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Knowledge can not be the property of Individuals. It is a Universal Principle. It is the true side of all things seen or unseen, perceived by the enlightened. Do not therefore strive to possess it, for this is impossible, but endeavour only to be a vehicle by which it may be carried to your fellowmen.

TWO OPTIMISTS.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century has brought to the front two Russians, both great optimists: Tolstoi and Mechnikoff. It matters not that the one writes and dreams in the seclusion and privacy of his own lonely green fields and that the other works and dreams in the crowded hospitals of work a day, up to date Paris. It matters not that they approached the riddle of life from diametrically opposed directions. It matters not that neither thinks highly of the methods of the other: in his last very remarkable book *"Etude sur la Nature Humaine: essai de philosophie optimiste,"* Mechnikoff does all he can, though preserving a deferential tone, to oppose Tolstoi's attitude toward science; and as to Tolstoi, on receiving Mechnikoff's work, he exclaimed in his usual pettish way:

"I shan't read this! Whatever he says, Mechnikoff can tell me nothing new. Oh yes! I grant you, he is a very learned man. But the man's one idea is to dissect aged people's corpses, in order to find out how we are to live at least a hundred years. A great boon, indeed!"

But in spite of this apparent antagonism the two men are much nearer, much more akin to each other, than either would dream.

Let us go into particulars. True enough, Mechnikoff examines hundreds of corpses of aged people, but it is because he believes that by so doing he can learn all about making human life purposeful, dignified and therefore happy. His great efforts are directed against age and debility. Our physical body he thinks very imperfect, very poorly fitted to live the life, as we made it. In his eyes it is but a sorry relic of prehistoric times, a cumbersome, aggravating dead weight on our flights towards happiness.

In different places of his book, Mechnikoff speaks of age in very graphic terms. Old age, as we know it, is a humiliation, it is a malady, an isolation in the midst of the busy world. And the condition of aged people is only the sadder because we of our day and generation grow old much before our time, so that many grey-headed, life worn people, preserve in their hearts all their thirst of life, all the power of their passions and instincts. Viewed in this light, the problem of our early old age grows only the more sinister. No one wants a helpless old man; he is a burden on those who care

for him the most. If he is poor, he will suffer from hunger and cold, if he is rich, he will suffer from sicknesses, which science is not competent to relieve.

In the opinion of Mechnikoff there are three causes leading to untimely old age: the too severe conditions of the struggle for life, blood poisoning sexual excesses and alcoholism.

Yet universal as these three causes are, Mechnikoff readily steps forward to do battle against them.

He is a dreamer, no less a dreamer, in his own sphere, than Tolstoi is in his. And in his dreams no less, than in the dreams of Tolstoi, the future promises to old men a dignified and a useful place. He assigns to them the first place in the life of society and government. Like Plato, he thinks that an old man is best fitted for the part of a ruler. Free from the despotism of sex, passionless in every other respect, the old men of the future will be healthy and strong, age being for them no humiliating decrepitude, but a new physiological condition, perfectly natural and as welcome as any other. And it should be only natural that such a man should stand at the head of his country, giving to it his undivided attention and the wisdom of his long experience. One would almost be inclined to think that this *geroncracy* of the future is the pet expectation of the learned physiologist, as he comes back to it frequently throughout his big work.

Mechnikoff thinks that nature positively destines us to live up to a hundred and more. And that, moreover, in spite of the cumbersomeness of our present bodies, most of the organs of which are entirely injurious, as for instance the *appendix,* in spite of all the obstacles in and without our bodies, there will be a time, when we shall live up to a hundred and more.

"The victory over scrofula alone, and then over alcoholism will considerably lengthen the life of men," says Mechnikoff.

A thinker, however, a man who is in the habit of trying to see behind the screen, could not linger very long over the scientific views of Mechnikoff, over his sincere, almost personal hatred of the *appendix,* or of the "wild" (that is the uncultured) microbe, for whose teeming millions, the happiest hunting grounds are the many useless or even injurious organs of our bodies. More than in all this, however learned and true, the readers of the Theosophical

Forum will be interested in the theories of this incessant and indefatigable, though be it only superficial worker for the good of humanity. And still more we shall be interested in the buoyancy of his faith in the powers of human mind, of which science is but the natural outcome. The human mind, in his opinion, can overcome all difficulties, all natural and acquired disadvantages, destroying the "wild" and the "cultured" microbes and modifying or even getting entirely rid of all such organs in our luckless bodies, as interfere with our comforts, happiness and dignity.

Happiness, in Mechnikoff's idea, is the one thing naturally destined for man, the one thing to which man has an unquestionable and indubitable right, and, moreover, a thing which man certainly shall have, if he only entrusts science with the management of his affairs. This faith, this enthusiasm of a man, whose mind never had anything to do with any aspect of life except the physiological, the grossest, is certainly very inspiring and ought to be a reproof to people who, though dealing with finer aspects of nature, aspects in which the workings of will are more directly manifest, go about life in a listless, half-hearted attitude, having faith neither in themselves, nor in life. And such a reproof many of us, who read the Theosophical Forum and write encouraging letters to the editor, have certainly amply deserved.

To all this an inquisitive person may very rightfully say: And what about death? Even if it is true, that science can so regulate our bodily disadvantages, as to make earthly man happy forever after, could it regulate death also, or at least the horror, the abhorence of death?

Why, answers the learned dreamer, it certainly can. The death we know in our day and generation is a painful death. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, modern man dies what can be called a *violent* death, coming as it does much before its time. Almost always it is a result of unnatural conditions, organic disorders, which nature never intended for us, of overwork, of too much care, an accident, a murder and so on. So it forces itself into our existence like an enemy to smash, to mangle and to destroy all we have constructed with so much care and labour. So it looks to us the greatest evil, without truce or mercy. We stand helpless and perplexed before the question why should a man die who was still so much

needed by everybody around him, who still wanted to live? And to this *why* earthly man can find no possible satisfying answer. The horror of it, the cruelty of it, the utter senselessness of it will haunt us, even through such fortitude and hopefulness, as the most sincere religious beliefs can offer us.

Yet Mechnikoff, confirmed naturalist as he is, solves the question quite easily. It is so, he says, but it need not be so, nature does not mean it to be so. *Natural death* will do away with all these horrors and perplexities. Natural death ought to come when man has gone through all the cycle of his life. And it must be preceded by the acquirement of the *instinct of death.* And this instinct of death Mechnikoff deems to be as natural and as necessary as the instinct of life. Potentially we are all endowed with it, but few of us live up to its complete growth and manifestation. We die much before it possibly could get manifest. The crystaline serenity of Mechnikoff's philosophy is such that whilst under the influence of his argument, death looses its horror for you and you think of it musing gently as of something you can understand, you can explain and desire.

Day's activity over we think of sleep with much pleasant anticipation. Life's activity over we shall think of death with the same pleasant anticipation.

Mechnikoff's arguments lead you to the greatest optimism, as he himself was led to it by his faith into the progressiveness of man and of science. His book insistently promises to humanity a life, free from sickness, a healthy and active old age and a death, which all men without exception will seek as a delicious rest.

Naturally enough all this can not happen the day after to-morrow. Mechnikoff may be a dreamer, but he also is a true man of science, who is well aware what incredibly long periods of time were necessary to transform the bulky, ugly, clumsy *archeopterix* into the birds of the air as we know them now. His chief enemy the *appendix* will take a long time to go, with all the poisonous 128,000,000,000 microbes it contains, yet go it must. And this *must* in the mouth of Mechnikoff takes the same assurance and authoritativeness as Tolstoi's promise that human beings will win universal happiness as soon as they abstain from evil doing or any participation in it.

The two thinkers apparently disagree. Mechnikoff's belief in science is absolute; to his mind, there is no hope for humanity without science, but, with science to back him up, there is no limits to the power of man. Tolstoi has no faith whatever in science. He seems to be greatly irritated by Mechnikoff's assurance and to take manifest pleasure in running him down. It really is one of the great puzzles of our day to see this great soul growling and grunting against anything and anybody of whom he disapproves, with all the pettish vehemence of unreasonable old age. Yet so far as Mechnikoff is concerned, just listen to the way Tolstoi speaks *against* him.

According to one of the latest interviewers, Count Tolstoi said:

"It does not matter that we live but a short time, but it matters that we live in the wrong way, that we live against ourselves, against our conscience. We fill our lives with deeds, which we ought not to have done, or else we spend it in a rattle of noisy words. One thing is necessary that the heart of man should awaken, that the thought of God should shine in it. That this thought should be acknowledged by man to be his only guide, the only authority over him, and that he should live as it commands him."

This would seem to be very far removed from Mechnikoff's physiological basis for man's possible welfare. Yet no unprejudiced person could go through the latter's book without noticing, that, for the author, man is above all a "sociable animal." Once our body gets cured, patched up and trained so that to be entirely renovated (probably out of sight or recognition), Mechnikoff sees no more pain ahead of us, no more suffering, nothing but intelligent labour and intelligent enjoyment. And this pleasant future is builded by him on the foundation of the universal solidarity of man, on the instinct of sociability, never on selfishness or disregard for others of the survival of the fittest kind.

And it strikes me that Tolstoi's "not living against ourselves, against our consciences" is closely related to Mechnikoff's "instinct of sociability," free from all egotism.

Listen further. The same interviewer reports that Count Tolstoi spoke as follows:

"Death frightens only him, who has never felt truth in his soul. To such a one it really does appear monstrous and horrible,

because it interrupts in the middle all the most important pursuits of man. But these most important pursuits of man are nothing but an illusion. The acquirement of truth alone is not an allusion. And as soon as this true object of man is accomplished, the man is ready for death at any time."

This again looks very much akin to Mechnikoff's statements, that as soon as all his work is accomplished a man will begin developing the instinct of death.

Both Tolstoi and Mechnikoff have evolved an optimistical system, both, though entirely opposed in their points of departure and their methods reach, the same result, promising to mankind a completeness of happiness, a completeness of life.

It certainly must be a rare and a gratifying sight to watch Count Tolstoi, who, after all the doubts, hesitations, despairs and blank negations of his life, has now reached such perfect peace and happiness of dispassion and serenity, that even chance visitors say that merely to be near him is to feel oneself on a height of moral power and superiority, comparable only to climbing snow-clad mountains. He is seventy-five, and is far from strong in his body, every spring putting him in the danger of death. Death he saw face to face, during his last sickness, and freed himself forever of the fear of death. He has acquired the freedom, which comes of the knowledge of self and the delight he takes in this freedom is so great, that he is never tired telling of it to all who come and go.

There is no more fear in Tolstoi's heart.

Neither is there any fear in the heart of Mechnikoff. He calmly looks forward to the coming death. Yet he has no belief in any kind of continuous life—death is complete annihilation for him. But he trusts and believes that through almighty science this annihilation will be made desirable and welcome.

The religion of science has lit up and purified his life, as the religion of human love has lit up and purified the life of Count Tolstoi.

The resemblance, almost the identity of all the chief points in the lives of these two men, who are so altogether different in every outward detail, seems to point to the fact that besides their two minds, their two hearts, separate for ever, there is a third factor in what they have achieved. This third factor is as essential to them

both, as the air they breath. This third factor smoothes down all the differences, due to the limitations and exaggerations of a personal nature, and enhances and strengthens all that is of universal significance and value in all they have thought and done. This third factor is a bridge on which their two minds could not help meeting in the common ground of their two souls, for it is the spiritual, the other-worldly atmosphere of the nation they both come from.

Both Tolstoi and Mechnikoff have labored in a titanic way, both have achieved great results. Yet the views and hopes of both are erroneous, or at least somewhat erroneous. Why and how—would be a good thing to define in their own minds for the readers of the Theosophical Forum to while away the long leisures of the coming summer.

MUSIC AND THE LAW OF CORRESPONDENCE.

Here comes a matter of largest value: If we read the history of annals and chronicles, with its red record of destruction, we shall find that no cause has been so prolific in killing, in cruelty and all evil, as the difference of race; the barrier which separated the French from the Germans, the Huns from the Austrians, the Italians from the French, the Teutons from the Slavs, has ever been the cause of war. Speech has not sufficed to pass this barrier, because speech has to be translated, in passing from one people to another, and, in the translation, the whole essence and aroma are changed; the common understanding is often lost, and the result is a heightening of the barrier which it was sought to take away. But song is a common speech which needs no translation; and there is no such revelation of the differences of races, and of the meaning of these differences, as the folk-songs of the peoples; take a good and faithful collection of folk-songs of Russia, Germany, France, Italy and Spain, and you have the warp and woof of all European history, through a dozen centuries; you have something that the translated literatures cannot give you, since the savor evaporates from the translated word. Therefore, for those who hold dear the ideal of universal brotherhood, there is no record so precious as the folk-songs of the nations, unless it be the record of religions. But whereas religions give us ultimately the assurance of the oneness of all mankind, since at heart and in their highest inspiration all religions are one, folk-songs give us something more, and in some ways more needful; they give us a sense of the inherent differences of races, and show us why these differences exist. They justify to our hearts and understandings the fact that the Hun is a Hun, that the Russian is a Russian, that the German is a German, that the Frenchman is French. They show in each one of these races a certain quality, a certain color or aroma, a certain essence, which is in no other race, and which, but for the race which possesses it, would leave a blank in the whole chord of human life; and, side by side with this manifestation of the divine purpose of race-difference, they show us that, underneath the difference, all races are one; for, while there are many folk-songs, there is but one music; while there are many men, there is but one mankind.

One might write long of the folk-songs of the nations, taking

them up one by one, and expatiating of their qualities, did space and time lend themselves to the work. But enough has been said for all who are so inclined, to take the matter up, and work it out for themselves. There is one thing more to be said: We find great Nature speaking in folk-songs, and in them telling of the human heart, its sorrows and its exultations; just as Nature speaks in the lesser humanity of the skylark and the nightingale. To the childhood of every race, this period of song belongs. Then comes self-consciousness and with self-consciousness comes silence. The more matured races grow mute. The mid-world takes us away from Nature, without yet bringing us to divinity, and we must pass through the desert, a desert of the heart, as well as of faith and joy and inspiration. It is true that the instinct of song remains, and that specially endowed natures try to carry on the tradition, not merely by taking the folk-songs and developing them into larger works, and by imitating their form and manner, but adding also a new element, the result of a dim groping after the Beyond.

Between the child and the sage, there is no peace. So it is with music. When the child-spirit ceases in a nation, there is silence, until there comes the ripening of genius. To that great ripening, some of our best music, like some painting and poetry, belongs.

So we have, on the one hand, folk-music, which came into being as spontaneously as the birds sing, and whose authors it is almost always impossible to determine; and, on the other, composed music, which has been created consciously, and of which we can say: this is by Bach, this is by Beethoven, this is by Wagner. Folk-music speaks to us of diversity, of the difference of races, and of the spiritual meaning of those differences. Composed music, in so far as it is real, brings us back toward unity, toward the spiritual oneness of the human race.

Among folk-songs, there are the greatest differences of quality and worth. Some are quite trivial; some are full of mere gaiety, but go no deeper; some touch the profoundest depths of human life. There are all shades of human feeling in the folk-songs of the races, from the passion of patriotic war to the crooning of a mother over her infant; and indeed these cradle-songs, these songs of maternity, are among the richest and finest of all departments of the peoples' songs. Then there are, of course, love-songs innumerable, of every

shade of passion and emotion; and one might make a collection, showing exactly how the different nations fall in love: the southerns passionately, the northerns in melancholy, and with many sighs, the people of central nations gaily and with a cheerful heart.

All this belongs to the world from which come the songs of birds: the world of spontaneous feeling. Every shade of human emotion, every feeling of human life, is expressed and made immortal in some of these songs. If we have not lost the natural sense of song, and of openness to song, we can learn the whole world of human feeling from the collected songs of the people who have not yet fallen into the muteness of self-consciousness, when they grow ashamed of feeling, and lose the power to give it expression.

After muteness come the beginnings of a new and self-conscious speech; awkward and tentative, like the gestures of the shy young person. Much of our composed music is full of this awkwardness, and has none of the assured accomplishment which belongs to the song of birds, and of races in the bird-period of song. The singing faculty has awakened, but it has awakened in the midst of a host of other faculties, which have grown up during the muteness of growing self-consciousness. The bird awakes as a human being, with mental faculties, reflection, imitation, memory, fancy, imagination; and the song-power has to struggle into being from among these other faculties, which surround it and hem it in. It has many trials and afflictions, before it regains the sureness and naturalness that it possessed before the fall.

This song power, more or less developed, more or less thwarted and twisted awry, is in all of us. In virtue of it, we all like to listen to music; for the music we hear sets the song-power singing within us by a kind of reflected influence, and we feel that something is going on in us, which is good and satisfactory, and which belongs to a real and natural part of our life. So we listen to music, with varying degrees of enjoyment, with varying fineness of appreciation; but in some way or other we all listen.

The composers of music are simply those in whom the song-power is more awake. It is alive in all of us, but much more alive in these. In the same way, speech is alive in all of us, but eloquence only in some; the reading power is alive in all of us, so that millions of cheap and commonplace sheets find their readers day by day; but

in a few only does the reading power come to the boil, so to speak, and, passing through the transformation into driving force, become the writing power, the power which makes that which it is worth while to read. So it is with the power to compose music. It is simply a faculty we all possess, and which all races enjoyed in the time of their innocence; and which now comes forth in a heightened and representative way in a few, and produces compositions which find their echo in the many.

Growing up amid the forest of our mental powers, the song-power gets more or less tinged and colored by the powers that surround it. Just as eloquence passes through rhetoric into bombast, and finally degenerates into twaddle, so is it with music. Just as there is great and worthy writing, as there is also fine and effective writing, which nevertheless, falls short of being great, and as there are vast masses of writing which have no particular value of any kind, so is it with music. It does not at all follow that, because it is music, it is therefore good; it may, indeed, be unconsciously bad.

But that is a vice of imitation, and in no way detracts from the worth of what is imitated. The thing to keep clear about is, that, in spite of the futility of much composed music, the thing itself is a very real and eternal thing. The music-power is real and universal, and comes out of the very depths of the Oversoul of humanity. For, as in all our arts and sciences, in all our religions and the works of our hearts and souls, there comes a height at which it is no longer the separate man who speaks, but the Oversoul which speaks through him; so is it with Music. There is the tangled forest of the mid-world, to which most composed music belongs. But above this there are heights, there are clear summits that reach up into the blue. There is the Oversoul which begins to speak through mortal lips; as in acts of heroism and devotion, the divine will shines through the human will of weak mankind.

The music-power must do its work in the midst of the stirring and echoing mind. From the mind, it receives many hindrances and acquires many drawbacks. Much of the music even of the greatest composers is of this quality, just as the poets say that sometimes even good Homer nods and drowses off to sleep. It would be interesting, were it not for the peril which lurks in snapshot judgments, to speak of a few of the greatest composers of music, and

to seek to discern what part of the Oversoul, of the collective soul of humanity, they are spokesmen of. Bach would thus stand for reverence; Beethoven for struggling and often thwarted aspiration; Wagner for the heroic valor and passion of the primeval world, gradually passing into the sense of immortality. In the same way, Tschaikowsky stands for human misery and pathos, for songs of woe and lamentations; Liszt for passion too often falling away into mere wordiness, and utterly losing the clear sense of feeling in a flood of indeterminate resonance; Rubenstein, for cold and carefully thought out emotion, artificial, pretentious, insincere.

But far better than such judgments is the awakening of the music-power within ourselves, which will soon enable us to form dozens of judgments just as good and better for ourselves; or, since it is not really the aim of the music-power to form judgments at all, will enable us to feel in ourselves, through music, the reverence expressed by one, the struggling aspiration of another, the heroism of a third; and so enrich our hearts, and draw them closer to the hearts of others, and to that primeval heart, whence all humanity came forth.

(To be Continued).

34

FORTITUDE.

I stood among the gods. One said to me:

"You may rest here in peace if so you will. But you have cried out to us, that you wish to serve. Yet, ere that service can be accepted you must know for yourself its full cost. After knowing which, if your desire still holds strong, you may seek its fulfilment. Look into the abyss below, into the nether world of earth. And not only seek through the powers of mind to understand its darkness, its degradation, its miseries, its despair; but realize, as with an earthly body's acutely sensitive nerves, every pain and torture known to flesh. Knowledge complete and true, won from your own heart's agony, in measure full and overflowing; added to which a realization of the whole world's burden and sorrow, must be your portion ere you can serve and have that service count a gain to man, ere your hands grow strong enough to lift and hold back a little the heavy Karma of the world, ere you have wisdom to pluck from out the soiled, ill-woven woof of human life, a tiny knotted thread replacing therewith a silver strand to lighten its heavy sombreness. Behold! and through our power feel and know. In few short moments that knowledge may be yours. Thus test your power to endure for an unknown period an experience which now is yours for a moment's flash of time."

And lo! I sank unto the nether world. And all its agony supreme of body, mind and soul were mine. Each nerve was knit into the nerves of all the rest. Each heart-throb found its answering pulse in mine. The pull and strain of all the waywardness, the evil impulse in man, likewise drew me with the rest. For now I had full consciousness of being bound-up with the whole. Yet knowing I must hold against and counteract the evil in the minds and hearts of men; nor once give way under the torturing strain. I was as if in the ocean's undertow, being fully caught in which will draw under the most powerful of swimmers.

No words can tell the bitterness of the cup I drank. But greater than suffering of body or mind was my soul's agony and despair in knowing the darkness within the souls of men. And above all my tortures of mind and body, supreme, compelling a vast compassion arose within me and dominated my being.

And from out the darksome depths I cried:

"Ye gods! it is my will to know no peace, no rest, no bliss while I have strength and courage to give my labour in these noisome fields; to uproot their poisoned growths, and to plant the seeds that shall redeem some parts, giving in time promise of a fairer harvest. Oh Mighty One, that I faint not in the task! Lend me of Thy power to endure and hold! Flood full my inmost heart with Thy light divine, helping me never to forget 'tis in Thy service that I toil! In that blessed work, in the hope of some fairer destiny for my fellow-creatures shall I find my happiness, my reward!"

Then the divine Ones, veiling their faces, looked below; answering back:

"Courage to thee! Thou mayest try."

THE OUTLINE OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE.

VI.

SUMMARY.

The Four Lower Planes. The Planetary Chain.

At the dawn of a new Universal Day the sevenfold powers of objectivity begin gradually to unfold. These powers are the offspring of Will, the twin-power with Consciousness, of each and all units of Life, of each and all facets of the eternal luminous diamond, by which we have represented the One Infinite Life. Will is as it were, the luminous ray of each facet; as Consciousness is the facet's power of perceiving the ray; and as the facets are bound together in septenary groups of units, humanities, hierarchies, and higher divine septenaries, so the luminous rays of formative Will are bound together into sevenfold streams, pouring forth from each group of units, humanities and hierarchies. Each ray as we have seen, each formative potentiality, contains within it seven forms or modes by which its objectivity can be manifested. By the operation of the first of these modes, that of incipient differentiation, Consciousness and Will, still almost blended together, tend to stand apart into subjectivity and objectivity, but do not yet actually stand apart. Subjectivity, Consciousness, still includes within itself all possible modes of cognition, and is therefore, just one step removed from the divine infinite Consciousness of Eternity. Objectivity, likewise, still contains within itself all possible modes of manifestation, and is therefore, just one step short of divine absolute Unity.

This highest range of being contains all the potencies of Consciousness and all the potencies of manifestation that we can conceive; and contains besides this, something more, for this highest range is overshadowed by the near presence of the One Divine Infinite Life, not yet veiled by the illusion of differentiation, not yet hidden by the bright phantoms and images of universal day.

In the second range of life the separation is complete. Consciousness is limited to one mode, that of direct cognition. Objectivity is also limited to one mode, that of direct presentation to consciousness; and as all objectivity is thus directly present to perfect cognition, this is the range of omniscience. The higher range is something more than omniscience, because the omniscient knower

not only confronts, but is blended with, the infinite known. These two highest ranges of life, which reflect the near presence and radiance of the Infinite One, may properly be called divine.

The third range is the link between these two and the fully manifested, fully differentiated objectivity. This third range contains as we have seen, the germ of varying intensity, when the luminous beam from each facet of the infinite diamond ceases to be homogeneous and thrills into separate rays. Though infinitely varied like the rays of the spectrum, these luminous rays are gathered together into closely related groups, the types of which are sound, colour, taste, and the other elements of perception, each in its turn infinitely various.

These innumerable rays, that thrill forth from each facet of the infinite luminous diamond, react as it were, on each facet, and establish groups of centers of perception; these nascent centers of specialized perception coalescing together to form the first ethereal vesture or body of each unit of life.

This third range of life contains within it the first germs and undeveloped elements of all forms of perception and objectivity, the types and potencies which are afterwards to be unfolded; these still are limited to one form of manifestation, that of increasing and decreasing intensity.

The bundles of luminous beams and rays which issue from each facet of the One Life are bound together, as we have seen, in septenary streams; and as the formative rays become more defined and developed, they are focused into united groups, related to each facet and each group of facets—to each unit of life, that is, and each group of units, humanities, hierarchies and higher groups.

The rays thus focused, form specialized objectivities for each facet, and for each group of facets—special objectivities, that is, for each unit of life, each humanity, and each hierarchy. These separate activities exist in germ in the third range of life, to be gradually unfolded and developed into fully formed bodies and worlds and systems of suns and stars, in the lower, more external ranges of life.

From this point—the formation of specialized objectivities for each unit, humanity and hierarchy—it is no longer possible to describe the gradual process of manifestation in general terms, appli-

cable to all life. We must henceforth, therefore, confine ourselves to the consideration of one group of units, one humanity or hierarchy; and restrict ourselves to the development of the specialized objectivities, whether bodies or worlds, related to it. The process for all other humanities in the universe is, presumably, the same; and the specialized objectivities related to them are, by analogy, subject to similar developments.

After this third stage—the common field of objective worlds—the specialized objectivities of each hierarchy and humanity gain colour and form, capacity and solidity, expanding through the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh ranges of life. It is only to the last four that the name of "planes" can, with propriety, be applied, and it is to development in these four lower planes that our attention will henceforth be directed. The highest of these four, in which perceptions are spread out into spaces and masses, as we see colour spread out, is the first to reach full development at the beginning of Universal Day. This colour or Fire plane at first is nothing but a glowing sea of intermingling forms and objectivities; through these throbs the rhythmic ebb and flow which is the detailed repetition of the universal ebb and flow of manifestation and dissolution. Under this ebb and flow, this continual circulation and gyration, the glowing sea of forms is gradually moulded into circular vortexes; the specialized objectivity of each hierarchy forming one vortex; and the lesser objectivities related to each humanity are swept into lesser vortexes. As the united consciousness and will of each humanity becomes more definite and individual, these vortexes contract and harden; and from the larger vortexes are formed solar systems; while the lesser become separate planets or worlds; each planet and solar system being, it must be clearly understood, still wholly within the highest external plane, the plane of Fire.

On the planet thus generated by the formative wills of one humanity, the units of that humanity go through a long series of formative, educatory, processes; each unit of Conscious Will forming for itself an ethereal vesture or body, by the reaction of perceptions which we have already described. If a name be thought necessary for this first world, it may be called the incipient Fire Planet, the first ethereal mould of future more material worlds.

When the possibilities of development which it contains are

temporarily exhausted, the formative will of humanity enters another stage by the addition of the element of capacity, and the unfolding of the potencies it contains, a new plane is formed—the fifth, which we have agreed to call the plane of air. Again, the same process of "circumgyratory motion" is generated by the formative Will of humanity, acting in harmony with the eternal ebb and flow; and the fluid sea of forms and objectivities is swept into contracting vortexes, which gradually harden into a second planetary world. To it we may give the name of the incipient Air Planet, the second of the gradually forming chain.

Yet another plane is entered on, when the educatory possibilities of this second world are for the time exhausted; this new plane adding the element of internal change or growth. Again the flowing sea of images is moulded into vortexes; and of these, coalescing, the third world of the chain, the incipient Water Planet, is formed.

Again the same exhaustion of its potentialities takes place; and the tide of formative wills advances to another stage; again the whirling images are wrought together, as the potter moulds the clay on his swiftly-moving wheel, and the most external world of the chain, the planet of solidity, or Earth, is formed.

From this point the tide of formative wills flows back again through the same four planes. The Earth Planet—the first rough pattern of our Earth—is left for the time exhausted, and denuded of its powers, and the life-tide flows back to the plane above.

Here, by the same formative circular force of collective wills, a second Water Planet is formed, different from the first, because more akin to the Earth-world, and enriched with the fruit of earth-life which humanity has gained on the world just left. To this planet, the fifth in the chain, we may give for convenience, the name of final Water Planet, to distinguish it from the first formed image-world, on the same plane.

Once more the wave of humanity flows back to the plane above, by the same vortical forces the final Air-world is formed, the sixth in the chain, differentiated from the former Air Planet by the riches added to it from the lower worlds of the chain.

The seventh, the final Fire-world, is formed in the same way, and the planetary chain is complete. Nothing now remains but to

trace the detailed development of humanity on each planet, and the story of man's birth and growth will be complete.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

Founded by H. P. BLAVATSKY at New York in 1875.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another ,and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics.*

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* to tread in this."

The expenses of the Theosophical Society in America are met by Dues of Two Dollars, and voluntary contributions, which should be sent to the Treasurer T. S. A., Box 1584, New York, N. Y.

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S. A., 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.