

# The American Theosophist

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## AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST TO BE DISCONTINUED.

It will doubtless astonish many of the readers of this magazine to learn that just when the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST has reached the coveted position of financial stability, as well as a secure place in the friendship of its patrons, it is to be discontinued. The reason is simple, and yet it is a powerful one to the theosophist. Co-operation is the very soul of the coming civilization for which theosophy is preparing the way and no good theosophist should hesitate to put aside his personal plans and aspirations and devote all his thought and energy to co-operative work of the same kind with others when it becomes clear to him that such a course is demanded by the common weal. President Besant, who has just left us, expressed the hope that the editor of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST could see his way to turning the energies formerly given to this magazine into a co-operative effort with Dr. Van Hook and others in making the *Theosophic Messenger* the one expression of the best that is in us, collectively.

With this issue the publication of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST will cease and the magazine work that I henceforth do will be sent to the *Theosophic Messenger*, official journal of the American Section of the Theosophical Society. To the welfare and the up-building of that magazine I shall endeavor to devote myself as earnestly and energetically as I have worked for the success of this one.

It is a more difficult thing to close up the affairs of the publication smoothly than it was to bring the magazine into existence and I trust that our subscribers will be patient in the adjustment of their accounts. All money for subscriptions sent in since the last issue will be returned. All who have subscriptions partially filled will receive statements of the exact amount due them, and can have the choice of receiving the *Theosophic Messenger* for the unexpired term or of having the money due them refunded.

This issue of the magazine was ready for the press when the decision to discontinue the publication was made, and this explains the appearance of the first installment of a series in the final issue of the magazine. But Mr. Leadbeater's valuable article on Our Relation to Children can be obtained in pamphlet form, by those who desire it, from the Theosophical Book Company, 98 Jay Street, Albany, N. Y.

The chief purpose of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST was to teach elementary theosophy—to present the fundamentals in the simple and direct way required by the general public and the new members rather than in the manner desired by the advanced student. In order that this utilitarian work may not cease a portion of the *Messenger* is to be devoted to it, and those who now take up the *Messenger* in the place of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST will find the kind of reading matter to which they are accustomed.

One very naturally abandons with regret a favorite project into which he has put much thought and energy, but all that is outweighed by the

hope of wider usefulness through co-operative effort with others that shall multiply the efficiency of each. In sincerely thanking those among the readers of this magazine who have worked for it, and in many ways encouraged the enterprise, may I also express the earnest desire that they now regard the *Theosophic Messenger* in the same light — an instrument for spreading theosophic knowledge — and join with me in the good work of pushing it forward to still wider usefulness.

Faithfully yours,  
L. W. ROGERS.

## OUR RELATION TO CHILDREN.

By C. W. LEADBEATER

It cannot be denied that from the Theosophic standpoint the subject of our relation to children is an exceedingly important and practical one. Realizing, as we must, the purpose for which the ego descends into incarnation, and knowing to how great an extent its attainment of that purpose depends upon the training given to its various vehicles during their childhood and growth, we cannot but feel, if we think at all, that a tremendous responsibility attaches to all of us who are in any way connected with children, whether as parents, elder relatives, or teachers. It is well, therefore, that we should consider what hints Theosophy can give us as to the way in which we can best discharge this responsibility.

It may seem presumptuous that a bachelor should venture to offer suggestions to parents upon a subject so especially their own; so I ought, perhaps, to preface such remarks as I wish to make by saying that, though I have none of my own, I have always been fond of children, and in very close relation with them through almost the whole of my life — for many years as a Sunday school and night school teacher, then as a clergyman, school manager and choir trainer, and as head-master of a large boys' school. So that I am, at any rate, speaking from long, practical experience, and not merely vaguely theorizing.

Before making suggestions, however, I should like to draw attention to the present condition of our relation to children — to boys, at any rate — here in the midst of our European civilization. The practical result of nineteen centuries of ostensibly Christian teaching is that our boys live among us as an alien race, with laws and rules of life of their own entirely different from ours, and with a code of morals of their own, also entirely different from that by which we consider ourselves bound. They regard grown up people (in the mass) with scarcely veiled hostility, or, at the best, with a kind of armed neutrality, and always with deep distrust, as foreigners whose motives are incomprehensible to them, and whose actions are perpetually interfering in the most unwarrantable and apparently malicious manner with their right to enjoy themselves in their own way.

This may sound rather a startling statement to those who have never

considered the matter, but any parent who has boys at one of our large schools will appreciate the truth of it; and if he can look back to his own school days, and in thought realize once more the feelings and conditions of that period, which most of us have so entirely forgotten, he will recognize, perhaps with a start of surprise, that it is not an inaccurate description of what his own attitude once was.

It is noteworthy, that, wherever the laws and customs of this race, living among us, yet not of us, differ from ours, they are invariably a reversion to an earlier type, and tend in the direction of primitive savagery — a fact which might be cited in support of the Theosophical theory that in each incarnation, before the ego has acquired control of its vehicles, the earlier stages of our evolution are hurriedly run through once more. The only right recognized among them is the right of the strongest; the boy who rules their little state is not the best boy, nor the cleverest boy, but simply the one who can fight best; and their leadership is usually decided by combat, just as it is to this day among many a savage tribe.

Their code of morals is distinctly their own, and though it cannot be so directly paralleled among primitive races as some of their other customs it is decidedly on a far lower level than even our own. To oppress and ill-treat the weak, and even torture them to the utmost limit of endurance, seems to be regarded as a comparatively innocent form of recreation, and it would be only a very severe case indeed which would arouse even a passing manifestation of public opinion against the offender. The theft of money is still, happily, regarded as contemptible, but the theft of fruit or jam is not; nor, indeed, would the stealing of anything eatable be considered criminal. Falsehood of the most outrageous kind is regarded as not only allowable but amusing, when practised upon some too credulous youngster; if resorted to in order to conceal from an adult the misdeeds of a fellow criminal it is often looked upon as heroic and noble. But the most heinous crime of all — the very lowest abyss of turpitude — is to call in the intervention of a grown-up person to right even the most flagrant of wrongs; and many a weak and nervous child endures agonies both physically and mentally from the barbarity of bullies without breathing a word of his sufferings either to parent or teacher — so deep is the distrust with which public opinion amongst boys regards the hostile race of adults.

In spite of the terrible suffering which it frequently entails upon the weak and sensitive boy, I am in no way blind to the good side of public school life — to the courage and self-reliance which it gives to the strong and hardy lad, and the training in the command of others with which it provides the members of its higher forms. I suppose that England is the only country on earth where the maintenance of order in the small world of school life can be (and is) left practically in the hands of the boys themselves, and there is much in this to be highly commended; but

I am at present concerned with the relations between boys as a class and adults as a class, and it can hardly be denied that on the whole these are somewhat strained, the distrust of which I have spoken on the one side being but too frequently met by dislike and entire want of comprehension on the other.

Many a man (or woman) thinks of boys only as noisy, dirty, greedy, clumsy, selfish and generally objectionable; and he never realizes that there may be a good deal of selfishness in this point of view of his, and that if any part of his indictment is true, the fault has been not so much in the boys themselves as in the unreasonable way in which they have been brought up; furthermore, that in any case his duty is not to widen the chasm between them and himself by adopting an attitude of dislike and distrust, but rather to endeavour to improve the position of affairs by judicious kindness and hearty, patient friendliness and sympathy.

Surely there is something wrong about such unsatisfactory relations, surely some improvement might be brought about in this unfortunate condition of mutual hostility and mistrust. Of course there are honourable exceptions — there are boys who trust their masters, and masters who trust their boys, and I myself have never found any difficulty in winning the confidence of the juveniles by treating them properly; but in a sadly large number of instances the case is as I have described it.

That it need not be so is shown not only by the exceptions mentioned above, but by the condition of affairs which we find existing in some Oriental lands. I have not yet had the pleasure of visiting the empire of Japan, but I hear from those who have been there and have made some study of this question, that there is no country in the world where children are so well and so sensibly treated — where their relations with their elders are so completely satisfactory. Harshness, it is said, is entirely unknown, yet the children in no way presume upon the gentleness of the older people. In India and Ceylon also, on the whole, the relations of children and adults are certainly more rational than they usually are here, though I have occasionally seen instances of undue severity there which show that those countries have not yet attained quite so high a level as Japan in this respect.

No doubt this is partly due to the difference of race. The Oriental boy usually has not the irrepressible animal spirits and the intense physical activity of his English representative, nor has he his pronounced aversion to mental exertion. Strange and incomprehensible as it would sound to the ears of a British schoolboy, the Indian child is really eager to learn, and is always willing to do any amount of work out of school hours in order that he may make more rapid progress. It is no injustice to the average English boy to say that he regards play as the most important part of his life, and that he looks upon lessons as distinctly a bore, to be avoided as far as possible, or perhaps as a kind of game which he has to play against his teacher. If the latter can force him to learn any-

thing, that counts as a score to the side of authority ; but if he can anyhow escape without learning a lesson, then he in turn has scored a point. In the East, such a boy as this is the exception and not the rule ; the majority of them are really anxious to learn, and co-operate intelligently with their master instead of offering him ceaseless though passive resistance.

Perhaps if I describe a little incident which I have more than once witnessed in Ceylon, it will help my readers to understand how different the position of children really is in an Oriental race. Readers of *The Arabian Nights* will remember how it constantly happens that when some king or great man is sitting in judgment, a casual passer-by — perhaps a porter or a beggar — breaks in and offers *his* opinion on the matter in hand, and is politely listened to, instead of being summarily arrested or ejected for such a breach of the proprieties.

Impossible as this seems to us, it was undoubtedly absolutely true to life, and on a smaller scale the same sort of thing occurs to-day, as I myself have seen. It came in the course of my work to travel about among the villages of Ceylon, trying to induce their residents to appreciate the advantages of education, and to found schools in which their children could be systematically taught their own religion instead of being left either to the rather haphazard instruction of the monks at the pansalas, or to the proselytizing efforts of the Christian missionaries.

When I arrived at a village I called upon the headman, and asked him to convoke the inhabitants to hear what I had to say ; and after the address the chief people of the place usually held a sort of council to decide where and how their school should be built and how they could best set about the work. Such a council was generally held in the verandah of the headman's house or under a great tree close by, with the whole village in attendance upon the debaters.

More than once on such occasions I have seen a small boy of ten or twelve stand up respectfully before the great people of his little world and suggest, deferentially, that if the school were erected in the place proposed it would make it exceedingly inconvenient for such and such children to attend ; and in every case the small boy was treated precisely as an adult would have been, the local grandees listening courteously and patiently, and allowing their due weight to the juvenile's arguments. What would happen if in England an agricultural labourer's child publicly offered a suggestion to the county magnates gathered in solemn assembly, one hardly dares to imagine ; probably that child's suppression would be summary and unpleasant ; but, as a matter of fact, the situation is absolutely unthinkable under our present conditions — more is the pity !

But how, it may be asked, is it proposed that this position of mutual mistrust and misunderstanding should be improved ? Well, it is evident that in cases where this breach already exists, it can only be bridged over

by unwearying kindness, and by gradual, patient but constant efforts to promote a better understanding by steadily showing unselfish affection and sympathy; in fact, by habitually putting ourselves in the child's place and trying to realise exactly how all these matters appear to him. If we, who are adults, had not so entirely forgotten our own childish days, we should make far greater allowances for the children of to-day, and should understand and get on with them much better.

This is, however, very emphatically one of the cases in which the old proverb holds good, which tells us that prevention is better than cure. If we will but take a little trouble to begin in the right way with our children from the very first, we shall easily be able to avoid the undesirable state of affairs which we have been describing. And this is exactly where Theosophy has many a valuable hint to offer to those who are in earnest in wishing to do their duty by the young ones committed to their charge.

Of course the absolute nature of this duty of parents and teachers toward children must first be recognized. It cannot be too strongly or too repeatedly insisted upon that parentage is an exceedingly heavy responsibility of a religious nature, however lightly and thoughtlessly it may often be undertaken. Those who bring a child into the world make themselves directly responsible to the law of karma for the opportunities of evolution which they ought to give to that ego, and heavy indeed will be their penalty if by their carelessness or selfishness they put hindrances in his path, or fail to render him all the help and guidance which he has a right to expect from them. Yet how often the modern parent entirely ignores this obvious responsibility; how often a child is to him nothing but a cause of fatuous vanity or an object of thoughtless neglect!

Now, if we want to understand our duty towards the child we must first consider how he came to be what he is—that is to say, we must trace him back in thought to his previous incarnation. Fifteen hundred years ago or so your child was perhaps a Roman citizen, perhaps a philosopher of Alexandria, perhaps an early Briton; but whatever may have been his outward circumstances, he had a definite disposition of his own—a character containing various more or less developed qualities, some good and some bad.

In due course of time that life of his came to an end; but remember that whether that end came slowly by disease or old age, or swiftly by some accident or violence, its advent made no sudden change of any sort in his character. A curious delusion seems to prevail in many quarters that the mere fact of death will at once turn a demon into a saint—that, whatever a man's life may have been, the moment he dies he becomes practically an angel of goodness. No idea could possibly be further from the truth, as those whose work lies in trying to help the departed know full well. The casting off of a man's physical body

no more alters his disposition than does the casting off of his overcoat; he is precisely the same man the day after his death as he was the day before, with the same vices and the same virtues.

True, now that he is functioning only on the astral plane he has not the same opportunities of displaying them; but though they may manifest themselves in the astral life in quite a different manner, they are, none the less, still there, and the conditions and duration of that life are their result. On that plane he must stay until the energy poured forth by his lower desires and emotions during physical life has worn itself out — until the astral body which he has made for himself disintegrates; for only then can he leave it for the higher and more peaceful realm of the heaven-world. But though those particular passions are for the time worn out and done with for him, the germs of the qualities in him, which made it possible for them to exist in his nature, are still there. They are latent and ineffective, certainly, because desire of that type requires astral matter for its manifestation; they are what Madame Blavatsky once called “privations of matter,” but they are quite ready to come into renewed activity, if stimulated, when the man again finds himself under conditions where they can act.

An analogy, may, perhaps, if not pushed too far, be of use in helping us to grasp this idea. If a small bell be made to ring continuously in an air-tight vessel, and the air be then gradually withdrawn, the sound will grow fainter and fainter, until it becomes inaudible. The bell is still ringing as vigorously as ever, yet its vibration is no longer manifest to our ears, because the medium by means of which alone it can produce any effect upon them is absent. Admit the air to the vessel, and immediately you hear the sound of the bell once more just as before.

Similarly, there are certain qualities in man's nature which need astral matter for their manifestation, just as sound needs either air or some denser matter for its vehicle; and when, in the process of his withdrawal into himself after what we call death, he leaves the astral plane for the mental, those qualities can no longer find expression, and must, therefore, perforce remain latent. But when, centuries later, on his downward course into reincarnation he re-enters the astral plane, these qualities which have remained latent for so long manifest themselves once more, and become the tendencies of the next personality.

In the same way there are qualities of the mind which need for their expression the matter of the lower mental levels; and when, after his long rest in the heaven-world the consciousness of the man withdraws into the true ego upon the higher mental levels, these qualities also pass into latency.

But when the ego is about to reincarnate, it has to reverse this process of withdrawal — to pass downward through the very same planes through which it came on its upward journey. When the time of its outflow comes, it puts itself down first on to the lower levels of its own

plane, and seeks to express itself there as far as is possible in that less perfect and less plastic matter.

In order that it may so express itself and function upon that plane it must clothe itself in the matter of the plane, just as an entity at a spiritualistic seance when it wishes to move physical objects materialises a temporary physical hand with which to do it, or, at any rate, employs physical forces of some kind to produce its results. It is not at all necessary that such a hand should be materialised sufficiently to be visible to our dull, ordinary sight, but to produce a physical result there must be materialisation to a certain extent — as far as etheric matter, at any rate.

Thus the ego aggregates around itself matter of the lower mental levels — the matter which will afterwards become its mind-body. But this matter is not selected at random; on the contrary, out of all the varied and inexhaustible store around him he attracts to himself just such a combination as is perfectly fitted to give expression to his latent mental qualities. In precisely the same way, when he makes the further descent on to the astral plane, the matter of that plane which is by natural law attracted to him to serve as his vehicle in that world, is exactly that which will give expression to the desires which were his at the conclusion of his last birth. In point of fact, he resumes his life on each plane just where he left it last time.

Observe that these are not as yet in any way qualities in action: they are simply the germs of qualities, and for the moment their only influence is to secure for themselves a possible field of manifestation by providing suitable matter for their expression in the various vehicles of the child. Whether they develop once more in this life into the same definite tendencies as in the last one, will depend very largely upon the encouragement or otherwise given to them by the surroundings of the child during its early years. Any one of them, good or bad, may be very readily stimulated into activity by encouragement, or, on the other hand, may be, as it were, starved out for lack of that encouragement. If stimulated, it becomes a more powerful factor in the man's life this time than it was in his previous existence; if starved out, it remains all through the life merely as an unfructified germ, and does not make its appearance in the succeeding incarnation at all.

This, then, is the condition of the child when first he comes under his parent's care. He cannot be said to have as yet a definite mind-body or a definite astral body, but he has around and within him the matter out of which these are to be builded.

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Where there is the slightest leaning towards falsehood in any shape there is shadow and ignorance, and their child, pain.—*The Doctrine Of The Heart.*



## PHILOSOPHICAL FRAGMENTS.

BY F. MILTON WILLIS

## PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

To those who are probing into the mysteries of the human soul the question of personal responsibility is an exceedingly important one. Are we mere mechanisms — parts of a greater mechanism we call the universe? We look out upon nature and find that a very considerable portion of her activities are calculable in terms of number, indicating that these activities flow from an established harmony. Now may we not conceive that the phenomena of even human life may be calculable in terms of some transcendental mathematics, indicating that it too flows so undeviatingly from some established harmony that there can be no such thing as free-will and hence no personal responsibility? It is important that this question be answered; for ideas rule the world, and ideas originating in philosophical minds filter down through all classes of society and mold the manners and thoughts of all; and if philosophy should say finally that there can be no such thing as personal responsibility, that we are mere machines, how disastrous must be the result upon human morals and hence upon human evolution! The deeper the study the more complicated the question. Everywhere in nature we see design; even human life is lived in the midst of a great scheme of evolution whose stages are definitely marked, and human life itself is a mighty stream flowing onward to a goal that is preordained. Where then the field for the play of our vaunted free-will?

Upon this let us consider the following suggestions:

Human life is obviously flowing onward to a preordained end; the evolving human soul is constrained to a certain consummation, but in order that it may develop its powers, unfold its possibilities, it is left free in respect to the means by which and the length of time in which that consummation is to be reached. "All ways lead to Me," says the Lord of the System. In the early stages of human evolution the man is carried along by the current, with exceeding slowness. Later he bestirs himself, develops his muscles, forges ahead, escapes this and that obstacle by his skill and knowledge, distances his easygoing fellows, picks his way so as to avoid retarding influences — in a word, has become free within the limits of the great stream flowing onward to the eventual triumph of all. So slight is the real constraint upon the human soul after the very early stages, that it is able to and does in the course of time voluntarily begin to align its own will with that of the Ruler of the System, and finds thus its greatest freedom. And so far are we from being mere mechanisms, that we are co-operators with God Himself in the grand scheme of evolution.

We *are* personally responsible; we who have attained the stage of

reason are not constrained to do anything. All that we do, flows from the character we have built by our own efforts. No effort, retarding or advancing, is ever wasted. There is no limit to what we can accomplish in the course of the long succession of lives before us. We are truly "images of God" in essence, and the object of our existence is to develop even to such as He. And He — the Ruler of our solar system — we may legitimately conceive to be evolving into the fullness of life of the ineffable Ruler of the whole mighty universe of solar systems. We are not mere mechanisms. We are gods in the making. We are to become gods indeed.

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### DREAMS

One morning I awoke laughing, and there came into my mind the following: "A club is a stick with one end, the other being held in the hand." It was several seconds before my waking consciousness appreciated the joke, and that consciousness found time in the interval to wonder what the laughing was for and to be vexed at itself for failing to see anything humorous in the words quoted. My sleep-consciousness had probably been confabulating with an Irishman.

What are dreams? Have we indeed another consciousness in which we function on another plane of existence, after the submergence of the physical consciousness? Do we go forth from our physical bodies, thus stilling the weary brain, meet and commune with one another, flash hither and thither at will in a world in which space has far less power to separate? Do we live two distinct lives side by side, each of which is as sleep to the other? If we do, why do we not remember our night-lives? Perhaps because at the stage of evolution most of us have reached, our day-lives are so predominant while we are living them and our brains so insensitive that the memories of our superphysical or sleep lives cannot come through into the waking consciousness. That it is not unreasonable to infer that we may live two distinct courses of life in this way will appear from the following fact: A mesmeric subject, after two or three hours of talking and laughing and bodily exercise, just as if he were in his normal consciousness, will generally return to his ordinary consciousness without remembering a thing of what has transpired since he was thrown into the mesmeric state, though when re-mesmerised will recall accurately the events of his previous period of mesmerisation.

Certain authentic records of dreams seem to introduce us into a new and strange world; and thinking people who have even a slight knowledge of the wonderful collection of facts accumulated by the Society for Psychical Research, and, in some cases despite themselves, becoming convinced of the general paltriness of our conceptions of even phenomenal existence, let alone our inferential ideas of a deeper-lying existence. It

seems as though we are rapidly nearing a critical point, a point at which we shall do well to lay aside our aggressive egotism — we people of the West — and humbly sit for instruction at the feet of masters of a science other than ours, a science prosecuted by means of the development of faculty rather than by means of the improvement of material instruments of research, a science whose masters demand as a prerequisite in the pupil absolute devotion to the service of mankind, and who for ages have been saying to a generally unheeding world: "Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you."

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#### TRouble LEADS TO FREEDOM

It sometimes seems, on reflection, that it is only by care and trouble that the true native eloquence, the genuine, intrinsic quality of a person, is evolved. Trouble is a ferment, which for a time apparently corrupts the elements of life; but it is only in order to produce the wine of experience, the real culture of the being, and the end and aim of every rational life — freedom. The cultured person, from his very nature, sees more of himself in things and events than does the uncultured, has broader and deeper sympathies, and realizing more fully than others the omnipresence of law — the law of causation — sees even in suffering that searches the very depths of his being, the reaction upon him of wrong thinking, desiring and acting sometime in the past, and instead of giving way to despair as would many, merely endeavors to keep calm and wait for the storm to pass. Intuitively he feels that this suffering could not — in a law-governed universe — have primarily sprung from his parents or remoter ancestors, from other persons or from the Divine Ruler. Primarily, he virtually knows, it must have sprung from himself alone — in some way, at some time; and even though others are concerned in its visitation upon him, he cannot but feel that they are instruments only, and consequently do anger and irritation diminish as culture increases.

A little consideration should lead to the conviction that this suffering, this trouble, these restraints, these harrowing limitations, rightly viewed, are stepping-stones to an ever-growing freedom. What is freedom — the goal of our struggles — but the consciousness of having overcome difficulty, the sympathetic comprehension of things, the deliberate willing of the good and the true, and the growing, expanding power of the will over the future? He who can say: "I am equal to all vicissitudes. Death, even, is but a vicissitude of my soul, my self. Those energies I inaugurate here will not end with death. If death cuts me short in striving to satisfy an overmastering demand of my nature, that demand will persist and cry for satisfaction, be it in another world, be it in a reappearance of this" — he who can say and believe this, and can feel that he is a sphere in which, in this life or in other lives to come, all that is possible for anyone, can

take place; that he is agent, supervisor and judge; and that nothing can restrain him in his efforts to grow intellectually, morally and spiritually, nothing but the reactions of errors of his past lives, and they only temporarily — he who can believe this, and act accordingly, will rapidly approach true freedom, the goal of mankind.

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### THE ALMOST

The Almost — the tormenting, unavoidable “gadfly of the incomplete!” It pursues us through life in this world and for a time in the life beyond death; forsakes us when we have passed out of the first of the inner worlds, that where we are purged of our desires, into the blissful realm “where the wicked cease to trouble and the weary are at rest;” and takes up the pursuit again when we have returned to this outer world — unslayable, yet ever seeking to be slain.

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### COMMON SENSE.

By A PILGRIM

In all the kingdoms of nature below the human, we see a universal guiding principle, which we call instinct. Each species has its own unvarying habits of life, common to the group to which it belongs. The migratory habit of birds, for instance, is a common instinct stirred by an impelling force that affects similar groups equally, and we say the source of this impulse is a cosmic Intelligence directly concerned with this particular department of nature; the thrush builds his nest in a way common to all thrushes; and the blackbird builds his house on a plan which arises from a sense common to all blackbirds; and so throughout all the kingdoms of nature below man we see this “instinct” — a guiding principle — adapting means to ends with unerring precision.

At the higher stage of evolution reached by man, can it be said that he has entirely emerged from the mysterious impulses which so clearly affect the whole of creation on the long path stretching behind him? May we not look for a common guiding principle, apart from and overruling the impelling force of his individuality? or, is his further upward course a slow, self-impelled unfolding of powers at present latent — infolded in the depths of his own being?

What of the potent factor of human life called “common sense,” which becomes crystallized as laws — written and unwritten — as manners and customs; and emerges as national characteristics, and racial tendencies: a massive impulse binding whole nations to particular ideals and purposes, on lines sharply marked off from neighboring nations.

In the detached attitude we assume in looking back on the great world-dramas of the past, we are able to trace the unfolding of purposes work-

ing to definite ends, of which the actors who played the leading roles were absolutely unconscious; and here we seem to touch again that mysterious, overruling Intelligence, so plainly seen in the sub-human kingdoms.

The common sense! How great, how vibrant, how compelling it is. What is the secret of a great leader, a great poet, a great actor? They have just one secret common to them all; they have touched the chord of the common sense of the people; therein lies all their greatness. Surely then, the word "common" must connote "greatness."

The common sense is the intellectual centre of gravity. It maintains the normal and guarantees the sanity of nations. In every concern of life, from least to greatest, it is the force which compels a successful issue. Beyond the range of the normal we may have brilliant individual flights of what we term "genius," but the world does not at once respond; the note of the common sense has not been struck, and the theory or philosophy which was to move the world, descends into the bosom of the normal, where it remains as a latent ideal until the tide of the common sense has risen to its level. Thus the course of the world is guided; the far away ideal of one age becoming the common sense of the next. Day by day the tide rises by slow imperceptible degrees, and behind its massive progress are the resistless evolutionary forces, impelling all things forward and upward to a goal, as yet hidden from sight; screened by the will of Omnipotence as by a curtain woven at the loom of mystery, out of the warp and woof of the common sense.

As we consider all the springs of action in the animal world as instinctive responses to the will of their Creator, so also we may regard the common sense of humanity as the divine principle through which the hearts and minds of men are moved and guided by the Supreme Will — less compelling than the instinct that governs animal creation — inasmuch as humanity has reached a condition of wider freedom, nevertheless, it is sure and true — as intuition is, as inspiration is — in the higher reaches of spiritual evolution.

Common sense is the sense of justice; the keynote of right-action; the highway of orderly evolution.

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So long as the taint of personality has not been clean washed out, vice in its manifold forms may find shelter in some neglected chamber of the heart, though it may not find expression in mental life.—*The Doctrine Of The Heart*.

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For we know beyond all doubt that all that is personal is transitory and fleeting, and all that is physical is illusory and false, and nothing but folly and ignorance mourn over things belonging to the world of shadows.—*The Doctrine Of The Heart*.

## REINCARNATION.

BY CLAUDE BRAGDON

Theosophy teaches that the soul attains to knowledge and perfection through successive returns to physical life with intervening periods of spiritual rest — in a word, through reincarnation. "If a man could not understand it," say the Upanishads, "before the falling asunder of the body, then he has to take body again in the worlds of creation."

This idea of the transmigration of the soul seems fanciful, almost grotesque, to the average Occidental, trained in so different a habit of thought, but it permeates the whole mental life of the Far East, and has permeated it for untold centuries. It is a fundamental tenet of Brahmanism, and as such was accepted and built upon by Buddha, who merely confirmed and popularized a truth that had lain at the heart of India from remotest ages.

The late Lafcadio Hearn wrote, "Were I to ask any reflecting Occidental who had passed some years in the real living atmosphere of Buddhism what fundamental idea especially differentiates Oriental modes of thinking from ours, I am sure he would answer, 'The idea of pre-existence.'" This idea of pre-existence seems always to have prevailed throughout the world except in modern times and among Western nations, and even here and now we are returning to it in strange fashion, for the whole idea of evolution is merely a paraphrase of reincarnation. The ancient civilization of Egypt was built upon it as a fundamental truth, and taught it as a precious secret to Pythagoras and Plato. It may be said to be the keynote of Plato's philosophy, being stated or implied frequently in the dialogues. It was an essential principle of the Druid faith, Caesar found it among the Gauls. It prevailed in the old civilizations of Mexico and Peru, so similar to that of Egypt, and it must have been not unfamiliar even to the Jews, for they thought that John the Baptist was a second Elijah, and Jesus a reappearance of John the Baptist. "What hath this man done," Jesus's disciples are reported as having asked him, "that he should have been born blind?" Philosophers like Kant and Schopenhauer have upheld the idea of reincarnation; thinkers like Bruno and Emerson and Goethe have found it not foreign to their thought. The mystics bathe in it, the poets profess it, and the late Professor Huxley, archpriest of modern materialistic science, wrote of it: "None but very hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity. Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality; and it may claim such support as the great argument from analogy is capable of supplying."

Although the doctrine of reincarnation is not susceptible of proof, as a belief it is natural and reasonable. It is borne out by the analogy of nature, and is in full accord with science, which recognizes neither

creation nor destruction but only endless transformation. At the same time it explains the mysteries and contradictions of life, and solves the problem of misery and injustice which broods over our world — a task to which the single life theory is clearly inadequate.

This law of an intercepted continuity of activity so universal throughout nature, operating on the higher plane of human life, in the shape of a continuity of effort, carried from life to life, accounts for the vast differences between men in individual capacity, and in the conditions of their existence. Genius, that mystery, that anomaly, on the one life theory, becomes — granted metempsychosis — a perfectly explicable phenomenon. If Mozart composed music at the age of twelve, if Bernini modeled statues at seven, if Pope "lisped in numbers," and if DeQuincy at thirteen could have harangued an Athenian mob better than his teacher could have addressed an English one, it was because each had developed his capacities in these directions in earlier incarnations to a point which made this precocity not only possible, but natural. Shakespere is accounted for if all knowledge be recovered memory and intuition an imperfect and as it were unconscious remembrance of things learned painfully and slowly in former lives, analogous to those transformations which the human embryo undergoes in the few months of his ante-natal existence, during which it rehearses the early life of the species. Such is the everywhere observed method of nature — as in the childish poem of *The House that Jack Built*, she repeats each previous phrase before adding another.

May it not be this peculiarity in the method of nature which makes each child born into the world seem like a new creation, instead of the manifestation in time and space and in a new physical vehicle of inherent qualities and aptitudes painfully developed in previous existences, through slow centuries of effort; or if not quite a new creation, at least only a reincarnation of an endless line of ancestors? This kind of pre-existence science accepts and sanctions, but the other, that every man is, on the spiritual side, in the matter of character, his own progenitor and his own ancestor, it is powerless to deny.

By what other interpretation of the world can we discover, in the ambiguous spectacle of human life, any semblance of essential justice, how else can we account for misery and sin? How explain that inner assurance, in the face of death itself, of continued life, so generally treasured even (perhaps most of all) by the unreflecting? On what other theory are explicable the secret likings and antipathies which drive men in seeking out their fate, the haunting charm to the eye of certain faces, to the ear of certain voices, the kinship, to the mind, of certain fields of knowledge — different fields to different mind, or the vividness, to the imagination, of certain particular periods of past history.

It is an axiom of science that in the absence of positive proof that theory is best which most completely and most successfully accounts for

and correlates the greatest number of phenomena, and this ancient and admirable theory that man himself through successive lives is self-rewarded and self-punished, reaps what he has sown and builds the house which he inhabits, whereby failure is at the worst only postponement, and success, at the best, only the stepping stone to an intenser effort, satisfies not alone the reason, but the heart as well.

## THE EVOLUTION OF VIRTUES.—VI.

### LOYALTY

The cultivation of the virtue of loyalty is a step toward the recognition of the unity of all life. As this virtue grows the self-interests become weaker and less restrictive upon spiritual development. Loyalty widens from the trivial into the great and intensifies into devotion, its highest expression. It is a placing of principle above self-interest and finally a merging of the self-interests with the common welfare of all.

Loyalty, devotion, constancy, steadfastness, reliability, patriotism, are words that name a quality in human nature that is instinctively recognized as most desirable and the absence of which is looked upon in every walk of life with more or less contempt. In its more restricted fields and forms it is no less honored than elsewhere. The schoolboy has his "chum" to whom he is loyal as against all others and would be in disgrace should he prove untrue to his friend's personal interests. The politician gives firm and loud allegiance to his clique or delegation or party, seeing at near range how only thus can his own personal interests be promoted. The corrupt politician, combining with his fellows to plunder the community by obtaining for themselves large sums of money from certain business organizations in return for giving them valuable public franchises that should be sold for the public treasury, is still the soul of honor toward his associates; and should he fail in loyalty to them would be regarded with frank contempt by his colleagues, thus justifying the old adage that there is honor even among thieves.

The growth of loyalty, its widening into farther reaches, keeps pace with a man's evolution. In the allegiance to a group of associates the gains for self-interest are easy to trace. When the level of patriotism is reached and the group has widened to the nation the gain for self is remote but there is still something of self-interest left in the preservation of liberties or industrial advantages. But when it widens from the nation to the race, then to all humanity and at last to all life, the self-interest has vanished, for when it has reached the highest expression the self is transcended.

In this growth to higher forms of loyalty and devotion we find an illustration of the difficulties of those who evolve more rapidly than the



majority and so are not understood by those they leave behind. A man, for example, who should disregard the particular interests of his own nation because he had risen to the point where all peoples are as one to him, and could not sacrifice the general welfare to selfish or national greed, would be thought devoid of patriotism. To be patriotic from the popular point of view is to help your nation get the best of it in the general scramble for selfish material advantages. The national boundary is the point where compassion is to stop. What happens to anybody beyond is of no consequence. "The safety and prosperity of our people must be secured and others must look out for themselves," says the patriot, "and any man who will not conform to that idea is a traitor." So it is, too, in lesser affairs than those of national interest. Whoever is broad enough to look beyond the limits of his little group or society or locality is considered a traitor and made to suffer accordingly. Thus does narrowness and intolerance impose penalties upon breadth and progress. But of course there is a world of difference between the traitor and the man who has grown too broad in his comprehension of life to permit his beneficent activities to be confined within the narrow bounds of superficial limitations. The traitor sacrifices the special interests of his country for his own personal gain; the other does it for the common good of all. One is acting from selfish motives and the other from the noblest of motives.

To cultivate loyalty even in its lower forms is to cultivate steadfastness, reliability. Even in its most restricted field loyalty can intensify into devotion. In one friend a man can see the race typified. There is nothing in life more beautiful than the devotion of perfect friendship — nothing more exalted and inspiring and nothing better calculated to arouse the inherent divinity.

Loyalty to a principle or a cause loses none of its beneficial effects on one's evolution because the judgment may be at fault. Whether the cause is a good one or not the genuine belief that it is, and sincere devotion to it, are to human nature what sunshine is to a growing plant. The thing that appears to be important is singleness of purpose and whole-hearted devotion; and whatever stimulates these qualities has its distinct value. Warfare has so many horrors in its train that we are prone to regard it as entirely devoid of good; yet that cannot be true of anything which is, for all things play a part in human evolution. A titanic struggle like the American civil war, the actual combatants numbering millions, the slain numbering hundreds of thousands, their relatives and intimate friends aggregating tens of millions, all following the varying fortunes of the two armies as though their own lives were staked on the final result, arouses an intensity of loyalty that probably nothing else in human affairs could. That one side was fighting to perpetuate conditions which all now admit were wrong does not change the fact that its loyalty to what it fought for was just as intense as the loyalty of those whom

history has declared to be in the right; and a devotion to a questionable or even a bad cause that moves men to give life itself to sustain it must necessarily produce remarkable results in evolution. The emotion we know as patriotism is tremendously stimulated and at that point of development the more intense patriotism is — the devotion to all within one's limited sphere — the better. It is laying the foundation for a devotion that will some day burst through its present limitations and know its very enemies as brothers.

How shall we cultivate the very necessary virtue of loyalty? Everyone has friends to whom he can be loyal; whose good name he will defend as he would his own; the sincerity of whose motives he knows thoroughly and stands ready to make clear to others should they express doubt about them. The truly loyal man will never permit an assault upon his friend's integrity to go unanswered in his presence nor remain silent when even the shadow of slander approaches, through the innuendo that is the favorite method of attack by the gossip. He will feel that he is, for the moment, intrusted with that friend's most valued possession — his good name — and that in the owner's absence its security is in his keeping. He is in charge of a priceless jewel that is in danger of destruction and to fail in allegiance to his absent and helpless friend would be an act of craven cowardice. His gratitude for the friendship he has enjoyed in the past as well as his feeling of obligation and his sense of fair play will prompt him to instantly take up his friend's defense against any odds that may confront him.

Everyone has, or should have, a cause to which he is earnestly devoted. Unfortunate indeed is the man who feels no real heart interest, who has no special thing of which he considers himself a champion and defender. Indifference is but little better than death. It is, in fact, the nearest approach to real death there is. The man who has for his ideal something for which he must contend in the world, something that appears to him to require protection and defense — an idea that is not yet generally accepted or a cause that sorely needs support — anything whatever that happens to be at his present level of evolution and that has the power to arouse the best that is in him, to marshal all his resources of championship — he is alive and evolving; and the farther his ideal is above and beyond the ken of the mass of humanity the greater its value and the harder his fight.

The theosophist is particularly fortunate in having a cause to work for with ideals so high that the mere statement of them seems absurdity to the man of the world. His field of action is limitless. Always and everywhere there is need of his energies. In every avenue of human thought and activity he can tactfully suggest, protect and defend. Waking or sleeping the deathless cause is before him and he is its immortal champion. When a given field is won a wider field always lies beyond. When one stage of usefulness is outgrown a nobler one opens before

him. Knowing what the theosophist does about the great sacrifice being made by the Masters of Wisdom in order that the painful period of human evolution may be shortened he has constantly before him an object lesson in devotion that must arouse the keenest loyalty to the cause he champions before a materialistic and incredulous world. To constantly strengthen that loyalty, which means so much of value for evolution in general and for his own greater strengthening as well, he should keep always before him the fact that the helplessness of the groping thousands about him is in proportion to the darkness of that spiritual blindness that dooms them to return again and again to the toil and pain and sorrow of a life of misdirected energy; that only by some degree of spiritual knowledge can they hope to rise out of it and that the man who feeds the hungry and heals the sick, great and good as his work may be, is still doing but little indeed compared to the one who, instead of temporary relief from physical ills, imparts the knowledge that shall ultimately make each human being superior to every environment and master of fate itself. Thinking daily upon the dire need of his struggling comrades, and of the immeasurable benefits which theosophical knowledge can confer upon them, his loyalty to his great cause will intensify into the sublime devotion that characterizes true renunciation.

*[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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## TWO UTILITY DREAMS.

It is not always that dreams are of practical service — on the physical plane, at least. It is said by occult investigators that the real wonder is that people remember as much as they do of their astral experiences — that they bring through into the waking consciousness as much as they sometimes do under the circumstances. Sometimes these “dreams” are so faintly recalled that we get nothing much that is definite. Again they are extremely vivid; then they may also be useful as in the following case reported to the Society for Physical Research:

“We had a croquet party and among the guests was a young man, George Gambier, at the time an agricultural pupil. As Mr. Gambier was about to mount

his horse and ride home, he suddenly said, 'I have lost the opal out of my ring. I would not have done so for the world; it belonged to my father. I remember seeing it as I rang the bell on arriving so that it must have dropped out since I came here.' We all set to work to hunt for the stone by walking up and down the lawn in line, but without success.

"There were two peach trees, one just on the lawn near the house, the other a little further back, above the embankment made in laying off the lawn, but spreading a little over it. In the early morning I dreamed I saw the stone shining under a leaf that had fallen from the tree, close to the edge of the bank. I saw the whole scene vividly, the dew drops sparkling in the sun, and the stone, in my dream. I woke so much impressed by my dream that I at once got up and dressed and went out. It was about 6 o'clock on a lovely morning. I went directly to the lawn, and walked up to the tree, seeing everything as in my dream, and found the stone without further looking, just under the leaf as I had seen it."—*Flora Stuart, Snettisham, Norfolk, Eng.*

Another case reported likewise resulted in the recovery of a lost article of value and the details are of greater interest:

"In the month of September, Wesley Davis, with whom I had for several years been acquainted, lost his watch and chain but did not discover his loss until that night, when it was, of course, too late to search for it. Davis and myself next morning looked for the watch all forenoon. Not having any idea of the probable locality in which the watch was lost we did not succeed in finding it. The watch was one that Davis had had for some time and he felt very bad about his loss. I felt sorry for him, and thought about the watch continually all afternoon after we returned from looking for it and was still thinking of it when I went to sleep that night. During my sleep I saw the watch as it lay upon the ground over a mile away. It was in the tall grass, at least ten inches high. The face of the watch was up, and the chain lay like a half-circle. About three feet from the watch was a large spot where the grass had been crushed and matted by a creature lying down; about ten rods to the north was a brush fence; about ten or twelve feet to the eastward of the watch was a granite cobblestone which lay about half out of the ground. When I awoke the next morning I felt as certain that I could go straight to the watch as if I had really seen it, and told Davis so and tried to have him go out and get it. He had no faith in my dream and would not go. In spite of the jests and laughter of the entire family I saddled a horse and went directly to the watch which I found with all its surroundings exactly as I had seen it. The watch had run down and stopped, the hands pointing to 9:40 o'clock, which I also noted in my dreams."—*J. L. Squires, Guildford, Vt.*

A common factor is found in both these dreams which will impress the thoughtful student. In each case the person fortunate enough to bring into the waking consciousness the memory of an astral experience was so genuinely interested in the matter that it was possible for the physical brain to be impressed with the facts. Miss Stuart was an interested searcher for the lost stone. The loss by a guest of a thing of value so highly prized was naturally the most dramatic event of the day. She was one of the searching party and her genuine interest led her to continue the search as soon as she fell asleep and was free from the physical body.

Mr. Squires, too, was evidently intensely interested. He "could not

keep his mind off the watch," he said. He spent a half day helping his friend search for it. "I felt sorry for him and thought about the watch continually," the statement runs, "and was still thinking of it when I went to sleep that night." That is the mental condition under which a person may expect success in recalling an astral experience. When he awoke he had the knowledge that he did not have before. He recalled vividly every detail that would be impressed on the mind by a visit to the spot, the exact location, the grass and rocks and fence and the precise position of the hands of the watch.

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### A WONDERFUL WOMAN.

Like all other nations America has produced some remarkable women and occasionally the public prints are crowded with articles setting forth their claims to distinction. The unusual achievements of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Julia Ward Howe and others, who have defied time in continued useful activities in spite of the weight of years, have furnished material for many a merited eulogium. A couple of years ago Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, of Christian Science fame, very nearly monopolized public attention for a time. The fact that she had built up a cult that was numbered by the tens of thousands was a matter of general interest while the fact that she had incidentally built up a great fortune intensified the interest as nothing else could have done and led the multitude to search closely for the secret of such success. Her every word and act became a matter of public concern. It was recorded as very remarkable that a woman who had reached the age at which most people retire from active business still continued in full possession of all her faculties and, while no longer venturing out in public, even to attend the church she established, yet nevertheless from her palatial home issued instructions to be carried out by others. In the mental world she still ruled regardless the failing body.

Let it be admitted that all this is unusual and is a most interesting and instructive object lesson in the development of the human will; but it is by no means as remarkable an achievement as another which has passed almost unnoticed by the press, so far as its features of marvelous endurance is concerned. Apparently none of the newspapers have mentioned the fact, but a white-haired woman who has crossed the line that separates maturity from old age has just finished a lecture tour of the United States, covering a period of about two months, that would have prostrated nine-tenths of our professional politicians who are accustomed to what has aptly been called a "whirlwind campaign." When Mr. Bryan, in his first race for the presidency, kept steadily to the field for the whole of the campaign period, traveling constantly, usually making several speeches a day, and yet retaining his voice to the last, it was

regarded as a most remarkable feat of endurance. Nothing like it had ever been known in the history of American politics. And it *was* remarkable, even when we give due weight to the vital facts that Mr. Bryan was both young and strong, an almost perfect specimen of virile manhood, and that he was naturally adapted to such work and had had years of training in it. It is true that when the campaign closed he bore little resemblance to his former sturdy self. Photographs of him taken just before the campaign and just after showed the terrible strain of the work. He lost much in weight and his face was thin, drawn and haggard. He was fortunate in being so young that he was barely eligible to the office; for an older man would scarcely have regained normal strength after such a drain upon his vitality. Indeed, some of his predecessors did not survive the physical and mental strain of far less strenuous campaigns. He set a pace that nobody has since been able to travel in the political world.

But during the last few months Mrs. Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society—the world-wide organization—a quiet little woman with no professional press agents nor campaign managers, with no army of expectant office seekers to everywhere smooth the way, has made a lecture tour of England and America that totally eclipses Mr. Bryan's famous campaign; and she will go on to other countries for similar work and think nothing about it at all! Think a moment of the contrast. Mr. Bryan had a special train on which he lived and was taken from city to city. He slept and ate on the train. There was never the need for walking or riding even a block in changing cars. It was as though his home, with his own bedroom, dining room and office were transported about for his convenience. Capable managers arranged everything. He had only to speak, eat and sleep, and within five minutes after the last address was finished he could be comfortably settled for the night; and he rested from his labors every Sunday. Mrs. Besant went by the ordinary trains, with all the hardships incidental to such travel. The American portion of the tour covered a program of intense daily activities, no Sundays being left free for rest. From New York she traveled westward to Seattle, southward to San Diego and thence eastward to New York again, often taking a devious course in order to include certain cities. No political candidate could possibly be busier. From the moment she reached a city until she was again on the train there was intense activity. Throngs of newspaper men sought interviews. Crowds of theosophists begged for a few minutes help with their personal problems; and so great was the demand upon her time that many could not gain admission. Besides this, which in itself was quite enough for the ordinary human being, there were lectures each evening, often in our largest theatres which were packed to the doors, and which must have tried the orator's voice severely. In addition to all this there were the day-time question meetings and other meetings for members of

the Society only! As she stopped usually but a couple of days in a place, and at the most about four days, the temptation of the local committees to crowd as much as possible into the program will readily be understood. Remember that in the midst of this incessant physical and mental activity Mrs. Besant had to live at the hotels, usually situated in the heart of noisy cities, and on the trains. It is said that on one portion of the American tour she spent fourteen out of eighteen nights on the trains, and in an ordinary Pullman berth.

Before Mrs. Besant began her tour of this country she finished her English tour of much the same character. The Sundays were not left free for rest and the meetings averaged about two daily, besides all the other work. The American was harder because of our magnificent distances. Besides the incessant lecturing, talking and handshaking, she traveled approximately ten thousand miles in the United States. And that is only a part of the story; for stretching back of the four and a half months in England and America are other activities but little less strenuous while immediately ahead is other similar work in various European countries.

Mr. Bryan gave us a remarkable exhibition of physical and mental endurance; but Mrs. Besant's achievement has made it look insignificant. He had the advantage of youth and perfect health. She had the handicap of old age and a frail body. He had the most comfortable and luxurious private train wealth could furnish. She braved the hardships of ordinary travel. He had a day's rest every week. She asked for none. He finished a much shorter campaign in a condition bordering on collapse. She finished her's as strong, calm and serene as when she began.

Will somebody who thinks that theosophy is not a practical thing, with a practical influence in practical affairs, please come forward with an explanation of this phenomenon?

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### CHILDREN FROM THE OCCULT VIEWPOINT.

We have the pleasure of presenting our readers in this issue with the first instalment of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater's excellent and helpful essay on "Our Relation to Children." In it every parent will find most valuable information clearly put by one who has faculties for the observation and study of child life from the occult side of the problem and who has employed them in the most sympathetic and appreciative manner. The first seven years of the life of a child is a period of golden opportunity for the parent and this fact cannot be too strongly emphasized. *Our Relation to Children* has been published in England in pamphlet form but it deserves the widest possible circulation and Mr. Leadbeater has authorized its appearance in these pages.

## FIELD NOTES.

Mr. C. Jinarajadasa spent most of August and part of September lecturing in Seattle and joined Mrs. Besant's party at Salt Lake, en route to Chicago. Arrangements have been made for him to deliver public lectures on theosophy in Assembly Hall, Chicago, every Sunday afternoon and Tuesday and Thursday evenings until January 1.

L. W. Rogers began the field work for the year at Reno, Nevada, September 5, with a course of six public lectures and some question meetings. He will go from the Chicago convention to New York for a two month's engagement, lecturing every Sunday evening in Berkeley Lyceum, 21 West Forty-fourth Street, near Fifth Avenue. While the Sunday lectures are running in New York — October 3 to December 5 inclusive — Mr. Rogers is to deliver a similar course in each of two neighboring cities.

Later: Mr. Rogers organized a lodge at Reno, September 15, with twenty charter members.

Immediately after the close of the theosophical convention at Chicago, September 19–21, Mr. Irving S. Cooper will fill engagements in several Michigan cities, including Grand Rapids, Detroit, Flint and Port Huron. Mr. Cooper delivered four Sunday evening lectures in San Francisco just before the arrival of Mrs. Besant the latter part of August. It is probable that he will remain in the eastern states for the year.

It is said that Mr. Thomas Prime, who has done much valuable field work in the United States, will soon go to Adyar, India, to reside.

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

## "BROTHER OF THE THIRD DEGREE."

Theosophists who like fiction will be interested in learning that a new edition of *Brother of the Third Degree* has been issued. It is an occult narrative, by Will L. Garver, of the life of a young man whose mystic experiences are quite as dramatic and romantic as those of the young Englishman in Lord Lytton's famous novel, *Zanoni*. Purdy Publishing Co., 40 Randolph Street, Chicago.

## TWO NEW PAMPHLETS.

Two new pamphlets have been added to the growing theosophical literature by Claude Bragdon. One is entitled *A Brief Life of Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society*. The other is *Theosophy and the Theosophical Society*. The former will serve the purpose of the very busy reader who desires to know something of Mrs. Besant's life but cannot give the time to reading her very interesting *Autobiography*. The latter is a convenient pamphlet to hand a friend for the purpose of calling his attention to the philosophy and later engaging him in conversation about it. In it Mr. Bragdon pleasantly relates the story of his meeting with Mr. C. Jinarajadasa. The pamphlets are artistically printed on fine paper, at the price of 25c each, and may be had of Claude Bragdon, Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, N. Y.