

"Point out the 'Way'—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness."

The Theosophic Messenger

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement contained herein unless set forth in an official document.

All readers are cordially invited to send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon Theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, Room A., Odd Fellows' Building, San Francisco, Cal. Subscription, 50 cents per annum.

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No. 6.

Edited by W. J. WALTERS

NATIONAL COMMITTEE LETTER.

DEAR CO-WORKERS:

After each meeting of the National Committee, there comes a wish that the corresponding member of every branch might have been present to get the full benefit of all the helpful, hopeful, inspiring letters received. Certainly those who respond promptly and fully would be encouraged to go on, and those who, for some reason, do not answer the letters, would perhaps be inspired with a desire to join the band of thoughtful, earnest souls whose co-operation makes the work of the Committee possible. There is not a letter received which is not helpful in some way. But it is impossible to give them all, and the committee has to select those thoughts and suggestions which seem most generally applicable.

Among the suggestions received last

month was this:—That in arranging programs for the meeting of the branch, it might be well to let the different members take turns. A new committee might be appointed for each month. This will give variety to the meetings and afford various members an opportunity to exercise their ingenuity and originality. Everyone having a chance to improve the meetings, this will also lessen the danger of fault-finding and needless criticism.

In an earnest and thoughtful letter from an eastern branch comes a suggestion which is, perhaps, best given in the words of the writer. She says: "In our Branch meetings, it seems to me, we who hear and read so much about the action of thought pay too little attention to its practical workings. For instance, when an inexperienced speaker rises to read a paper, we might help him to a better control of his mind by sending him harmonious and reassuring thought currents instead of sitting in cold criticism, noting his faltering words and picking out

discrepancies. We ought to remember more that his success is *our* success as a body, and help him to it. It is the duty of each one to uphold the dignity of the Society by upholding his brothers as far as he honestly can."

These are words we should all do well to ponder, and strive to put in practice the suggestion, not only in the special case referred to, but in all our relations with each other, and especially towards those who have accepted some responsibility.

From one of our brothers across the line in the British dominions, we have received the following, which seems worth quoting: "The editor of the *British Medical Times* is among those who see in wireless telegraphy an argument in favor of thought transference by 'Brain Waves.' He writes: 'Marconi has shown that a small electric battery can send waves of energy and thought through the ethereal atoms of space for a greater or less distance, according to the elevation, which may be caught by a sensitive mechanical receiver and its code of signals recorded and interpreted. In the battery a small amount of material is decomposed to produce the electric current. The brain is, to a certain extent, an electric battery, and the ganglions of the great sympathetic nerve relay batteries to insure a continuous supply of the nervous energy generated in a great measure by the brain. This battery, with its relays, by the nourishment applied to the body, decomposing its own material thus supplied, is perpetually in action. Thought is to a certain extent the outcome of cerebral action, the same as electricity is a force evolved from the decomposition of elementary substances. Thought then is an entity, a force, something that can travel through space and be caught by a receiver, however distant, which is in tune with its vibrations.' "

The Committee takes pleasure in announcing that it has received from Dr. Marques six lectures as follows:—

1. Spiritualism and Theosophy, A. Marques;
2. The Higher Function of the Imagination, Marie Howland;
3. H. P. B. and White Lotus Day and Lessons from White Lotus Day, A. Marques;
4. The Bhagavad Gita, A. Marques; and Theosophy and Its Inspirations, Valerie Shouldes;
5. Mission of Theosophy, Kate B. Davis; and Hindu Cycles and the Circle's Ration, A. Marques; and
6. Why We Should Study Theosophy, A. Marques.

These are printed, being cut out of old *Mercuries* and put together by Dr. Marques. The Committee would suggest as to these that, being printed, they can be sent very much cheaper than manuscripts, and if it is desired to have them in manuscript form, the person who is to read them can copy them. As suggested in the last letter, the person who is to read the composition of another should study it carefully and be in thorough sympathy with it, and the copying of a lecture can be made a helpful part of the study of it.

The Committee has also added to the Lecture Bureau this month "Richard Wagner and Lohengrin," by Mrs. Florence A. Taylor of the Newton Highlands Branch, and "Memory of Past Lives," by Charles Johnston—both in manuscript.

A Branch has recently been formed at West Superior by Mrs. M. L. Brainard, and another chartered at Lewiston, Maine. Mr. Titus has very recently formed a Branch at Cedar Rapids, and the branch at Portland, Oregon, may be said to have arisen from its ashes with a new charter and a new name—the Mt. Hood Branch.

In the National Committee there have been two resignations. This has necessitated a redistribution of branches among the members here and some exchanges

have been made. It occurs to the Committee that it might be a good thing for the branches to elect a new correspondent occasionally. It is well to let different ones take up the burden of this work, especially where the correspondent finds it difficult to write regularly. Perhaps some of those branches from whom we hear rarely or not at all might find a change of correspondent productive of more favorable results. As a receiving and distributing center, the usefulness of the Committee depends upon what it receives. We are all parts of one organic whole, and the health of the whole depends upon the health and vigor of each member; and every branch, however weak and isolated it may seem, has behind it the strength of the whole Section. The more fully we realize this, the more earnestly and courageously can we work.

Fraternally yours,

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE.

PROPAGANDA FUND.

DEAR F. T. S.:—

We are fairly launched in the new year, and as time comes on apace and the day is not long enough for the work thereof, we feel the need of dwelling especially on the Propaganda Fund. The committee, knowing the necessities of the Section, is desirous of aiding the work and positive demands for money are met at every turn. We wish to add at least six hundred dollars to the Fund during the current year.

Will you help the Cause and the Committee with twenty-five cents a month? The pledge system is designed to let those of us upon whom Mammon has not showered his golden smiles help in the cause, and we need not refrain from giving the very smallest amount. There are fully twelve hundred members of the American Section. Count what we

might do, if we would, and perhaps we *will*.

The principal and crying requirement—forgive the reiteration—is to keep lecturers trained and devoted to the Society's interests constantly in the field. The more the Propaganda Fund is increased, the more lecturers and the wider their field of action. To Branch officers especially do we appeal to bring the matter before their respective lodges and to assist us in every way possible. So once more, will you help us?

For the growth of the Cause, fraternally yours,
PAULINE G. KELLY,
278 Bissell St., Chicago.

CONVENTION NOTES.

The Adyar Convention of '99, so far as outward performance is concerned, is now a thing of the past; but how far-reaching may be its results, only the Lords of Karma may compute. The weather was perfect. Recent rains had made the foliage beautifully green, and an atmosphere of peace seemed to rest over the place. A native delegate said that he and his Parsee brothers had been talking it over, and all had noticed this peculiar uplifting of the mind and soul—a strange experience felt even before the opening of Convention. The feeling of brotherliness seemed spontaneous and irresistible.

The noble altruism of these Parsees may be gauged by their attitude toward the Central Hindu College, founded by Mrs. Besant. Although in the interest of a so-called "rival" faith, these devoted Theosophists have worked shoulder to shoulder with their Hindu brethren for its maintenance, some devoting all their time to it, lecturing, collecting funds, etc., without remuneration. Could anything save Theosophy lead to such results?

I have never seen anyone so capable

in the management of a large assembly of people as is Colonel Olcott. There was not the least jar. Of course, an immense amount of planning had to be done, in order to dispose of all the visitors; but he did it so easily that it seemed like the automatic working of a great machine. By his long residence and unselfish work in India, he has endeared himself to the people, and there is no thought here of rival leadership.

Great anxiety had been felt regarding Mrs. Besant's health. When she left Benares for the Convention, she was recovering from the fourth attack of fever. A program of lectures *en route* had been arranged for her, but Colonel Olcott, fearing the arduous work might cause a relapse, prevailed upon her to cancel these engagements. But weakened as she was, she refused no one the opportunity for personal conversation with her.

By December 27th all was in readiness. Late improvements in the great hall left nothing more to be desired. A large Cashmere carpet covered the center of the main hall, its colors harmonizing with the delicate tints of the walls. The high ceiling, the many open archways, and the walls perforated with ornamental tiling, gave perfect ventilation. Under an archway in front, the statute of H. P. B. faced the audience. Above is the seal of the Society, and on the opposite wall our T. S. motto. Nearly life-sized bas-relief figures of the Founders of the four great religions look down upon the assembly—a material expression of the harmony underlying their teachings.

The rooms were filled to overflowing; many hundreds were standing in the wings and court-yard around the hall. When the President-Founder appeared, leading Mrs. Besant through the long pathway flanked by Hindus, a burst of enthusiasm made the roof ring. It was a tribute coming from loyal, loving hearts, for the Hindus

never cease to be grateful to those who have given them back their religion. Mrs. Besant announced the subjects of her lectures as follows: 1. What is an Avatara? 2. What is the Need of an Avatara? 3. The Work of Nine of the Ten Avatars Spoken of in Hindu Scriptures. 4. The Tenth Avatara, Shri Krishna. Her face was pale and thin, and at first her voice was unsteady, owing to weakness. But as she proceeded, strength seemed to come, until the vibration of the clear tones reached the most distant listener. So far as she went, this most difficult subject could be easily understood. It was feared that a nervous reaction would follow, but the factors had not all been considered. At the second lecture, no trace of physical exhaustion was visible in voice or gesture. She carried her hearers to spiritual heights they had seldom reached before, and the impression made was too deep for words. The third lecture was equally strong. But into the fourth she seemed to throw the whole force of her ardent soul, for she spoke as a Hindu sage might on returning to his sacred land with memories of the teachings of Shri Krishna still ringing in his ears. No words of mine can convey the grandeur of the theme as treated by her; though you may read it in print, you will not read it all.

After a brief rest, Mrs. Besant will start on a lecturing tour among the Indian Branches, which will occupy about a month, and then, before starting for England, she will return to Benares for a brief interval.

SARAH E. PALMER.

BRANCH REPORTS.

BOSTON, MASS.—K. W., Secretary, writes:—Alpha Branch held its annual meeting for the election of officers early in January, with the following result:—President, Cornelius A.

Russell; Vice-president, Estelle Bright; Treasurer, Katherine T. St Clair; Librarian, Isabelle M. Donaldson (re-elected); Secretary, Katherine Weller (re-elected). Two new members have joined the branch during the past month, bringing the membership up to forty-one. On the 31st of January the Branch had the pleasure of welcoming Miss Walsh back from her western trip, and in February a new schedule of work was begun with vigor, including studies in the interpretation of the Bible according to the Secret Doctrine on Sunday afternoons, a course of Secret Doctrine Topics at the Branch meetings Wednesday evenings, both conducted by Miss Walsh, and public lectures on Sunday evenings, by Miss Walsh. For these latter a larger hall has been hired, accommodations at headquarters proving insufficient, even on Wednesday evenings these being taxed to the limit. The two public lectures already given, viz. "Theosophy and Social Reform," and "The Rationale of Health and Disease," have evoked much interest, both in and out of T. S. circles. An interesting union meeting was held on the 21st of January, on "Four Great Religions."

VANCOUVER, B. C.—F. A. R. writes:—The regular yearly nomination and election of officers took place on the 6th of January, 1900. President, Mr. T. E. Knapp; Secretary, F. A. Round; Treasurer, Mr. Yarco; Librarian, Mrs. Yarco. We hold two meetings weekly. Mr. W. C. Bailey arrived on the 17th of January and lectured upon the following subjects: The Essentials of Religion, Nature's Greatest Force, The Three Worlds—Earth, Hell and Heaven, Whom did Jesus Worship? The Ascent of Man.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—A. J. C. writes—The Washington D. C. Branch of the T. S. has been favored by Miss Walsh with luminous lectures and class-talks on Mind, Memory, Solar and Planetary Forces, The Rationale of Health and Disease, The Path of Discipleship, The Law of Overcoming, talks on T. S. Work. On Sunday, Dec. 24th, she delivered a lecture on "The Esoteric Christ" from the pulpit of the People's Church; and on Sunday, Jan. 14th, she spoke before the Secular League at the Masonic Temple, on "Hidden Powers in Man." In the time between the first and last lectures she visited Norfolk, Va., where she lectured and was accorded an ovation. From here Miss Walsh goes to Philadelphia and from there to Boston.

The great interest aroused has been attested by the overflowing attendance at our Headquarters. We consider it fortunate that the T. S. of America, has such a worker as Miss Walsh.

BUFFALO, N. Y.—J. H. writes:—Fidelity Lodge begins the year with a new resolve. When Miss Walsh visited us, she impressed upon us the importance of the effort on the part of each individual to do *his* share of the work, and that as the individual improves the branch *must*. So we have agreed—not without some misgivings, however—to each furnish a short paper, to be followed by general discussion, at our Thursday evening meeting. On Sunday our time is still given to the reading and study of the Manuals, with the aid of the syllabus. Kindly greetings to all.

LOS ANGELES, CAL.—H. M. writes:—Harmony Lodge has just concluded a month of much activity. January 30th, Mrs. Kate B. Davis of Minneapolis, accompanied by Miss Houston of Chicago, arrived, and their work among us has been productive of good results. More clearly than ever before we have been brought to a realization of the debt which we owe to the founders and leaders of our beloved Society. The following lectures have been given: "What is Occultism?" Miss C. Nelson; "Involution and Evolution" (illustrated), Miss Houston; "Life after Death," Mrs. Davis; "Theosophy in the Home," Miss Houston; "The Theosophic Life," Mrs. Davis. One other evening was given by Mrs. Davis to the answering of questions, and it proved the most instructive evening Harmony Lodge has known since the visit of Mrs. Besant. Large and interested audiences attended all the lectures. A training class was organized by Miss Houston to aid the younger members in preparing themselves for public work. Also, owing to the efforts of the visitors, the study class has taken on a new interest. One new member has been added to the roll, and two others have tendered their applications. It was with regret that we bade farewell to these devoted workers, but we consoled ourselves with the thought that others were to receive the benefit of their presence and assistance.

CHICAGO, ILL.—H. A. H. writes:—The annual election of officers of the Eastern Psychology Branch of the T. S., was held at the home

of Mrs. K. C. Havens Friday evening, Feb. 23, with the following result: Mrs. Eva M. Blackman, President; Mrs. L. M. Knowles, Vice-president; H. A. Harrell, Secretary-treasurer; Mrs. Eva M. Blackman, delegate to the Annual Convention of the American Section, T. S.; H. A. Harrell, alternate. Within the last fortnight three new members have been added to the roll, with a most flattering prospect for an additional increase in the immediate future.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.—Mrs. Davis and Miss Houston are with us, having arrived on the 20th from Los Angeles. On the 25th, Miss Houston addressed a large audience at Headquarters, her subject being "Theosophy in the Home," which called out such a multitude of questions that but half of them could be answered, the balance being held over for a quiz the following Tuesday evening, at which Mrs. Davis attended and explained many puzzling problems. "The Physical Body—A Living Temple" was the subject of a lecture by Miss Brodie on the 4th. Feb. 11th, Mrs. Keefer read a well-prepared and instructive paper on "Ancient Chaldea", and on the 18th, Mr. W. J. Walters gave a lecture with illustrations on "The True Story of the Cross." The usual activities have been continued, and all are receiving a new impetus from the presence of Mrs. Davis and Miss Houston, whose devotion and earnestness cannot fail to leave their influence upon all who meet them.

CLASS WORK AND REFERENCE WORK COMBINED.

(The following references for study have been used by the Ancient Wisdom class of Chicago Branch. The questions are those of the "Ancient Wisdom Syllabus" and the method of class work is to read the answer to each question in the "Ancient Wisdom" and then correlate with the statements made in the references given below. It is hoped that any class or individual using this method of study will send further references for each question. What is given below, being the work of students, mistakes and inaccuracies will constantly slip in, and it is our earnest desire that such errors shall be pointed out. Please mail all additions or corrections to this work to THEOSOPHIC MESSENGER, Room A, Odd Fellows' Building, San Francisco.)

ABBREVIATIONS USED.

CC. means "Christian Creed," C. W. Leadbeater; L. & F. means "Evolution of Life and Form," by Annie Besant; S. D. means "Secret Doctrine" (new edition paging); S. P. M. means "Seven Principles of Man," by Annie Besant; R. means "Reincarnation," by Annie Besant;

Dh. means "Dharma," by Annie Besant; Cl. means "Clairvoyance," by C. W. Leadbeater; S. & I. S. means "Self and Its Sheaths," by Annie Besant; D. P. means "Devachanic Plane," by C. W. Leadbeater; Dr. "Dreams," by C. W. Leadbeater; M. & H. B. means "Man and His Bodies," by Annie Besant; A. P. means "Astral Plane," by C. W. Leadbeater; B. & E. of S. means "Birth and Evolution of the Soul," by Annie Besant; E. B. means "Esoteric Buddhism," by A. P. Sinnett; G. of S. means "Growth of the Soul," by A. P. Sinnett.

THE ANCIENT WISDOM.

CHAPTER IV, (Continued).

THE MENTAL PLANE.

What beings function on the Mental Plane?

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D. P., pp. 6, 14, 27, 29, 82

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When is the true man at work and what can he do?

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What are the real barriers between souls?

D. P., pp. 69-70

What does rising in the scale of evolution really mean?

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What stage is reached by the Thinker conscious in the arupa world?

G. of S., pp. 113-115, 254, 255

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Who are the inhabitants of the highest subdivision of the mental plane?

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By what methods do the Masters work?

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The Future that Awaits Us. Annie Besant

.....S. & I. S., pp. 84, 85

What can be said of the process of the Thinker descending into incarnation?

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M. & H. B., pp. 72, 108, 109

Describe the three types of mental

bodies of men, noting from which subdivisions of the mental plane the materials of each are drawn.

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Describe the commingling of astral and mental bodies.

See Mrs. Besant's pamphlet.....

....."Emotion, Intellect and Spirituality."

What is the purpose of earth life?

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Our Relation to Children, C.W. Leadbeater

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What makes the different and illusory "I's" in man seem real?

S. & I. S., pp. 73-79

Pure Reason. Intuition, S. & I. S., p. 63

.....S. P. M., pp. 54, 55

Distinction between Manas and Buddhi,

S. P. M., p. 60

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION XVI.

H. M.—How can an aspirant best attract the attention of a Master?

C. W. L.—As a matter of fact it is absolutely unnecessary to try to do this, for the Masters are ever watching for those whom they can help, and who will be of use to them in the great work which they have to do. We can do nothing on our side but work steadily at the improvement of our own character, and endeavor in every way possible by study of Theosophical works and by self-development to fit ourselves for the honour which we desire. The regular practice of meditation and concentration will be of the utmost help to us in such an attempt; but we must remember that the regularity is an important factor in producing the result. It should be undertaken daily at the same hour, and steadily persevered in, even though no immediate effect should be produced.

QUESTION XVII.

M. E. W.—Mrs. Besant, speaking in Manchester, stated that the human embryo passes through the mineral and vegetable—as well as the animal—kingdoms. Can a scientific authority for this statement be given, and where shall I find it?

B. K.—Beyond the fact that human germ-cells are built up out of the so-called "inorganic" chemical elements, I do not know in what sense it can be said that the "human embryo passes through the mineral kingdom," and I venture to think that the questioner has probably confused the statement he quotes with another somewhat similar one, which is often made by occultists and was very probably quoted by Mrs. Besant on the occasion he mentions, *viz.*: "Life evolves through the mineral, vegetable and animal to the human stage," or, as the older writers put it; "The stone becomes a plant, the plant an animal, the animal a

man, and the man a god."

As regards the vegetable, it is a scientific fact that the human germ-cell in its earliest stages of segmentation is practically indistinguishable from that of a plant or an animal; and in its later stages it passes through a series of stages which reproduce in brief the main evolutionary types of the animal kingdom. These will be found described in detail in any good text-book of embryology.

QUESTION XVIII.

J. E. C.—Why is suffering always assumed to be so much more beneficial to individual perfection than happiness?

G.R.S.M.—It seems to be laid down in the nature of things that happiness is the outcome of suffering, and that without this "passion" there could be no salvation—that is to say, perfection or gnosis. The soul, if she remained ever by herself in her own state and without change, would be practically non-existent, and unknowing of her own nature and bliss. To know herself she must descend into matter, seeking sensation and so suffering. When the lowest point of descent is reached, she turns upward to ascend, stretching forth her hands to her lord, the spirit or true mind, who descends unto her and becomes her savior, finally restoring her to her pristine condition but with all the added gnosis of her long pilgrimage. Thus is it laid down in the Gnosis of the Christ and we must receive it with all reverence from so high a source. Now this "suffering" is a mystery, for in her descent the soul goes forth in love, not to suffer but to enjoy; for her in her descent all is happiness, and only when she turns and "repents" and begins to re-ascend does she recognize her former happiness as suffering. What was the happiness of the soul is suffering to the spirit, and what is happiness to the

spirit is suffering to the soul. But the soul has now to change from her former will to enjoy to a new will to know and so once more to be. She must become the spirit, and so for her now her happiness is to unite herself with the spirit and free herself from her old nature of enjoying the things of sense, which now no longer satisfy. What was her former happiness becomes now her ignorance and misery; but she has still to tread the path of happiness—a new and greater happiness—and not of woe, for she must now ascend and no longer descend, she must return to "those-who-are" once more—no longer as a passive substance, but as an active power.

Now the two most extremely opposed views of life with regard to suffering and happiness are the "Jewish" and the "Greek." The Javehist fanaticism which rejoices in suffering as the chastisement of a God for sins committed against his jealous personality, has led to a morose and melancholy Puritanism, that sees sin in the most innocent pleasures—"sins" against the Almighty. It is responsible for the monstrous dogmas of "original sin" and unending torment which make this world grey and the world to come an inferno, and which portray the Deity in the loveless guise of a bloodthirsty and revengeful fiend. It is almost impossible to imagine a more distorted caricature of the doctrine of the Christ than is imagined by this (unfortunately very large) class of minds. It is the out-come of that "fear of Jahveh," which has transformed the doctrine of the eternal "passion" of the soul into the blasphemy of the savage sacrifice and pitiful suffering of a son to appease the wrath of a bloodthirsty parent.

On the other hand, the laughter-loving "Greek" view that yearned after the ever-smiling soul of nature, and would make life one long holiday, was a great

danger if its love were not turned to the higher soul. Still it was free from the paralyzing sense of sin in all things, and prevented life growing grey.

We want more colour in our lives in this mechanical age, a brighter view of things, and I for my part cannot see why in our Theosophical life we should prefer the melancholy ideal of the "path of woe" to the winsome comradeship of the child Psyche, who was the "conductor of souls" in certain mysteries of the rare remembered past.

QUESTION XIX.

G. A.—*We are told in The Secret Doctrine that on each globe in the Planetary Chain the Lunar Monads pass through the three elemental kingdoms, then the mineral, vegetable, animal and human. We are also told in more recent books that the three elemental kingdoms belong to the two devachanic levels and to the astral plane. How could all these kingdoms and the mineral exist on the higher globes of the Chain, which have no physical, and in two cases, neither a physical nor an astral basis?*

C. W. L.—These kingdoms do all exist quite comfortably on those higher globes, but in truth the conditions there are so totally different in every way from any with which we are acquainted in this world that it is exceedingly difficult to make them at all comprehensible to those who are as yet unable to see them. This much, however, is clear—that we must think, in every case, of the evolution of the ensouling monadic essence, not merely of that of the encasement, whether that encasement is physical, astral or mental. Take the case of what is sometimes, though rather misleadingly, described as the mineral monad. This consists of an enormous mass or flood of the force outpoured from the Logos, already

divided into many different streams, and having already reached the lowest point of its descent into matter, so that it is able to manifest itself on the physical plane.

It must not, however, be forgotten that it has descended through all the other planes and retains what it has acquired in that descent, so that the monadic essence ensouling any particular mineral has also its own special expression on the astral, mental, and all other planes—hardly definite enough yet to be spoken of as its astral or mental *body*, but nevertheless fulfilling for it some of the functions which such bodies fulfill for more advanced entities.

The mineral monadic essence, in passing from globe E to globe F, must, of course, cast off its physical vehicle—that which we call the mineral; but the conditions of the essence itself is no more affected by that than is the condition of the true man when he casts off for the time his physical body. It is still the same living essence, though manifesting now only in its astral vehicle, and no doubt it can still be acted upon through that vehicle in such manner as to assist its evolution, though the exact methods of such action are not clearly known to us.

The same truth holds good all the way through, and therefore every kingdom is fully represented on each globe. This much we can clearly see, although the processes through which each kingdom passes in those higher worlds are not readily comprehensible by the physical brain.

QUESTION XX.

L. W.—*If a person is continually thinking ill of another, does he create a thought-form by this thinking, and if so, would a clairvoyant on the astral plane be deceived by that thought-form, and*

mistake it for the real person, who might be quite different?

C. W. L.—The meaning of this question is not absolutely clear. Every thought creates a thought-form of some sort, and if one person thinks strongly of another (whether ill or well) he not infrequently calls into existence a thought-form resembling himself which appears to that person.

But it seems more probable that the questioner is suggesting a possibility that by thinking frequently of another we might create an image *of the person thought of*, and that since such an image would obviously represent only our idea of the person, and not his real condition, injustice might be done to him if our misrepresentation were mistaken for the reality. I have not personally met with any such case as is here suggested, but I imagine that it is by no means impossible; and I suppose that an entirely untrained clairvoyant might perhaps be considerably influenced by such a misrepresentation, much as a foolish or unthinking person may allow himself to be considerably influenced by gossip and slander on this plane.

But it is inconceivable that anyone who had been at all properly trained in the use of astral sight could ever mistake a thought-form for a living person. The distinction between them is so clear to practised sight, that to confuse them a man must be either extremely ignorant or almost incredibly careless.

QUESTION XXI.

H. Z.—*It has been stated that through want of care and self-restraint on the part of the parent many incarnations of children are wasted. How can wasted incarnations be accounted for while we are taught that the Lords of Karma regulate and are responsible for the in-*

carinations, which ought to be for the further development of the Ego?

C. W. L.—It is foolish for us, who understand nothing of the necessities of the case, to pretend to criticize the action of karmic deities who by the hypothesis must understand *all* about it on every plane. But obviously their responsibility ends with the provision of conditions; the use which a man makes of those conditions must be left to his free will.

If a parent through ill conduct or want of self-restraint injures the character of his child (and it is unfortunately true that many do this) then it is the parent who is responsible for the waste of time caused, and not the karmic deities. It must be remembered, too, that a child is born into a certain family not only because the conditions there provided for him are such as he has deserved, but in many cases because he has previously-existing ties of affection or service with some of its members. A great opportunity is thus afforded to those members, whether it be to discharge an ancient debt, to repay affection shown to them long ago, or perhaps to resume their loving care of one who has been their child in former days; whether they will take advantage of that opportunity, of course, rests entirely with themselves.

Underlying this question, and many others, there seems to be a lurking doubt of the justice of the action of karma. When will students understand that it is utterly *impossible* for the action of karma to be unjust—that if it could be so in even one case for a single moment, or in the smallest particular, it would mean the absolute upsetting of the law of the universe—a failure in the power of the Logos Himself?

QUESTION XXII.

L. H.—*In The Human Aura (Marques), it is said that books possess an aura ac-*

cording to their material, language and subject; is this statement generally accepted? If so, supposing a book read frequently and exclusively by one person, would its aura change or gain from contact with the aura of the reader? Again, how would its use, say in a public library, by all and sundry, affect its aura, or affect the casual reader if sensitive?

C. W. L.—The statement as it stands is incorrect. The aura of a perfectly new book would differ in no respect from that of any other collection of printing ink, paper and binding materials; except that it would bear traces of the workmen through whose hands it had passed. A *manuscript* is, of course, strongly impregnated with the aura of the writer, but the book printed from it has no direct connection with him; and it has no aura beyond that ordinarily appertaining to its materials, except what it acquires from those who handle it.

The language and subject of the book could not possibly make the slightest difference to its aura while it is new; but it is true that after it has been long in use they have indirectly produced an effect upon it, for a book written upon a special subject would most likely be read chiefly by a particular type of persons, and these readers would leave their impress upon the aura of the volume. Thus a book violently advocating some sectarian religious views would not be read except by persons who sympathized with its narrowness, and so would soon develop a decidedly unpleasant aura; and in the same way a book of an indecent or prurient nature would quickly become loathsome beyond description. Old books containing magical formulae are often for this reason most uncomfortable neighbors.

In the same way the language in which a book is printed may indirectly affect its

aura by limiting its readers largely to men of a certain nationality, and so by degrees enduing it with some of the prominent characteristics of that nationality; but directly and of itself it could have no influence whatever.

A book read frequently or exclusively by one person would of course be impregnated with his influence just as would any other article which was constantly in close connection with him. A book used in a public library is not infrequently as unpleasant psychically as it usually is physically, for it becomes loaded with all kinds of mixed magnetisms, many of them of a most unsavoury character. The sensitive person will do well to avoid such books, or if necessity compels him to use them he will be wise to touch them as little as may be, and rather to let them lie upon a table than to hold them in his hand.

QUESTION XXIII.

X.—*What re-awakens the desire for re-birth in the soul in Devachan? Do the thought images which surround it, when it passes into Devachan, gradually grow fainter and finally disappear?*

B. K.—Just as there is the great pulsation of the One-Life—the out-breathing and in-breathing of the universe, so also is there an ebb and flow, an out-breathing and an in-drawing of every separated life into which the One Life becomes differentiated. In each case this forthgoing and withdrawing of life starts from whatever may be, at the particular stage of evolution in question, its (relatively) permanent center. Thus in the case of the evolving group-soul of the animal kingdom, it is the group-soul which constitutes the relatively permanent centre from which is put forth the life which ensouls a given physical animal form, and into which that life is again drawn back when

the time comes for that physical form to break up. In man it is the causal body which forms this permanent centre, and it is this same universal law of out-breathing and in-breathing which determines the putting forth of the life of the ego into incarnation and its withdrawal in due course of time. The awakening of the desire for rebirth is the aspect in the consciousness of the ego which this universal law assumes, and while in the earlier human stages the putting forth of the life of the ego into incarnation is an instinctively, barely conscious process effected by the impulse of the great law rather than by any conscious desire or choice on the part of the individual, this state of things changes more and more as evolution proceeds and self-determination is evolved, until, while still being guided by the one Law—since man's inmost essence *is* that Law—the conscious desire and choice of the individual acquire an ever greater importance in determining in detail its working out.

As the life ebbs back into the ego from the mental body the vividness of consciousness in that body naturally lessens, and, *pari passu*, the thought forms, which its activity had held in manifestation, gradually fade out and disappear, as, indeed, was indicated in one of the earlier letters of the Master K. H., which the student will find in *The Occult World*.

BOOK REVIEWS.

The Theosophist (December)—Colonel Olcott, in "Old Diary Leaves," recounts some of the early struggles in the T. S. He says, "When I look through my papers of those days of stress and storm and read the letters written me from exile by Mme. Blavatsky, the solemn feeling comes over me that the binding mortar of its blocks was stiffened by the blood of her heart and in her anguish were they laid." The Colonel's account of Mr. Fullerton's term of office as Private Secretary to him at Adyar, is quite amusing. It seems that nine days of the

"blessed rest" of Adyar was all our good General Secretary could endure, and, lest the slowness of the place should bring about his premature decease, the Colonel advised his return to New York. Not even the attractions of the coming Convention, to which, as delegate, he had brought the greetings of the American Section, could hold him, so back he travelled forthwith. That he has worked faithfully ever since all know, and not a few F. T. S. in America will rejoice at the Colonel's unselfish advice and Mr. Fullerton's very prompt action upon it. The Convention of 1887 is briefly reported, and the Colonel concludes: "Twelve years have come and gone since then, yet the impetus behind us has never slackened, the vital force within the Society never been spent; disasters have not wrecked us, secessions not weakened us, the fountain of ancient wisdom not ceased to flow." H. M. Voltec concludes his paper on "The Astral Light," and speaks of the good service which spiritism has accomplished in the way of checking the growth of materialism. "Lanka," by Nakur Chandra Bisvas, is in the nature of a continuation of Mr. Banon's "Kingdom of Ravan," and an endeavor to trace out the early history of Ceylon. In "Study of the Relation of Man to God," Mr. A. Schwartz has gleaned from the various text-books and put into orderly and concise form teachings upon this subject. The paper will repay careful reading and study, especially to those who have not yet been able clearly to comprehend the teaching as to the great scheme of evolution, for the links are here very accurately traced, and diagrams help to simplify matters. "Heredity," by Mr. A. E. Webb, is a study in evolution. P. C. Mukherji writes on "The Maurya"; B. K. reviews Mr. W. Williamson's "A Study of Religious Origins;" and H. S. O. tells of his recent discovery that H. P. B. wrote Tibetan and Mongolian. There are the usual activities, reviews and comments.

The Theosophical Review (January)—*The Watch Tower* declines to make any predictions concerning the events of the coming century, but speaks cheerfully of the prospects before our Society and of the new Headquarters at 28 Albemarle street. Margaret Carr continues her series on the "Friends of God," describing from the *Book of the Five Men* some of those connected with the Order. A letter from an Indian Yogin to his pupil is translated by J. C. C., and contains some rather surprising statements concerning the physical and etheric bodies.

"The Hidden Church on Russian Soil" is continued, this number dealing with the Molokans and Doukhobortzi. G. R. S. Mead, as a continuation of his papers on Hermes and Trismegistic literature, takes us back into Egypt, and gives some interesting gleanings from the writings of the German scholar Pietschmann and from W. Marsham Adams. Agatha Leigh contributes "Chrysostomos: A Platonic Dialogue," which contains some useful hints for those who would become "invisible helpers." "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" is an excellent article by W. Kingsland, in which he shows the part which supernaturalism has played in the Christian Church and among Western peoples, and the dangers arising therefrom. He declares that it is to the East we must look for the light of that divine science which shall dispel the mists—to Theosophy, which sets forth fully the *natural law* of our spiritual evolution, and takes us step by step from the lowest to the highest rung on the ladder which leads thereto. Mr. Leadbeater concludes his series on "Ancient Peru," giving us a glimpse of the art, music and literature of that wonderful country. He states that the love-story had fortunately not yet made its appearance, all stories being written with a purpose. There was no poetry as we know it. The food and dress of the people are described, and the article closes with some interesting comparisons between the times and people of fourteen thousand years ago and our own. Dr. A. A. Wells contributes a delightfully interesting paper on "Individual and Collective Karma," which all students should endeavor to study.

NOTICE.

To members of the American Section
T. S.

BRETHREN:—

I have received a very earnest appeal from India asking that contributions be made by American Theosophists to the Indian Famine Fund, now in charge of the President of the Blavatsky Lodge in Bombay.

You have doubtless knowledge of the frightful severity of the famine now overspreading India, and of the measureless sufferings undergone by the population; also of the fact that a similar appeal made

during the famine of three years ago received generous response from F. T. S. The present appeal is even more urgent, because the famine is worse and because charity in England is almost entirely directed to the sufferings in South Africa.

I will most gladly receive any gifts for this purpose, and will duly forward them to the President of the Bombay Branch. The need is so extensive and so sore that it is more than ever true that "He gives twice who gives quickly."

Faternally yours,

ALEXANDER FULLERTON, *Gen. Sec'y.*

Form for Bequest of Personal Property.

[The following is the proper legal form of bequest to the Theosophical Society, American Section, and may be adopted by any who desire to give by will, money or property to be used for the furtherance of the work of the Society.]

I give and bequeath to The Board of Trustees of the Theosophical Society, American Section, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Illinois, dollars to be used for the furtherance of the cause and objects of said Theosophical Society, American Section, in such manner as said Board may determine.

(Specific directions as to use of gift may be included).

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I give and devise unto The Board of Trustees of the Theosophical Society, American Section, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Illinois, the following described real estate, to wit: (Here insert description of real estate by metes and bounds) the same to be used, or the income thereof to be used or the proceeds of the sale thereof to be used, for the furtherance of the cause and objects of the Theosophical Society, American Section, in such manner as said Board may determine.

(Specific directions may be included.)

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