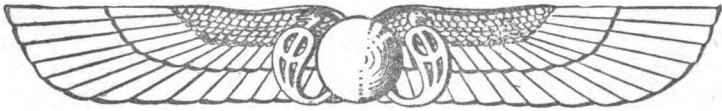


# THE VAHAN



## A VEHICLE FOR THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL NEWS AND OPINIONS.

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MEMBERS and others are invited to send opinions and questions on Theosophical subjects, notes on current Theosophical literature, reports of activities, cuttings of general interest from papers, &c., for insertion in THE VAHAN to W. R. OLD, Gen. Sec. British Sec. T. S., 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W.

JUNE 15, 1891.

NO. 14.

### LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC.

The May number of the *Theosophist* opens with one of the Adyar Convention Lectures, on "The Identity of the Microcosm and Macrocosm," by C. Kotayya. It consists of a brief explanation of the fundamental doctrines of the Adwaita Philosophy, that man is identical with the Universe. Of the article itself we must say that it contains passages of the deepest significance to those who have studied and assimilated the teachings of the *Secret Doctrine*, in their deeper metaphysical relations and aspects. It is also seen how immensely the septenary division which was adopted by Madame Blavatsky and worked out consistently in all her teachings, lends itself to abstract as well as to concrete conceptions. Let us take for instance such a statement as this: "The Universe is the *Logos* in its manifested state; the *Logos*, according to Vedantism and according to all philosophy, being either manifested or unmanifested. In my lecture I do not make any distinction between the manifested and the unmanifested *Logos*, and the manifested and unmanifested *Ego*, but treat the two as one generally." Now the manifested *Ego* is the triad, or upper three principles and the manifested *Ego* is the quaternary or lower four principles. But the lower manifested *Ego* as a personality is an emanation from the higher during incarnation or Manvantara;

the two are in reality one, seen under different aspects. This is looking at the matter microcosmically, but if we take it from a macrocosmic point of view it is just the same. What we call the *Ego*, microcosmically, is in the macrocosm termed the *Logos*, and the *Ego* and the *Logos* are identical. Now the *manifested* universe is the *third* *Logos*, and its symbol is the quaternary or square, while the *unmanifested* universe—which is simply the subjective side or aspect of which the manifested is the objective—is the *second* *Logos*, and its symbol is the triad or triangle. The three *Logoi* are completed by the *first* *Logos* as the point in the circle, giving the idea of the first emanation from absoluteness; but this is not usually dealt with, as the septenary is comprised in the second and third *Logoi*. But as these three *Logoi* are One—a doctrine which has found an echo even in Christian Theology—so the *Ego*, and ‘just as one sun by the help of its own light is reflected as many, in as many vessels, so matter, or *Mâyâ*, that has emanated from the *Ego* itself, reflects that One *Ego* as so many *Egos*; thus the One is the reality, and the many the unreality.’ ”

The series of papers on “Astrology” (as conceived by the Hindus) is continued by Rama Prasad. The present one gives some useful hints on the evolution of the senses, in their relation to solar prana.

“Child Culture,” by F. A. Brodie-Innes, deals with a question of first importance to parents, but does not present it so much in relation to Theosophical as to general principles.

A translation of the *Gharba Upanishad of Krishna Yajur-Veda* gives some interesting information respecting the immediate prenatal state and development of the *Ego*. A considerable knowledge of occult physiology is required in order to understand much of what is stated, but it may be noted here that it is stated that during conception the *Ego* is fully self-conscious, knows that it is about to be born again into the world of effects, and remembers its previous incarnations. This superior state of consciousness is lost at the moment of birth. Compare this with a similar statement in the *Key to Theosophy*, page 162.

Miad Hoyora Koia-Hori continues his interesting series of papers on “Obeah,” and gives some instances of the power of the projection of the double.

E. D. Fawcet contributes a paper (to be continued) on earthquakes, volcanoes and cataclysms, under the title of “An Imprisoned Titan.”

The Theosophical Publishing Society have just issued what is perhaps one of the most important of the many works which they have brought out in a cheap form in order to popularize the sub-

ject of Theosophy. It is an essay by Mr. Wm. Kingsland on "The Esoteric Basis of Christianity," the original being a paper which was read by him before the Blavatsky Lodge on the 23rd April, 1891, under the title of "Theosophy and Christian Doctrine." It sets forth in a clear and concise manner the conclusions which many Theosophists—perhaps we may say the vast majority—have arrived at with respect to the nature of the Biblical record, and more particularly with regard to the teachings which centre round the personality of Jesus of Nazareth, and the Christ of the Gospels and of St. Paul's Epistles. The writer deals with the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity, beginning with the inspiration of the Bible, the nature of prophesy, and the connection between the Old and New Testaments, and passes on to the nature of the "fall" and the "redemption" as typified in Adam and Christ respectively and shows how all the controversial difficulties which surround the subject when it is taken in its mere literal and historical form, vanish the moment we apply the key which Theosophy offers as to the higher spiritual realities which underlie the mere external form of the narrative. Through the liberality of a member of the Blavatsky Lodge the means have been provided to circulate this paper—which is got up in a neat 8vo. pamphlet—in several thousands among those whom it might not otherwise reach; and by this means much of the popular misconception concerning the teachings of Theosophy, and more especially that which regards it as "Esoteric Buddhism"—whatever that may mean to the uninformed—will be counteracted. We need to show to the Western world that Theosophy is Esoteric Christianity as well as Esoteric Buddhism, that it is in fact the basis and unifying principle of all religions; and Mr. Kingsland's pamphlet cannot fail to be of immense service in this direction.

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We wish to direct the attention of all members of the society to the edition of the *Agnostic Journal* published on the 30th May, 1891. It contains rather more than two pages from the pen of the well known writer "Saladin," descriptive of his thoughts and impressions of Madame Blavatsky, her character and her life work. It is probably the most splendid eulogy which has ever been written of her by any one outside of the Theosophical circle, or inside for that matter. We are tempted to quote one paragraph. "Now, through dark death and the crematorium fire, she has passed from among us, ye slanderers. Apart from the nobility of her soul and the magnitude of her achievements, I cherish dearly the memory of one I loved, of a misunderstood one whom I understood, and one of the very few who ever understood me. The mystery to which we are passing may be the richer for her presence; but this

mediocre world of ours is all the poorer for her loss. Her demise falls heavily upon me who was of her brotherhood, but who do not share in the stoical consolations of her creed."

## THE ENQUIRER.

QUERY.—*What advantages has cremation over interment, from a Theosophic standpoint?*

ANS.—Beyond the fact that any system which affords precautions against the spread of disease must be preferable, on mere sanitary grounds, to that at present in vogue, the Theosophist would urge additional reasons for the adoption of the crematory process, one of which we may give. The action of fire upon the body is such as to destroy at once all those elements in it which form the link of connection with the "shade" or astral body. It is only when we come to know the powerful influence exercised by the thought and imagination of living persons upon this shadowy counterpart of the deceased, and understand the intimate connection there is between the lower principles and the ex-carnated Ego who, in its pre-devachanic sleep, is awaiting their final dissolution, that we are able to fully estimate the importance of the crematory process. The number of cases of persons who, from the violent attitudes of their exhumed bodies, seem to have been buried alive, is almost uniformly explained by the occult law of "repercussion" (*vide Isis Unveiled*, vol. 1, p. 387, *et seq.*) The action of evil thought and feeling upon the image of the dead person is such as to exert a direct harmful influence upon it; and on the astral plane thoughts are *living things* having form and substance, and self-defence is as necessary there as here. Death is sleep, and the purpose of sleep is rest. A process therefore which forefends the sleeping soul, and conduces to the speedy attainment of that rest which is the natural complement of the life which is ended, is in harmony with the law of progress and must be good. It has been objected that the crematory process robs the earth of its due and destroys life. This cannot be. No one can destroy life, it is only possible to translate it; and the alchemy of Nature provides for the resolution of the life germs of one element to those of another. While fire destroys at once all the poisonous germs of infection, it restores to the atmosphere all the valuable elements of its gases from which the body was formed, and these enter into new combinations in healthy living organisms. The subject is treated from a sanitary standpoint in Sir. H. Thompson's book on "Modern Cremation." Pam-

phlets can be had free of charge from the Editor of the VĀHAN.

QUERY.—*How is it that H. P. B. so severely criticizes the Western systems of Occultism and yet admits in some of her writings that they lead to the same end as the Eastern system?*

ANS.—H. P. B. knew that the Eastern system was based upon the primeval revelations given to the early races of mankind, and that it had been carefully guarded and taught only under strictly correct conditions, which were actually part of that revelation. Thus it has remained pure and undefiled and is felt as such by all aspirants to its mysteries. On the other hand, the Western systems reached the Europeans through the Egyptians and more especially through the Mosaic channel, by which the primal truths became coloured and distorted, a fact due first of all to the corrupt motives which induced to their study, and secondly to the faulty interpretations given to the traditions by individual writers. The history of Western Occultism shows it to be nothing less than a pot-pourri of individual research and speculation, which disfigured the original truths almost beyond recognition. The Jewish tradition, which is the basis of Western Occultism, is full of national egotism. The Jews claim to be a chosen people, and to this idea all their Occultism is subservient. But chosen for what? Let the Karma of that people say.

By W. Q. J.—It is very true that all systems of Occultism lead to the same end, since all must be based on similar principles however distorted some may be in practice, but the road by one will be more difficult than by another until the real highway of Universal Occultism is reached. It was thought by H. P. B. that true Eastern Occultism was the primeval system and hence better than the Western. For the Western is all overgrown with the weeds sown by Judaism in the beginning and mediæval Christianity in the end. So it will be found that although at bottom Western Occultism has the same doctrines as the Eastern, a vast mass of rubbish has to be carried off in order to get at the truth. Any one who will dive into Rosicrucianism will find those difficulties. It must always be borne in mind, too, that H. P. B. in speaking of Eastern Occultism had in view the real thing and not the many systems in India which would juggle the student quite as much as the things in the Western schools.

Speaking for my own beliefs, I do not think Western Occultism is worthy of the name and is only a hodge-podge that produces confusion when the mere outer crust of virtuous living is mastered. It leads to saintliness but not to that higher knowledge which must be added to the good in order to make them also the wise.

QUERY.—*Is it well to talk about Occultism to the ordinary enquirer into Theosophy?*

ANS. (W. Q. J.)—It is better not to do so. Ordinary enquirers may be attracted to Theosophy because of its mysterious appearance, but that is no reason for giving them just what they demand. For surely later on they will find that the pursuit of the mysteries and the occult is hedged about with many difficulties and that it demands an acquaintance with every other philosophy that ought to have been offered to them when they first enquired. Furthermore it is not the many who are fitted for Occultism, but rather the few, and those few will soon find their way into the path no matter how they may have approached it. Enquirers will then be directed to this philosophy and the ethics of the Theosophical system, as true Occultism springs from philosophy, and its practice is alone safely possible for those who have a right system of ethics.

QUERY.—*It is taught in the "Voice of the Silence" and elsewhere, that to become a Nirmanakaya and a Master of Compassion requires the full and complete sacrifice of self. In view of the fact that with the choice before Them, the Masters of Compassion can only take that which to them appears the best and therefore the most pleasant to their natures, is their any special choice or possibility of sacrifice in it?*

ANS.—The great renunciation is but the final outcome of many sacrifices made in numberless existences, and therefore the direct expression of that principle of selflessness which they have confirmed themselves in by much suffering and a ceaseless effort towards the attainment of that divine life which lives for all, except itself. Self-sacrifice is a virtue, difficult to attain to even in the small things of this transient existence, and how much greater then must be the virtue of entire renunciation of self for the sake of an ideal? "For this thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in Self." The distinction lies in the nature of *self* referred to. It is evident that if we trace things to their origin, we shall find a certain self-centered germ of consciousness lying at the root of all phenomenal existence, which exists because it cannot help existing, and which acts in such and such a way because that particular way is the only one possible to its nature under given conditions. Therefore the man who sacrifices himself to an ideal is in reality only satisfying his own nature, to which the aimlessness of common life is not even a satisfactory cause for mere existence, much less for effort. The human mind conceives of such a life as would afford the means of satisfying the unde-

fined aspirations of the upward yearning for something that alone would make life worth the living; and knowing as it does that Nature does not exert herself in any direction without a purpose, the mind of man learns to think that the ideal life is within a possible grasp of the practical; for it is not plausible that Nature would evolve a soul-function which could not be used, nor a desire which could not be satisfied. And from desiring to thinking, and from thinking to striving, he passes into more and more of possession, sacrificing much, enduring much, hoping ever, "till hope creates from its own wreck the thing it contemplates," painfully but surely proving to himself and to others, "that men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things." We cannot be more than the possible, but we may be less, and herein is the definition of our free-will, and the danger of not having an ideal. And can there be a greater or more beautiful ideal than to consciously coöperate with the Divine Mind for the betterment and progress of the Human Race?

## ACTIVITIES.

There was a crowded meeting of the Chiswick Lodge on Monday, the 1st June, to hear an address from Mr. W. Q. Judge on "Theosophy, what it is and what it is not." There were many visitors and much appreciation was shown by them, as well as by the members, at the way in which the subject was handled and presented by Mr. Judge.

We call the attention of the reader to the forthcoming number of *Lucifer*, the advance sheets of which we have had an opportunity of viewing. The number will contain a series of personal reminiscences of H. P. B. written by members of the staff and others whose particular work in the cause of Theosophy has drawn them into closer contact with her than many whose devotion and work have been not less sincere and efficacious. In addition to these memorabilia, there will be a well executed portrait of H. P. B. in litho-photogravure, on a separate leaf, suitable for framing. The June number of *Lucifer* is, in fact, especially designed to be a tribute to the memory of its Founder and late Editor-in-Chief. As there will be a great demand from the public for this number, our members should order their copies early if they are not subscribers to the journal.

Mrs. Maria Higgins, of Washington, has been selected by the Women's Educational Society of Colombo to superintend a very useful and extensive part of their work among the female natives

of Ceylon. Miss Emily Kislingbury has been elected Treasurer of the W. E. S. for Europe. Her address is 19, Avenue Road, London, N.W.

AMERICA.—A full report of the fifth Annual Convention of the American Section T. S. will appear in this month's issue of *Lucifer*. The report of the General Secretary showed that 19 Branches had been chartered since the last Convention, the only private Branch had opened its doors, three Branches had coalesced to form one, none had died; the total result showing the American Section to consist of 52 Branches in full work. No less than 432 members had been admitted, 23 had resigned, and one had been expelled.

Dr. J. D. Buck, the president of the Cincinnati T. S., who has been staying, with Mrs. Buck, at the Headquarters in London during the past fortnight, has now left England for Paris, whence he will return to America. Dr. Buck is endeared to us by 14 years of active work for Theosophy, and well known to the world by the writing of many useful books of first-class merit, such as *A Study of Man*, etc. His addresses to the Blavatsky Lodge on the occasion of two of its meetings were received with expressions of great interest. Bro. W. O. Judge remains with us until after the European Convention in July, concerning which event our members will be fully informed.

BLAVATSKY LODGE.—The usual monthly conversazione took place on Tuesday, 2nd inst. The lecture hall was arranged to form a large and picturesque studio, an abundance of fresh spring flowers and foliage giving the room an exceptionally bright and refreshing appearance. The conversation of the evening was interspersed with a very good programme of music. Miss Arngard E. Allen, violinist, Miss Alice F. Allen, pianist, and Mr. Aldebert Allen, flautist, led off with a capital trio, and gave evidence of exceptional executive ability and much power of sympathy. "Regret," a violin solo, was feelingly rendered by Miss Arngard Allen, and her brother received much applause for his clever execution of some flute solos. Mdlle. Sara Palma sang "La Giochonda" in her usual brilliant and effective style. Mr. Enes Blackmore sang Beethoven's "Adelaida" with extreme delicacy of expression and afterwards joined Miss Grainger Ker in the duetts "Fiori di Campo" by Ciro Pinsuti, and "Maying" by Gounod, which were rendered with accomplished elegance and power. The room was well filled and the entertainment of the evening fully appreciated by the members and their friends.