianity every soul is newly created at birth and according to its life so will its future be eternal pain or everlasting pleasure. It is impossible to reconcile this view with an act of God which results in the sudden putting out of the world of thousands of the young and the old of his creatures, without warning, without time for repentance. Truly it is a mystery to the Christian church. Some thinkers even go so far as to deny, in the face of such frightful catastrophes, the existence of a God at all, and conclude that we are all lucky or luckless creatures of blind chance or circumstance.

The lack of a consistent teaching to explain and account for accidents, catastrophes and cataclysms is the weakest part of Christian theology, the feeblest part of a feeble attempt to explain life, death, God, the universe and man, and we cannot wonder, when men contemplate these occurrences, that they lose faith and become agnostics or atheists, or dismiss religion as puerile, believing that there can be no explanation of the inexplicable, and so center their thoughts and attentions ever more on the pleasures of physical life.

Theosophy claims divine wisdom, and as such it must cover all phenomena and have something to say in relation to every occurrence taking place in the world. Its believers stake their belief on this position. Theosophy is not presented to us as a revelation which we must believe against any apparent contradictions which we may note in life around us. It is

presented to us as the divine wisdom, or so much of God's consciousness as we can understand, and as such must furnish us with an adequate explanation of all the facts in life which we can observe. The proof of its truth lies in this ability, and it is through the application of its explanations to the phenomena, and the finding that it *does* furnish an enlightening comprehension to what otherwise, or by any other theory, is and has been incomprehensible, that we students of the teachings have acquired the faith that is in us.

Let us then see how theosophy explains such things as the late Messina earthquake and all such occurrences where many lives are suddenly lost in shipwrecks, railroad accidents, fires, tidal waves, floods, etc., etc.

There are three fundamental postulates of theosophy which we must first thoroughly comprehend:

First, there is *no* death. Man is an immortal soul and uses bodies merely as vehicles of consciousness. What we call death is but the man leaving the physical vehicle and functioning in a more plastic, more ethereal one. Second, that man grows or evolves by the experiences and knowledge he gains in a long series of life cycles in mental, astral and physical matter and vehicles, and consequently returns to earth life and takes a physical body, time after time, to acquire more knowledge and more experience. Third, that the law of karma, or action and reaction, governs this growth by bringing to every individual and every nation the exact effects of every force generated, whether it be on the mental, moral or physical plane of being; this law being one of absolute *justice*, unerring and immutable.

These are the three main teachings which bear on this question of what we call accidents, etc., but there are others which we will touch upon, more or less; particularly the existence of great beings of great wisdom and power, who have control over the forces of nature, and who, working in perfect harmony with the divine will, are administering the law and acting as guardians and helpers of humanity in the long evolution towards the goal.

Mankind has now been evolving from a mere animal with a little spark of mentality, a primeval savage, to what he now is, for some millions of years and, although he has been helped considerably by precept and example, it has been principally by the knowledge gained by experiencing the results of doing certain things, desiring certain things and thinking certain things, relating cause and effect, classifying them and so acquiring knowledge of good and evil; that thought, that desire, that action, which results in pain is found to be wrong and that which brings harmony and pleasure is known as right or good.

One life is far too short to experience more than a very small part of the effects of causes set going in that life, therefore after many physical incarnations there is an accumulated mass of causes or karma as we call it, of most varied kind, of which only a small portion can be worked out

as effects in one incarnation. When a human being is ready for incarnation again, coming for another day at school as it were, the great Lords of Karma, as we call them, decide what portion of these accumulated debts of his are to be paid, and they direct his birth to parents, to country, to a nation and environment, which will be most suitable. This is called ripe karma, that mass of causes which are to have their effects in the one physical life; but it is important to remember that there is a great mass of karma, or causes, which the conditions of the life just beginning are not likely to afford an opportunity for expression.

This law of karma, of cause and effect, applies to mankind collectively as well as individually, and races, nations, families, societies, religions, any organization where men are brought together and act in concert, are equally subject to this law — that as races, nations, etc., they also have to reap what they sow, and therefore the units composing them are more or less responsible and will more or less feel the effects. We have now cleared the way for a consideration of sudden deaths, accidents, fires, shipwrecks, famines, wars, etc., where few or many people are killed.

As in a universe of law and absolute justice we cannot logically admit chance and accident as factors, we must conclude that any such death is a karmic result of some cause. Let us therefore consider what would be the causes bringing such effects. One which will occur to our minds first, would be the previous taking of a life. By losing our own physical body we are suddenly deprived of our opportunity for growth, and so realize by this lesson that we did wrong in killing that other. Physical life is a very important detail in our larger lives — it is the state in which we gather our experiences, which we work up as knowledge, and work into our character as faculties afterwards, and where, in our relations to our fellows, we pay off many of the debts we owe. It also conditions our next life. The long preparation and unfoldment of our character and control of our bodies through childhood to maturity, is, in the case of one suddenly killed, so much waste of time to the conscious ego on the higher planes, and the long process has to be gone over again; therefore it is a decided loss and a severe lesson. Another cause would be the taking of our own life, suicide; we have not valued it sufficiently, therefore we lose it again when we very much want it. Or, again, we have been instrumental in others losing their lives by carelessness, and so we lose our own. Or we have been great hunters, fond of killing our younger brothers, the animals, and a loss of our life may well prove a salutary lesson to our insensate cruelty.

In some cases the loss of a life may not be from any cause set going directly by ourselves. In our relations with our fellow men we constantly incur obligations and set up strong ties of love or hate, which bind us to them so that it is inevitable that we be continually brought in contact with them in future lives. Now conditions may be such, our respective karmas may so operate, that a short intervening life may be necessary for

one while the other or others are spending a long time in superphysical conditions, so that each may eventually be born again at about the same time. A man therefore may sometimes die suddenly by some apparent accident or in some catastrophe when it may really be the time for him to die, having worked out the little karma allotted to him.

Possibilities will multiply themselves as you think over them, but I think I have shown enough to indicate, when we consider the long evolution behind most human beings, that a very large proportion are most likely to have generated causes the effects of which can be reaped only by experiencing sudden or violent death. It may not be arranged as due to them in the present life, but if in the continual adjustment necessary by the play of free will and other conditions arising in their social relations, the Lords of Karma are able to take advantage of some accident or catastrophe about to take place, then these karmic debtors are drawn into it.

This theory, of course, presupposes that coming events cast their shadows before; that events are predestined. To a certain extent that is so, and apart from theosophy we have considerable corroborative evidence of it being so in the mass of true presentiments, premonitions and clairvoyant percepts; in the true foretellings of astrology, and even palmistry, which, though far from being exact sciences, do occasionally furnish us with instances which the much-used argument of coincidence cannot explain and which, while proving the existence of fate or destiny, indicate that the failures to correctly forecast are not due so much to the inexactness of the science as to the inefficiency of the scientist and his lack of knowledge of all the factors bearing on his deductions. In the light of the teaching of reincarnation and karma, we are able to see that the principal events of a person's life are mapped out for him in accord with the ripe karma. It would not be quite correct to say that he himself was the cause of these events; that his thoughts, desires and actions in a previous life reacted on him as events, automatically as it were. This could not be so. They *do* react on him automatically in the development of his character, his faculties and mental powers; but it is the administrators of the law who so adjust the affairs of his life that he gets exactly the equivalent reward or punishment, the pleasure or the pain, of that collection of causes generated by himself in past lives of which he has to experience the results in his present life.

Therefore, so far as any one particular man or woman is concerned, we see that the events of his or her life are to a great extent inevitable and the result of the past. We can also, from the study of the individual, understand that the law must equally apply collectively, that the future of nations, races, families, societies, must equally be foreordained. Therefore the administrators of the law, they whom we call Lords of Karma, and the hosts of workers under them, know what events are to take place, and in conformity with the law utilize them, not for the experience of

one person only, but for a number of persons to whom such results are due. Hence in minor accidents such people are brought together on the same train, in the same ship, in the same theatre, etc. It can, of course, be readily surmised that where some hundreds of people are killed in one particular locality it is hardly probable that the loss of their physical life was in the *ripe* karma of each one of them, but that in their accumulated karma there is some cause which entailed this loss, and so the event is taken advantage of, in some cases, to permit of it being worked out. Those whose destiny is otherwise, who have to live and not to die, whose ripe karma cannot be interfered with, are saved from these accidents, sometimes almost miraculously, often prevented by some apparently trivial cause from going by that train or sailing by that ship, etc., and it is interesting to know that some of this work is often done by men and women like ourselves, who have developed the astral body into a usable vehicle and during the sleep of the physical body, function in the astral and aid in many ways at the scenes of these happenings.

In the case of such accidents and even of minor cataclysms or catastrophes, there is a factor to be taken into consideration which is largely responsible for their occurrence. For want of a better name I will call it thought force. I cannot go into the full details of how this force is either generated or operated, but we know that a thought takes definite shape in superphysical matter and becomes a living entity ensouled by that thought and a force for the accomplishment of that desire-thought; and constantly receiving similar thoughts strengthen and vitalize that entity more and more as they are generated, and this force arouses or stimulates similar vibrations in the mental bodies of other people who respond by the creation of other and similar thought entities. So they keep on accumulating, becoming more and more forceful until the aggregate is a tremendous energy which crystallizes into an effect on the physical plane. If these thoughts are evil, thoughts of hate, wishes for harm, revenge and so on, they so influence men that some dreadful accident may result, or the force may be used by the Karmic Lords in bringing about such an "accident," which is really an adjustment.

Now in the case of great loss of life caused by the sudden convulsion of natural forces, such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tidal waves, these same forces are at work; the *modus operandi* is much the same except that there is yet another factor to be considered, the law of periodicity, the cyclic law apparent in the whole universe. Occult science declares that the past and future history of this world is marked into distinct stages by terrific cataclysms, coincident with the rise and decline of one of the great root races, or root types. These great seismic disturbances may be caused by a change in the inclination of the earth's axis, but what causes this oscillation, profane science knows nothing and occult science does not inform us. We can hazard a conjecture that there are influences at work, caused by certain changing positions of the sun and

planets of our system ; and as the distances, orbits and speed of these are known with exactitude, the recurring periods of these greater cataclysms of the earth could be fairly closely computed did we know the precise times of past happenings. We understand that the real occultists, adepts and greater beings, having much greater knowledge than the most erudite of men, and facilities of observation enormously superior, *can* determine the time of these happenings ; and this not only applies to these great cycles but to the very many small cycles revolving within the limits of the main one. As in one of the great root types of men there are seven sub-types and these again are divided into seven families or nations or sub sub-types, so there are smaller cycles of the earth's change of form or position, causing minor cataclysms, earthquakes, etc., and producing what seems to us an appalling loss of life and these we are told can be predicted with mathematical certainty like eclipses or other recurring phenomena in space. Occult science tells us something of the past history of this earth and man. It states that the majority of mankind now on the earth is the fifth root race which we call the Aryan and that we American, English and Germans, of Teutonic stock, are the fifth sub-race ; that previous to the beginning of this fifth root race, the fourth, which we call the Atlantean, flourished and attained a high state of civilization, the configuration of the earth's surface being considerably different from what it is now, — the principal habitat of the race being a large continent where the Atlantic now rolls, and that the third race millions of years previous to this inhabited the continent of Lemuria, stretching in a great horseshoe or arc across the two hemispheres and taking in parts of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The great convulsions of the earth's surface, marking the end of one race and the beginning of another, must destroy millions of human forms in comparison with which the disaster in Sicily, dreadful and terrible as it seems, is but a small affair. But the great and distinguishing cataclysm is always preceded and followed by a series of minor ones, all extending over long periods of time. For instance, we are told that the destruction of Atlantis began about a million years ago, and from Plato we hear of the subsidence of Poseidonis, the last considerable remnant of that land as disappearing about 9400 B. C. Now we also know that the races overlap very considerably ; that although this is the fifth era, we have the last sub-race of the fourth, the Mongolian, running their cycle in comparatively modern times. As this applies both ways, we can therefore presume that not only is the sixth sub-race being brought into existence, but that the segregation and culture of the type for the sixth great root race is also taking place, and as these changes are to some extent coincident with geological changes, we can therefore suppose it probable that the tales of earthquakes in our own times down to this later disaster in Sicily are but the faint precursors of many more. The great guards of human destinies see clearly the coming of these upheavals and human lives are so arranged that they will be

drawn into them or kept out of them.

To most people to whom this life in physical matter is the supreme reality and life after the death of the physical body but a speculation, or at best a probability, the sudden destruction of millions of such lives, and even of hundreds in minor affairs such as the Iroquois theatre fire in Chicago, is the most dreadful and appalling thing—in fact this feeling may be said to apply to the death of one person. We have so exaggerated the importance of physical life that we look on its ceasing with horror, and surround death with trappings of woe and feelings of regret and sorrow. This point of view, this attitude, is caused wholly by ignorance and the hitherto utter inadequacy of our modern religions and sciences to give a rational explanation of what man is and what life is.

The science of sciences, religion of religions, the ancient wisdom of the ages, which in its modern dress we call theosophy, gives us a very full and clear explanation of all this and one which appeals to our reason, satisfying our intuitive feelings and so illuminating our understanding. With this knowledge we see that what we thought was death or extinction is but an illusion; that so far from being death, it is birth into a freer, happier existence. That the true reality is the soul or spirit; that the nearest approach to death which man ever experiences is the life in the physical body where the soul is most restricted in the expression of itself. We realize that the form or body is but a temporary one among a large number which we inhabit at different times; that the destruction of the form does not affect the life, any more than the destruction of our clothes would affect us. That far from death being the grim spectre we picture him, he is the gentle tender friend who releases us from our imprisonment and whom we should be ready to welcome gladly when he comes to us. The life, the spirit, is the reality; the form as nothing in comparison. The life is indestructible, eternal, ever growing; the form but a temporary vehicle for that life. Nature is prodigal of her forms, destroying them in myriads constantly, with man as well as with the lower kingdoms. Think of the wars, pestilences and famines which are destroying human forms continually, as well as the class of occurrences which we are considering. It is only by the light of these three teachings of immortality, reincarnation and karma that the right and justice and love of God becomes comprehensible and this phenomena explicable.

In this light we can see that, far from being a punishment, some deaths may be a reward; that the striking away of a restricting, confining form which we have outgrown, and in which we cannot express ourselves as we would, is the greatest kindness that we can receive, enabling us to continue our growth, using better and more suitable instruments. In the light of this knowledge we can faintly glimpse how the Great Fashioners of our destiny may look down in compassion on our struggles and our limitations, and that when we have outgrown our forms, when the prisoners are struggling to free themselves from the prison which has become

too small for them, they may rejoice and be glad because of the opportunity which some great convulsion of nature, or other occurrence gives them, to cancel karmic debts, free the prisoners and permit their growth to go on.

THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES.

BY ADELIA H. TAFFINDER.

The mysteries of Eleusis were the most famous, the most sacred, and the most popular, of all the many mysteries which existed in ancient Greece. There is no authority to show that the ritual of the Mysteries differed essentially from that of the general religion of that land. All ancient testimony tends to prove that the ritual was based on religious myths similar to those which were common in Greece, and that the difference between the mystic and exoteric rites lay chiefly in the accompaniments, or ceremonial arrangement.

When the ancient mythology of Greece and Rome lost its sacred import, and the writers of the age were wont to treat the popular religious rites with mirth, they seem to have made an exception of the Eleusinian Mysteries which were always considered with the deepest reverence. "These supreme institutions of religious antiquity" are naturally shrouded in mist and obscurity. Lobeck's great work *Aglaophamus* in 1829 was the first critical analysis of the materials then at the disposal of scholarship. He indefatigably gathered from all the classical sources, but he is not endorsed by all students of the mystery-cultus because he seems to have destroyed the very spirit of the mysteries, denying that they were enshrined in a primitive revelation of divine truth made to mankind, or that they contained a philosophic doctrine borrowed by the Greeks from the wisdom of the East.

Other authorities consider that the Eleusinian Mysteries contained the most ancient form of religion known at the time, that they underwent numerous modifications and partial blendings with other great mystery-cultus, such as the Orphic, Bacchic and perhaps even Isaic mysteries; that they can be traced back to the pre-historic period thousands of years before Christ. Mr. G. R. S. Mead states that the only surviving tradition extant is preserved in the *Critias* and the *Timæus* of Plato, concerning the Atlantic legend. That "the mysteries, like the religions of antiquity, were originally *national*, and purposely adapted to the idiosyncrasies of the race. In the intermixture of races the original distinctions were broken down. The inner doctrines of all the mysteries were identical, the differences in the outer degrees being necessary in the various countries in order to lead the candidate by natural stages from his limited national ideas of religion to more universal conceptions, and finally to the truths

of the one universal religion of mankind."

Athenaeus says that the Eleusinian Mysteries were distinguished from the ordinary festival by the peculiar magnificence and expense, and of the "mystic paradosis" which took place at them. The other states and allies of Greece were required to pay homage and to bring their first fruits and offerings to the goddesses of Eleusis. The strictest secrecy was enjoined and observed in regard to the Mysteries, and everything connected with them; so much so that the silence maintained became proverbial. The degree to which silence was observed depended entirely on the individual conscience, and the fact that it was in general so strictly maintained is the best proof of the power of the mysteries over the popular mind.

The believers in these holy rites treasured as sacred knowledge all that they had seen, heard or handled pertaining to the ceremonies. Every act, rite and person engaged in them was symbolical, and the individual revealing them was put to death. So also was any uninitiated person who happened to be present. Persons of all ages, and both sexes were eligible.

An inscription has recently been discovered in Greece, showing that the public slaves of Athens were initiated at the public expense. The only disqualification for initiation was unexpiated crime — murder.

With regard to the profanation of the Mysteries by those persons who ridiculed them, it is easy to understand that the very simple character of the rites, the commonplace nature of the sacred things which were exposed at the crowning ceremony, to the adoration of the people, lent themselves readily to ridicule when contrasted with the solemn preparations that led up to the culminating act, and the great moral effects that were expected from the initiation.

Those who were admitted into this "holy of holies," were shocked and indignant at the ridicule thus cast on their sacrament by the pitiless analysis of a cold, disbelieving intellect. They felt that more than met the eye existed in these sacred things. There is overwhelming proof in the works of ancient writers that the effect of the Mysteries was not dependent on any dogmatic instruction. Even the doctrine of a future life was not *expressly* inculcated in them, but left to the spectators to gather for themselves from the spectacle presented to them.

It was required that the candidate must do his best to eliminate all the impure elements from his nature. "There was a distinction between those who were not purified, and those who, in consequence of being purified were admitted to a more divine life. The creation of this distinction is itself remarkable," says Dr. Edwin Hatch in the tenth of his Hibbert Lectures, in 1888. "The race of mankind was lifted on to a higher plane when it came to be taught that only the pure in heart can see God."

It was only when the precincts of the Temple were entered that even the lowest mysteries began. The temple was called by various names,

says Mr. Mead. It was known as the "initiation hall," "the mystic enclosure," the "great hall," and the "palace." The magnificent fane of antiquity was destroyed in 396 A. D. by fanatical, black-robed monks, calling themselves Christians, who guided the hosts of Alaric the Goth, over the mountains into Attica. For a sketch of the history of the great temple of Eleusis, read the admirable articles of Francois Lenormant in the *Contemporary Review* (May, July, September, 1880) on "The Eleusinian Mysteries."

Such profound intellects as Pindar, Sophocles, Isocrates, Plutarch and Plato regarded the Mysteries with reverence. Pindar declares: "Happy is he who has beheld them, and descends into the underworld; he knows the end, he knows the origin of life." Socrates was accused of atheism, or disrespect to the gods, for having never been initiated.

The terms Lesser and Greater Mysteries refer no doubt to the exoteric and esoteric degrees. It was required of all candidates that they should be first admitted at the *Mikra*, or Lesser Mysteries of Agræ, by a process of fasting called *purification*, after which they were styled *mystæ* or initiates. A year later they might enter the higher degree. When the candidate entered the Greater Mysteries he was fully instructed and disciplined, becoming an *epopta* or seer. He was now regarded as having received the arcane principles of life. Herodotus mentions the celebration of eternal ceremonies of the Lesser Mysteries in Egypt, in which 100,000 "initiates" participated. The candidate was initiated in the Lesser Mysteries in February in Athens, and he was admitted at Eleusis in the following September, preparatory to taking the higher initiation. In presenting himself as a candidate he was solemnly impressed with the proclamation, "Let no one enter whose hands are not clean and whose tongue is not prudent." A full confession of his sins was required; then followed the baptism in two small salt lakes, which flowed out into the sea. The neophyte faced the sun, and poured the water over his head with his hands the requisite number of times. The manner of bathing and the number of immersions varied with the degree of guilt he had confessed. He was now regenerated; the next stage was to practice certain forms of fasting and abstinence.

Lenormant states that "their fasting was similar to that of the Mussulmans during Ramadhan; they took no food so long as the sun was above the horizon, but only on the rising of the stars, this being the time at which the goddess had eaten for the first time after her abstinence." After this period of abstinence and purification came the "sacrifice of salvation." Some authorities state that the neophyte made offerings of mullet and barley to Demeter, the "sorrowing one." Dr. Hatch states that "each of the candidates for initiation sacrificed a pig for himself." Mr. Mead explains that "the pig was a symbol of the most bestial propensities of the lower nature," "and this fact may give a clue to the explanation of the miracle legend of the casting of the evil spirits into the

herd of swine, in the gospel narrative." There was an interval of two days after the "day of sacrifice" before the inauguration of more solemn sacrifices, which began with an immense procession, each of those who were to be initiated carrying a long lighted torch and singing loud pæns in honor of the god. This solemn procession started from Athens at sunrise and reached Eleusis at night. The following day was dedicated to sacrifices; then came three days and nights spent in fasting and mourning for the divinities presiding at the Mysteries, whose names were too holy to be spoken by the profane. This fast was broken by partaking of the mystic drink of flour and water and pounded mint, which was of the character of a real sacrament.

Portions of these three nights were spent by the candidates in witnessing mystic representations, tending to deeply impress them of their vows and obligations. The last night "their torches were extinguished; they stood outside the temple in the silence and darkness, until the great door of the temple opened, and in a flood of light and glory they beheld that which was sacred to their eyes."

Can we not imagine how deeply they were impressed, and how this splendid illumination seemed dazzlingly bright after the darkness? The strange apparitions, the dramatic voices, the gorgeous dresses of the actors, the magnificence of the sacred drama, to which the highly suggestive and symbolic art of Greece no doubt contributed largely — all these they saw and heard in awe-struck silence. May we not wonder what was the significance of this mystic drama? Some statements have been made that it represented the Great Goddess, the Cosmic Soul, and the individual soul. "Above all stood the great figure of Pallas Athene, the goddess of wisdom, the patroness of Athens and of the forbears of the Grecian race." (Mead.)

Mr. G. R. S. Mead, in his *Notes on the Eleusinian Mysteries*, says: "Many remained content with this (the mæsis) and did not proceed further, but for others there was a further mystery-play, to which they were admitted after the lapse of a year. Its subject was the descent into the invisible world, most probably derived from the Orphic tradition. In early times these two degrees perhaps formed only one, but as it was found impossible to keep out undesirable people entirely, the initial ceremonies were divided into two." Beyond the first initiation in the Greater Mysteries, a further attempt was made to give the initiated some idea of the Elysian Fields, the devachanic life, or at least of the higher regions of the invisible world. The moral teaching consisted in showing dramatically the punishments which awaited the evil-doer in Tartarus, the herald proclaiming that such and such retribution awaits him who commits such and such crimes, and also in enacting the happy scenes of Elysium, the herald pointing out that such and such rewards attend the man who does good deeds. There was also instruction concerning the coming into existence of things, when the "play-things of Bacchus" were explained,

and also some exposition of astronomical phenomena. All was done deliberately, impressively and in order, and though we cannot to-day see any cause for such great secrecy, there is no doubt that the impression caused on the mind of the learner was immensely deepened by the solemn ceremonies, and that the result was a good one.

The real mysteries, however, were much more impressive, but on a very much smaller scale; they were kept very secret, and the candidates were selected very carefully. These mysteries were not held at Eleusis, but at several centres of which the existence was kept a profound secret. The candidate retired for many days into seclusion, passing through a rigorous discipline of fasting, prayer and meditation. Lenormant states that the all-night solemnities were principally composed of the following elements: "Hymns, sacred dances, mimical scenes, sudden apparitions, accompanied by solemn words and disciplinary precepts pronounced by the hierophants." The dramatic instruction given to the Mystæ was the mystery of life and death. "Of the life and death of the sun, of the death and resurrection of the glorious orb of day, of the death and life of the earth in the seasons of the year, an explanation of the eternal course of natural phenomena. This was but the outermost veil of the mysteries, merely another set of symbols; for the great theme of the sacred science was and is the life and death and resurrection of man; whence he comes, how he is brought into the world, whither he goes at death, and how he is born again, and so on to higher and higher mysteries along the path of that mystical blending with the gods, and finally with the God of which Jamblichus speaks."

Plutarch, in referring to the higher degrees of the Mysteries, says: "Formerly in our times of great prosperity, the gods have often manifested themselves at this holy ceremony by mystic visions." The doctrinal tradition which furnished the key to the symbols was in the keeping of the higher ministers — the hierophants. They were bound to celibacy and required to devote their entire lives to their sacred offices. Each hierophant had three assistants — the torch-bearer, the *kerux* or crier, and the minister at the altar. Mr. Mead says that "the inner side of the initiation must ever remain a mystery;" that it was certainly something far higher than the mere imparting to the neophytes of certain formulæ of the same nature as those in the so-called Egyptian *Book of the Dead*.

Cicero adds his testimony, declaring the Mysteries to be the highest product of Grecian civilization, and testifies that in them "we have found indeed and truth the basic principles of life; for not only have we learned the proper way of living in happiness, but also of dying with better hope." From this we would infer that Cicero had been initiated. Plato, alluding to the lowest and most material of the after-death states, affirms: "Whoever goes to Hades without initiation and instruction in the Mysteries shall lie in mud; but he who has been purified and perfected in the Mysteries, on passing on to the other world shall dwell with

the gods."

Let us listen to significant words of the tragic poet Sophocles: "How blessed, thrice blessed, are they of mortal kind who gaze upon these mysteries before they pass into the world invisible. They alone have there their lot in life; in miseries untold is there the lot of others." That this was the common belief of the Greeks is further shown by a classical writer, Diodorus Siculus, who tells us that, "it is said that those who have participated in the Mysteries become thereby more pious, more just, and better in every respect." An inscription was found at Petilia, Greece, in 1880. It indicates the soul of an initiate addressing the powers of the realms of death: "Pure from the pure I come, O queen of the realms below, and thou most glorious god of righteous counsel, and ye the rest, ye gods immortal! For of your race am I; it is my boast; by fate am I now vanquished. * * * Out of the circle, the painful and grievous, my flight have I winged; swiftly upon the longed-for crown my foot I set; into the bosom of the queen, the mistress of the dead, I plunged." It is evident that the latter portion of the inscription has reference to the ritual of initiation and also that the soul has triumphed and has freed itself from the painful round of re-births, for it says: "Out of the circle, the painful and grievous, my flight have I winged!"

TWO REMARKABLE DREAMS.

BY GENEVIEVE HARD WRIGHT.

During the civil war between the North and South, Dr. Abner Hard, surgeon of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry, a volunteer regiment, had a most remarkable dream which undoubtedly saved his life, and which I have many times heard him relate. It was this: While the regiment was in camp one night, Dr. Hard dreamed that they were ordered to break camp and to march many miles south to the fighting line. In this dream, after the usual preparations were completed, he found himself riding between Captain Sam Smith and Captain Clark, of the regiment. The scenery was entirely strange to him, as he had never been so far south before, and he observed very attentively the country through which he was riding. Coming very near to the place where a battle was in progress, he found a large red barn, and remarking that it was a suitable building for a hospital, he stopped there. The wounded were being brought in quite rapidly, when a messenger came with this word: "Major Medill is wounded and wishes Dr. Hard to assist in bringing him from the field." I wish to remark in passing that Major Medill, a brother of Joseph Medill, at that time editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, was a warm personal friend of Dr. Hard, which was the reason for this request. Dr. Hard started at once and in his dream found a very rocky country. He was immediately in front of an enormous boulder, when, as he dreamed, a shell burst where

he was standing. Of course he awoke and thought no more of the dream at that time.

Early the following morning the regiment was ordered to break camp and proceed south. This they did, and Dr. Hard found himself riding between Captain Sam Smith and Captain Clark, and through country entirely familiar to him, although he had never been there before, for it was as he had seen it in his dream. He was able to tell before reaching it what he was to see, as "a small, unpainted school house," "a bridge crossing a stream," etc., etc., and he told his dream to his companions, who afterward vouched for its correctness. As he had dreamed, he found the red barn, and he there established his hospital. Word came to him of Major Medill's being wounded, and first turning over to his assistant surgeon his valuables, papers, etc., and leaving farewell messages for his wife and family (for he felt he was going to his death) he started through the same rocky country of which he had dreamed. Finding in his path the same enormous boulder, instead of passing it, as he would have done but for his dream, he quickly stepped behind the boulder. The shell burst where he would have stood. Then he helped bring Major Medill to the hospital, where he found him so desperately wounded that he subsequently died.

Many years later a niece of Dr. Hard had a remarkable dream, which, unhappily, did not save life. She and her brother were most devotedly attached to each other. She was living in Illinois, and he at that time was in San Francisco, but his business frequently took him to what was then Washington Territory. Not having heard from her brother for some weeks, the sister dreamed one night that she saw in a newspaper an account of a terrible disaster on the Pacific coast. A steamer bound from Portland, Oregon, to San Francisco had gone down with all on board, and third in the list of passengers lost stood out, distinct and clear, this dear brother's name. She awoke very much disturbed, and at once wrote to her brother, telling him her dream. She received a reply to this letter, in which he laughingly said not to worry, as he would never be drowned, but would probably "die by hanging."

This dream occurred in July. The following October, she and her husband and members of her husband's family, removed to California, going to Santa Barbara. Her brother was at that time in Olympia, Wash., on business, but he telegraphed that he would take the next steamer down, and would join his sister in Santa Barbara. She had been in Santa Barbara just a week, when the morning paper was brought to her. Opening it, on the very first page she saw an account of a dreadful disaster at sea. The steamship "Pacific" had foundered just off Cape Flattery, and had gone down with three hundred passengers aboard! The *third name* in the list of passengers was the name of this brother of whom she had dreamed less than five months before. The date of the disaster was November 4, 1875.

THE EVOLUTION OF VIRTUES — V.

FEARLESSNESS.

Fearlessness is something more than courage. A man whom we call courageous may be very far from fearless. A recruit going onto the battle-field for the first time, white-faced but determined, is called a man of courage. Wellington is said to have remarked as a young soldier passed him to the front, white, trembling but resolute: "There goes a brave man; he realizes the danger, but unhesitatingly faces it." A man may have the courage to move toward a known danger, even to risk his life where there is a strong probability of losing it, and yet be by no means fearless. Perfect freedom from fear marks a high stage of development and indicates great knowledge; for, as a matter of fact, fear arises from ignorance.

Chiefly because ignorance is the parent of fear, a man who is courageous in one thing is sometimes an abject coward in another. He may face death a hundred times and come to be quite unconcerned about bullets and shells, and yet he could not be induced to spend a night alone in a graveyard. A French king who died upon the scaffold with such calm courage and dignity as to arouse general admiration had been so lacking in a different kind of firmness as to hasten his own downfall. On the other hand, a notorious outlaw of the early California days who was celebrated for his daring, who had killed many people in the various raids and robberies of his band, and who seemed to risk his life as recklessly as though he were a total stranger to fear, nevertheless died in abject terror when he was finally caught and hanged by the *vigilantes*. Some men, courageous in other matters, are filled with fear by the sight of a harmless snake. Others would on no account be present at a materializing seance, while it would be extremely difficult to induce many ordinarily courageous persons to visit alone at night an unoccupied house which was alleged to be "haunted." But all these fears would vanish with a little more knowledge. The graveyard can have no terror for the man who knows that the dead physical body is as much a separate thing from the dead man who once lived in it as his clothing is and that a cemetery is as harmless as a wardrobe. The outlaw about to be deprived of the physical life he had forfeited to the outraged public would not have suddenly turned coward had he not been ignorant of the fact that there is really no death and that while he was losing his physical body he had a better one left. The life ahead of him in the astral world would certainly be an undesirable one; but what probably filled him with fear was the possibility of extinction. The man who is afraid of a materialization, or a ghost, would quickly regain his courage if he understood a little more about the facts and laws of the invisible world. He would not run from a wraith if he knew it was but a temporary aggregation of matter as

harmless as a puff of smoke. We are mightily amused at a huge elephant going into a paroxysm of terror at sight of a mouse; but it is no more remarkable than the many baseless fears of human beings that arise from various kinds of ignorance.

The action of fear upon the physical body is interesting and instructive and even a superficial examination of it shows that it is extremely detrimental in its effects, while courage is of incalculable value to a person. Sudden fear contracts the heart, impedes the circulation of the blood and leaves the face blanched and ashen. We are not surprised when the clairvoyant tells us that the color in which this emotion expresses itself is gray. It is quite in keeping with what we know of its physical effects. The emotion of fear appears to be synonymous with contraction. It is a *lessening* of life, and therefore of vitality — a tendency toward separation from the source of life. Fear is the ally of disease and death. It is destructive, disintegrating. Every physician knows this from experience and always does his best to keep fear from the mind of his patient. He knows that if he can kindle hope and revive courage the battle is more than half won.

Because fear means a restriction of the life-forces, a process of life contraction instead of expansion, it is inimical to soul growth. Only in the atmosphere of serene fearlessness can the inherent divinity come to perfect expression. Any kind or degree of fear is an enemy of growth and progress; and the kinds and degrees are many. People fear poverty, fear disease, fear old age, fear accident, fear possible helplessness, fear loss of position, of power, of social standing, — fear even the opinions of others about them. With many people one or another, or several, of these things gives rise to a mental condition of perpetual unrest. Ignorance, once more, is the cause of all such fear. The difficulty is in the failure to understand facts — to see things in their correct relationship to each other and thus to realize the harmlessness of things which, seen out of their true relationship, are fear inspiring. A man is afraid of a harmless wraith because he erroneously attaches to it a power it does not possess. Just so are all the rest of his fears groundless, and the objects of them equally powerless to injure him, except through the fear he permits them to inspire in him. To all the things over which he worries a man attaches a wholly imaginary power to do him injury and in order to acquire fearlessness he must try to understand nature's methods of evolution and to comprehend why certain unpleasant experiences, such as the unexpected loss of property, accidents on sea or land, friendlessness in old age, etc., come to people. He must come into an understanding of three things: First, that no such experiences can come to any human being unless that person has himself set going the causes that will bring them; second, that when a thing is inevitable it is much less disastrous if calmly faced than if met with the paralyzing fear that renders one helpless; and third, that all ill-fortune has a lesson to teach that is of more real value

to a man than good fortune could possibly have been in its stead—not that painful things in general are better than pleasant ones, but that they are absolutely necessary to those to whom they come; and were it otherwise they would not, and could not, come to them. A pain in a boy's stomach is not better than the condition of perfect health, but until he learns better than to eat green apples that pain is giving him a lesson that is necessary for his future health and safety. If a thing is inevitable nothing can be gained by frantically trying to escape it; and if it has a lesson to teach that will enable us to avoid greater suffering later on, it is obviously foolish to lament it.

A wise man once said that there are two classes of things about which he refused to worry. One was the things he could not help and the other the things he could. It is quite useless to worry about the one and unnecessary to worry about the other; and so a little common sense puts the demon of worry entirely out of court.

But there is something more to be said about fear than that it arises from ignorance for its root is in an ignorance that is closely associated with selfishness. "Perfect love casteth out fear;" and there can be perfect love only where there is absolute unselfishness. The man who reaches a knowledge of the actual unity of all life has no fear. Fear and hatred perish together. A man does not fear himself. When he knows that he is one with all that lives he can have neither hatred nor fear of anything nor can anything have fear of him. The devotee of the orient prays that he may become one who is afraid of nothing and of whom nothing is afraid.

The "perfect love that casteth out fear" also casts out selfishness. A man is no longer thinking about himself but about others. Instead of worrying for fear he will be friendless and helpless in old age he is thinking altogether about how he can help those who are now poor and friendless; and in that very forgetfulness of himself he is creating the conditions that will make his own old age rich with loyal friendships. On the other hand a man who is trying to accumulate money to "provide for old age" may permit his anxiety to secure plenty of it to lead him into the very things that will make a friendless old age certain.

The thoughtful student of cause and effect, as they operate in human evolution, will not be misled by the foolish idea that by increasing his material possessions he can protect himself against any fate he has earned, but will give the whole of his energies to the kind of efforts that would ensure desirable results for the future, both immediate and remote. He will waste no time worrying about blunders that he may have made in the past and the resulting unpleasantness that may still be ahead, but will meet the inevitable serenely, pondering its lessons when it comes, getting from its severity a Spartan strength and courage and rejoicing that the account now balanced is done with forever. To live in fear of what may be ahead of us as the life-plan unfolds is only to increase whatever misfortune may

come and to weaken our powers of resistance at the moment when they are most needed.

To the disciple who has entered fully into the spiritual life nothing matters. He has reached a clear understanding of the fact that a superior intelligence is superintending his evolution and that all the events of this life and his future lives will be adjusted with more careful planning for his welfare than that of a tutor for his pupil or a father for his son; that no useless lesson will be given him, that no unneeded experience can befall him, and that while he may not understand all the events in a program so far-reaching that it includes his evolution on planes of the universe of which he is wholly ignorant in his waking consciousness, he has no more to fear from it than an infant has in the arms of its loving mother. When this view of evolution is fully comprehended one reaches a mental condition that is higher than courage,—the condition that can properly be called fearlessness. It is not the state in which the will is called upon to enable one to resolutely face danger or death. It is rather the state of consciousness that, realizing that there is neither danger nor death, but that all things are well with the soul, looks fearless and unafraid on any change that can come.

[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.]

EDITORIALS.

A RELIC OF BARBARISM.

“Pass the Anti-Whipping Bill” is the caption of an editorial in a Missouri paper urging the abolition of corporal punishment in the prisons of that state, and the case against the degrading custom is well and concisely put:

“It brutalizes all concerned with it—the convicts and the men set over them. It never yet reformed a bad man or improved discipline in a prison. It is a sufficient answer to the plea that whipping is necessary to discipline to recite the fact that the most competent prison managers have abolished it and have attained a far better condition of discipline without it than has obtained in the Missouri penitentiary, where it still prevails.”

The attitude of the strong toward the weak is an infallible guide to the moral fibre of a community. It is in the use of authority that men always show where they stand in evolution. Clothe a man with authority and

you will discover what his inner nature is. If he is morally sound he will use his authority with wisdom and mercy. If he is still morally weak he will abuse it and those under him will suffer accordingly. The use of authority over offenders against the laws, in the United States, shows a lingering brutality against which all who stand for justice, mercy and common decency should protest as frequently as possible.

The American people have much to be proud of in some phases of penal reform. The juvenile courts and the parole and probation systems are giving the world object lessons that are already having powerful influence for good in other countries. In some of our states, too, like Colorado, for example, freedom given prisoners within the penitentiary as well as humane treatment in general is a most commendable step in the right direction. But with all the progress of various kinds and degrees in different parts of the country it is not difficult to find here and there traces of a lingering barbarism that are a reproach to our civilization. The practice of flogging is one of them. It is only when some unusual thing occurs that the public realizes that such atrocities are still in vogue behind the walls that doubtless hold many a dumb tragedy of life. For the most part people are profoundly ignorant on such subjects. How many of our citizens know that some of the states still retain the public whipping-post that is commonly supposed to have ended its openly shameless career with our colonial days? This degrading institution, which the mind naturally associates with the tortures of the Inquisition and with the days when the "crime" of being a Quaker was punished with public flogging, is still in active use in the state of Delaware, unless the law has been recently repealed. The offense known as vagrancy is said to be the misdemeanor against which this penalty is most often invoked. Under this enlightened administration of "justice" if an intelligent, educated mechanic loses his place because a financial panic closes the factory and his meager savings are exhausted while searching for work and he finds himself, let us say, in the city of Wilmington without food or shelter and is observed and arrested by a policeman, his fate may be the whipping-post! Now, the only excuse for the existence of law at all and the only warrant for the interference of any officer of the law with the right of every human being to be let alone in peace, is that by the law and its administrators the defenseless weak may be protected from the rapacious strong. To see the abject imbecility of such an institution as the whipping-post it is only necessary to analyze the particular case mentioned. It amounts to this: speculators on Wall street plan a financial raid which, if successful, will give them fortunes and will wreck certain industries. As a result a large number of factories are compelled to close. As the result of this, in turn, a large number of men are forced into idleness and many must tramp through the country searching for some kind of employment. Naturally many of them will be without money before they succeed in finding it. Those caught penniless on the soil of the state of

Delaware are flogged in order to teach them better. To put it differently, the intelligent people of Delaware punish the speculators of Wall street by flogging their unfortunate victims!

PHYSICIANS AGAINST MEAT EATING.

As specific knowledge increases vegetarianism becomes more and more popular because, as definite information is acquired, the injurious nature of meat as a food is seen more clearly. The medical profession is extremely conservative; and this is not strange, for medical students are training in a profession in which specific instructions must be followed with the utmost caution or life will be imperiled; and moving precisely along fixed lines of course cultivates conservatism. Precedent is the very soul of medical practice and therefore we naturally expect the medical profession to be slow to abandon anything that has been approved for a very long time. Hence we find the great majority of physicians standing firmly by meat as a desirable food. Nevertheless it is to be observed that an increasing number of them are at least not discouraging patients who are inclined to take to an exclusively vegetarian diet, while much more frequently than in the past we find some eminent practitioner taking a firm position against the use of meat as food. D. H. Kress, M. D., of Washington, D. C., superintendent of the Washington Sanitarium, in an article in *Life and Health*, makes some strong points against meat eating. He insists that meat, even in the cases where it is certain to have come from healthy animals, contains retained body wastes which are distinctly injurious to the health, and asserts that it is no more injurious to breathe vitiated air than to subsist upon such food. He also points out that much meat, which is apparently sound, is nevertheless from the bodies of diseased animals and contains dangerous disease germs. Among the diseases which are listed as likely to have their origin in the meat eating habit are tuberculosis, cancer and scrofula and "other like affections which are becoming so common among men and women." He points out that it is affirmed by some medical authorities that appendicitis is practically confined to meat-eating countries, and to meat-eaters in those countries. The doctor also takes a fling at meat extracts, citing other authorities on the point that they contain practically no nutrition and that their stimulating effect is due entirely to the *poisonous wastes* they contain. From the strictly scientific view-point Dr. Kress certainly makes a strong case.

Have mastery o'er thy soul O seeker after truths undying, if thou would'st reach the goal.—*The Voice Of The Silence*.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

"Do you think it right to take life in self-defense, be it man or beast?"

Answer: When one has only a choice of two evils it would plainly be foolish to choose the greater of the two instead of the lesser. If an escaped tiger suddenly confronts a man and the only way of avoiding death is to take the life of the tiger, why should not the lesser life be sacrificed, or, to put it from the theosophical view-point, why should not the animal form be destroyed instead of the human form? Self-defense against a human being is, of course, somewhat different and we may imagine cases ranging from an effort to escape from a cool and calculating murderer to a decision as to which of two occupants of a balloon, yourself or companion, shall be sacrificed to prevent both falling immediately into the sea. Probably nobody would undertake to decide such questions for another. We all know there are many people who, in the latter case, would promptly leap out of the balloon to lighten it without wasting any time in debate, if it were perfectly clear that one or both must die; there are undoubtedly some who would not take the life of a person who should murderously assault them, much preferring to resist as best they could, while stopping short of killing, and leave the rest to karma.

"What is the cause of tuberculosis among animals? It seems that living in the open air and on natural food should leave them free from such diseases."

Answer: Probably one prolific source of infection is the drinking water. Cattle are commonly compelled to drink from stagnant pools while swine appear

often to prefer to. In our profit-grasping, get-rich-quick civilization dairies are frequently overcrowded and during the severe winter season the animals are often closely confined in poorly ventilated stables. In such confinement where scores, or even hundreds, of cows are fed together by the smallest possible number of attendants that can do the work there is a general lack of cleanliness and much of the food is more or less filthy when eaten. This is particularly true of swine and the wonder is that diseases are not more common among both. They probably are more common than we suspect. A member of the Chicago board of health is quoted as saying that if all diseased meat were rejected the price of beef would be a dollar a pound, while a government inspector is reported to have said "if all the poor meat were condemned half the population would have to go without any at all." A little investigation of the subject would probably disclose facts rather startling to those who have given the subject no thought.

"Why should the Masters give Their teachings without expectation of return?"

Answer: Why should a father teach his son without expecting a return, or a mother lovingly care for a crying, rebellious infant without calculating what she is "going to get for it?" Fortunately there are some things we do without hope of gain and they are precisely the things that make life worth while. If human beings at our level of evolution thus give services without thought of return we need not wonder that the Masters of Compassion do so.

Shun praise, O devotee: praise leads to self delusion. Thy body is not self, thy self is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not.—*The Voice Of The Silence.*

VEGETARIAN RECIPES.

ASPARAGUS OMLETTE.

One and one-half cups asparagus tips, 4 eggs, 1 tablespoon butter. Beat the eggs very light, add asparagus tips, salt and pepper to taste and mix all thoroughly. Pour into frying pan heated so that the butter has begun to brown slightly. Cook until the omlette is light brown, then cut in four equal parts and turn each part over and

brown. Serve immediately. This serves four people.

BRAN GEMS.

Two cups bran, 1 cup flour, 1 tablespoon molasses, 1 teaspoonful soda, 1½ cups milk. (An egg improves, but is not necessary.) Stir the molasses into the milk, add the soda and salt, stir into the bran and flour. Bake in gem pans.

PARAPHRASE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

By DR. W. C. BAILEY.

I believe in the Conscious Intelligence, the Source Omnipotent, Maker of the Universe, and in Divine Man, its Truest Reflection, our Higher-Self; which was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born into Virgin Matter; suffers under Judgment of the World, is crucified, inactive and buried in materiality; it descends into hell; the three days of experience (physical, sense and mental) are passed; it ascends into heaven and is One with the Source Omnipotent; from thence it reviews the experiences of action and inaction. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Universal Brotherhood of Humanity; the Communion of Souls; the Overing of Sins; Re-incarnation, and the Life everlasting (past and future.) Amen, So may it be!

OTHERS TO BE CONSIDERED.

My little craft sails not alone;
 A thousand ships from every zone
 Are out upon a thousand seas,
 And what for me were favoring breeze
 Might crush another with the shock
 Of doom upon some hidden rock.
 And so I do not dare to pray
 For wind to waft me on my way.
 Then whatsoever wind doth blow,
 My heart is glad to have it so;
 And blow it east or blow it west
 The wind that blows, that wind is best.

—Anon.

Let thy soul lend its ear to every cry of pain like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.—*The Voice Of The Silence.*

NOTES.

An unknown friend has placed the editor of THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST under obligations by suggesting a change of a couple of words, in a pamphlet, which makes a distinct improvement. Such suggestions, either about the magazine or books and pamphlets of the Theosophical Book Company, will always be gratefully received and carefully considered. Sometimes, also, a typographical error escapes notice in a first edition and could be set right in the second if discovered in time.

The Bureau of Activities of the Theosophical Society in Great Britain is endeavoring to raise a national propaganda fund by sending out blank pledges to the members, the contributions requested ranging from a penny up to two shillings sixpence a week. The estimate is that five hundred members would thus contribute \$2,500 a year. We trust that our English brothers may realize this hope and they possibly may—in England, where theosophists are much less inclined to expect something for nothing than in the United States. They pay a salary to their General Secretary and also to an assistant and cheerfully maintain a dignified national headquarters besides, although we outnumber them two to one. In the United States we as cheerfully expect everybody to work for nothing and forcibly express our opinion about it if they don't work to please us.

"Godward, Ho!" is the unique title of a pamphlet by N. K. Ramaswami Aiyar. It is a compilation from the works of Annie Besant and Herbert Spencer and touches upon evolution, psychology, sociology, ethics and other subjects. Price two pence: Shri Vidya Vinodini Press, Tanjore, Madras, India.

England has a rather remarkable organization in what is known as the Association for the Prevention of Premature Burial. At one of its recent meetings in London the chairman said he had collected evidence of one hundred and fifty authenticated cases of premature burial. A physician who was present said that all the ordinary signs of death might be manifested by a person in a trance and that physicians giving certificates of death did not, once in a thousand times, make an examination of the body or even look at it; which seems to be putting it pretty strong. Dr. Stetson Hooker said he knew of a woman whose body had been prepared for burial who was still alive and who kept, as a souvenir, her death certificate!—nearly as interesting a case as that of the Wisconsin physician who had a charity case on hand, and, pronouncing the man dead, notified the authorities who at once had the grave prepared. Then the patient revived and the doctor was continually chaffed by his professional brethren about that grave until he cut their mirth short one day by remarking that he was probably the only physician in the city with an unfilled grave.

The London society has started an agitation for a law requiring a medical man to examine all dead bodies before giving a certificate of death.

A Washington paper devotes a page of its Sunday edition to the experiments of a group of medical and scientific men in that city in which, in the astral body, a member under hypnotic control was sent to explore the home of an absentee. The descriptions he gave of the interior of the house at the moment were verified the next day. This experiment, corroborative of theosophical teachings, attracted considerable attention on account of the participants being well known physicians.

One of the most interesting of recent scientific discoveries is that the land, like the sea, has tides and that the ground, like the water, actually rises and falls, the variation amounting to nearly eight inches in the crest of this earth wave that occurs twice daily. Commenting on it, Camille Flammarion says it is "impossible for us to notice the slightest variation, but the fact remains that all ground moves, and ceaselessly. If we are able to observe the ocean tides

it is because of the shores. At sea it is impossible to notice the tide because there is no point of comparison; but by the seaside we see the ocean rise and withdraw."

Madame Blavatsky forecast so many such scientific discoveries that it would be most interesting if some close student of *The Secret Doctrine* will tell us if this one may not be among the number.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX ON KARMA.

"Upon how well we learn our lessons here and how we transmute pain into power, depends the number of times we must return before the period of 'peace absolute, bliss absolute, rest absolute,' is obtained. Every day and hour we are making karma. Nothing can save us from feeling the effect of this karma in lives to come. No plea for mercy can change the law, any more than the crying of a lazy pupil will pass him through graduation day with honors. Upon the standard of his examination papers he must be judged and placed in the next class. Upon his own efforts depends the overcoming of those old errors and sins of commission and omission.

"The law of karma is just, divine and beautiful. To one who investigates it, in all its phases, it must stand as the only explanation of the startling contrasts and seeming inconsistencies, which are everywhere visible; and the only answer to life's puzzling problems. God is a God of love and justice only as He rules His world by the law of karma. And no historical, emotional and illogical creed can inspire an earnest soul with such deep reverence for the Creator and such a profound love for the finished and perfected being represented by Christ, our Brother, as a careful study and full comprehension of this magnificent religion lying under the law of karma. No other creed can awaken the human mind to such a sublime consciousness of its personal responsibility, in every thought, word and act; and its divine kinship to the One Great Cause."

The national convention of the American Theosophical Society will open in Chicago September 19th and will be presided over by Mrs. Annie Besant. Mrs. Besant will give a number of public and private lectures and addresses prior to the convention.

Surely we can never crave for peace if in strife the world must be helped.—*The Doctrine Of The Heart.*