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ESSAYS ON THEOSOPHY

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PREFACE

TO those who remain content with the Church doctrine as preached by the clergy of to-day, and also with the self-guiding laws, void of Soul and Spirit, believed in by modern material scientists, it is advised that such beliefs be retained so long as they continue to supply comfort and satisfaction, and that the study of Theosophy for these persons be deferred ; meanwhile this book is offered firstly to Christians who have awakened to the fact that while for centuries they have been accepting their ideas of Christianity, ready made, from the hands of former generations, humanity, in the inevitable upward turn of its evolutionary course, has been slowly but surely transcending them, and from an ever-improving basis of mentality reaching out for something more satisfying than the empty husks of the religion which fed its forefathers ; and, secondly, to scientists who have become, or are becoming, aware that Root-Religion and Science cannot be separated inasmuch as they constitute the dual parts of the perfect Whole of that mechanism of Divinity which formed the *modus operandi* of Creation.

It is through the medium of Theosophy (the soul of Science) that Spiritual wisdom, which greatly transcends all mundane knowledge, is imparted to it and leads it to heights of achievement undreamed of by materialists.

Were it not, however, already known in Theosophical circles that the seven Occult keys to the mystery of the genesis of man now held by the Secret Records must eventually fall into the hands of the men of research in the department of Symbology, Theosophists might hesitate to state truths which, unsupported by material proof, are doomed to disbelief by the majority until verified by the discoveries of some other body of workers. Without the help of Symbology, with its seven departments, of which the moderns know so little, no ancient scripture can ever be understood. For no Egyptian papyrus, no Indian olla, no Assyrian tile nor Hebrew scroll, should be interpreted literally, but the purer the thought—either racial or individual—the greater the ability to pierce the Emblematical, Symbolical, or Allegorical “blinds” thus purposely introduced in order that knowledge which would prove dangerous in the possession of individuals or races morally unfit (because cyclically unready) to receive it should be withheld. It is for this reason that all exoteric scriptures, including the Puranas¹ and the Bible, are written emblems, or, in other words, a series of graphic pictures which (allegorically explained) unfold an idea in a succession of panoramic views recognisable only by the Initiates.

“And he said unto them, Unto *you* it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God ; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables.”²

¹ Very ancient religious works which, in addition to the Tantras (which see) are the foundations of the Creed of the Brahminical Hindoos.

² St Mark, iv. 11.

A careful study of Theosophy discloses the Science of good and evil, and convinces man that he cannot, under any circumstances, act in opposition to natural (Divine) law without incurring the penalties which keep him standing amongst "those who are without," but that, subject only to certain limitations of natural endowment, he is the arbiter of his own destiny and has but to choose between right and wrong living ; it shows him, moreover, that he is capable of doing, learning, seeing, and understanding a very great deal more than is ordinarily supposed, and that when he *does* rise above mediocrity, it is not a question of luck, nor chance, nor fate, but of faith, faith in the ability of the God within himself to do that which he has set himself to do. Christ invariably testified to the impossibility of achievement without this great principle of the law, for though He readily healed those whose faith could make them whole, in His own country, where His own great faith was generally unreciprocated, "He did not many mighty works *because of their unbelief.*"

I. E. TAYLOR.

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OUTLINES OF THEOSOPHY

A

ESSAYS ON THEOSOPHY

OUTLINES OF THEOSOPHY

To the mentally lazy or to the obtuse, Theosophy must remain a riddle, because no writer is prepared to do his reader's thinking for him, but as it is becoming every day more and more obviously the duty of those who have studied it to set forth its tenets to intelligent thinkers who have not yet done so, the following explanations are offered to those who are ready to receive them. Theosophy is not a religion but a philosophy, at once religious and scientific, and may be described as the Science of the Mystery of Christ, or Divine Wisdom, which its name signifies; the term is many thousand years old and comes to us from a school of philosophy founded by Ammonius Saccas of Alexandria, and known as the Neoplatonists or Philalethians, the latter name meaning lovers of truth. These Alexandrian philosophers, who were called by various other names, were the Theosophists of the early centuries, and the object of the system was then, as now, to impress upon the minds of its disciples and others certain great moral truths and to reconcile all religions, sects, and nations under a common system of ethics based on eternal verities. For Theosophy teaches us that, what-

ever pains a man may be at to draw lines of demarcation between his own particular creed and those of his brother Christians of other denominations, every Christian religion and every creed sprang from the trunk of the one Root-Religion of the ancients, therefore the world's religions (no matter what we elect to call them), are all based upon one and the same truth, although both nations and individuals view this truth only from their own particular standpoints in the world's spiritual evolution. Every ancient religion, or rather philosophical cult, consisted of an esoteric or secret teaching and an exoteric or outward form of public worship, and the mysteries of the ancients comprised with every nation the greater or secret and lesser or public mysteries. The priests of the ancient nations never imparted their real philosophical secrets to the masses, but allotted them only the husks. Northern Buddhism also has its esoteric and its exoteric schools, nor can anyone blame them for such secrecy—for who would feed a flock of sheep on learned dissertations on botany instead of on grass, or, in other words, cast pearls before swine. Pythagoras called his Gnosis "the knowledge of things that are," and preserved that knowledge only for his pledged disciples, who could digest and feel satisfied with such mental food, and whom he pledged to silence and secrecy; and the biographers of Ammonius Saccas tell us that he bound his pupils by oath not to divulge his "higher doctrines" except to those who had already been instructed in preliminary knowledge, and who were also bound by a pledge. Finally we find the same secrecy

observed in early Christianity among the Gnostics, and even in the teachings of Christ, who invariably spoke to the multitudes in parables, having a twofold meaning explaining His reasons only to His disciples. "Unto you," he says, "it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."¹

We see then that from the earliest ages there has always been both a spiritual interpretation of Divine truth for those who have ears to hear and a dead-letter rendering or external covering of the same for those who have not. But this does not imply that those who have not ears to hear never will have them; it simply means that they are what Theosophists call "younger souls," who, not having evolved to the point of ability to receive spiritual truths, must take their religion in the only form suited to their mental capacity. The teachings of Theosophy are far more complicated and metaphysical than either spiritualism or current religious thought, and he is wise who gradually secures his neighbour's interest in them by his own exemplification of their virtues before attempting elaborate explanations of a science so abstruse and difficult of assimilation by minds which have been trained in Western thought; therefore, after stating here, as briefly and as simply as possible, just a little of what Theosophy is and also a little of what it is not, I propose to call your attention to some points of difference between it and the doctrines of Modern Christianity as preached in our

¹ Gospel of St Mark, iv. 11.

churches of to-day and to ask you, at your leisure, to judge between the two. Let us, however, begin by understanding the difference between abstract Theosophy and the Theosophical Society by carefully noting that while the former is the reflection of divine wisdom, love and purity on earth, the latter, as a body, is but human nature striving to ascend to its original source, for, understanding that God is Spirit and can therefore only reflect Himself through the purest human temples, every true Theosophist strives daily and hourly so to purify himself as to be able to meet and reflect more or less (according to the measure of his own effort) of this Divine essence of love and purity which is always descending over all humanity but is retained only by those who are ready to receive it. Theosophy is pre-eminently a doctrine of self-sacrifice, and it warns its followers to rely for their spiritual, and also physical, well-being upon deeds rather than creeds, for a man's creed is serviceable only in so far as it leads him on to a common ground of purity and truth whereon the brotherhood of man, which Jesus taught, may become less impracticable than it is now; but his deeds, as also his words and thoughts, are all so much stock-in-trade which he is perfectly at liberty to use both to his own and his neighbour's advantage or, alack, disadvantage according to his own good or evil desires; and, as selfishness with the human family has become almost a fine art, it requires but little reflection to arrive at the conclusions that, until man can be given a more practical reason than modern theology offers as to *why* he is his own enemy if he intentionally

wrongs his neighbour or in any other way places himself in opposition to the laws of nature, until it can be brought home to him that, apart from all sentiment, there is a scientific, fundamental *law* underlying the principle of Divine justice; until, in short, he can understand and appreciate the purpose of his being there can be no such thing as true brotherhood amongst us. Theosophists are respecters of all religions and have a profound admiration for the religious ethics of Jesus, whose teachings, which have come down to us, are the same as those of Theosophy and so far, therefore, as modern Christianity makes good its claim to be the practical religion taught by Jesus Theosophists are with it hand and heart, but so far as it goes contrary to those ethics, pure and simple, Theosophists are its opponents. The comparison between the teachings of Jesus and the doctrines of the Church has frequently been made, and often with great learning and critical acumen—both by those who would abolish Christianity and those who would reform it, and the aggregate result of these comparisons goes to prove that, in almost every point, the doctrines of the Church and the practices of Christians are *in direct opposition to the teachings of Jesus*. The Theosophical Society has branches respectively composed of Buddhists, Hindoos, Mahommedans, Parsees, Christians and Freethinkers, who work together as brethren on the common ground of Theosophy because the deeper one penetrates into the meaning of the dogmas and ceremonies of all religions the greater becomes their apparent underlying similarity, until finally a perception

of their fundamental unity is reached and this unity is Theosophy, the secret doctrine of the ages which, diluted and disguised to suit the capacity of the multitude and the requirements of the time, has formed the living kernel of of all religions ; therefore, Theosophists are accustomed to say to the Buddhist, the Mahommedan, the Hindoo, or the Parsee : "The road to Theosophy lies, for you, through your own religion," because these creeds possess a deeply philosophical and esoteric meaning explaining the allegories under which they are presented to the people ; but the same thing cannot be said to Christians, because the successors of the Apostles never recorded the *secret doctrine* of Jesus the "mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven"—which it was given to them (His Apostles) alone to know. These have been suppressed, destroyed, and the stream of time has only brought down the maxims, the parables, the allegories and the fables which Jesus expressly intended for the spiritually deaf and blind to be revealed later to the world and which modern Christianity either takes literally or interprets according to the fancies of the Fathers of the Secular Church ; in both cases they are like flowers severed from the plant on which they grew. Were Theosophists, therefore, to encourage Christians, as they do the votaries of other creeds, to study their own religion for themselves the consequences would be, not a knowledge of the meaning of its mysteries, but either a revival of Mediæval superstition and intolerance, accompanied by a formidable outbreak of mere lip prayer and preaching, or else a great increase of scepticism. For

Christianity has no esoteric foundation known to those who profess it; even the highest dignitary of the Church must be only too painfully aware that he knows absolutely no more of those "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" which Jesus taught his disciples than does the most illiterate member of his congregation.

The Christian religion as it now exists is composed of the husks of Judaism, the parings of Paganism and the ill-digested remains of Gnosticism and Neoplatonism, which curious conglomerate has gradually formed itself round the recorded sayings of Jesus, and which now, after the lapse of ages, has begun to disintegrate and fall away from the precious gems of Theosophic truth which it has so long overlaid but could not destroy. To rescue these precious gems from the fate which threatens the rubbish requires a knowledge of the secret doctrine as it exists in the esoteric foundation of other religions, and this knowledge is not in the hands of the clergy, for the Church has hidden, and since lost, the keys; so you see, in plain language, it amounts to this, that those Christians of other denominations whom we denounce as heathens possess a far deeper knowledge of the mystery of Christ than does the Orthodox Church, and if so-called Christian missionaries would stoop to examine the tenets of other religions before they condemn them they might save the often valuable though misguided lives which are now so constantly sacrificed to man's over-anxiety to train his neighbour before he has trained himself. We all know that Christians in their lives often rise above the level of

their Christianity and that churches contain many noble and virtuous men and women anxious to do good in their generation according to their lights and opportunities; full of aspirations to higher things than those of earth, in short, followers of Jesus in spite of their Christianity, and for these Theosophists feel the deepest sympathy; for only a Theosophist, or a person of delicate sensibility and great theological learning, can justly appreciate the tremendous difficulties with which the tender plant of natural piety has to contend as it forces its root into the uncongenial soil of Christian civilisation and tries to blossom in the cold and cheerless atmosphere of Theology; yet how rarely does it strike Christians that God and spirit could possibly exist in any other form than that under which they are presented in the doctrines of their Church.

Theosophy teaches men to be just, kind and true, because justice, kindness and truth are all attributes of Divinity and man is intended to be the reflection of Divinity in the physical world—divine principles lie dormant in every one of us, and our purpose here is to cultivate them into practical action for the advancement alike of our own and our neighbour's spiritual evolution and final restoration to that divine source whence we have all come, and to which all that is best and purest about us must return, not necessarily because the Bible says so, but because it is an immutable law of nature that like shall attract like, and consequently all that is divine in human nature must gradually rise towards, and finally mingle with, its parent source just as naturally as all that is of the earth

must remain tied to earth. The churches, however, have never taught men any other or higher reason why they should be just, kind and true than the hope of reward and the fear of punishment; thus while Theosophy urges man towards moral living by showing him that salvation comes of individual effort, the Church cuts the very ground of spiritual progression from beneath his feet by teaching the doctrine of his natural depravity. Yet it claims that Christianity is the only true religion, and the evil consequences of this teaching are terrible, because when people discard dogma they fancy that they have discarded the religious sentiment also and conclude that religion is a superfluity in life, a waste of energy which could be more profitably expended in the struggle for existence. The Materialism of this age is therefore the direct consequence of the Christian doctrine that there is no ruling power in the universe, and no immortal spirit in man except those made known in Christian dogmas, for when men let go their belief in Divine caprice and Divine injustice as represented by Orthodox Christianity, the foundations of their morality are sapped and self-interest becomes the only motive for conduct, the fear of being found out the only deterrent from vice.

If the energy evinced in building churches were a measure of religion this would be a pious age indeed, for never was dogma better housed, though human beings may have to sleep by thousands in the streets; and these churches are all built in the name of Him "who had not where to lay his head," of Him who tells us that religion

is *within* us, not in temples made with hands. The churches do not recognise the quickly growing germ of the Christ Spirit in the hearts of thousands whom they brand as infidels and madmen, yet amongst these there is the same spirit of love, of self-sacrifice, of immense pity for the ignorance, the folly and the sufferings of the world which appeared in its purity in the heart of Jesus as it had appeared in the hearts of other holy reformers in other ages and which is the light of all true religion, the light by which Theosophists of all times have endeavoured to guide their steps along the narrow path that leads to salvation. A community must have a religion—that is to say, a uniting bond—under penalty of social decay and material annihilation, and a religion is true in proportion as it supplies the spiritual, moral and intellectual needs of the time, and helps the development of mankind in these respects, but false in proportion as it hinders that development and offends the spiritual, moral and intellectual portion of man's nature. For instance, the spiritual ideas of the ruling powers of the universe entertained by an Oriental Sage would be as false a religion for the African savage as the grovelling fetishism of the savage would be false for the sage, although both views must necessarily be true in degree, because both represent the highest ideas attainable by the respective individuals of the same cosmico-spiritual facts. We all see the same spirit of truth, but from different points of view ; therefore it is not a difference of religion which separates the races of mankind but a difference of cyclic evolution, and no man can

force his own perceptions of divine truth upon his neighbour without injury to both ; neither is there any necessity to compel our fellow-men to see as we see, for whosoever is ready to receive a higher, purer, and more practical religion than that which has hitherto satisfied him will be (by natural law) attracted towards those persons who are fitted to supply him with the information he requires, and when he is thus seen to be ready it is the duty of any Theosophist who has it in his power to teach him, for the fundamental tenet of Theosophy is the brotherhood of man.

And now, in conclusion of this discourse, we shall do well to consider the nature of the mischief arising from the adoption of the Mosaic law, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." It has already been stated that the Church claims Christianity to be the only true religion, and I do not think any Christian would be prepared to deny that Christ is the head of the Christian Church. Nevertheless, all his altruistic teachings, which so thoroughly pave the way towards brotherhood, have become merely theoretical matter for pulpit oratory, while the precepts of practical selfishness taught in the Mosaic Bible, and against which Christ so vainly preached, have become ingrained into the innermost life of the Western nations. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" has become the first maxim of the law ; but Moses made laws to suit the hardness of the hearts of the people, so, also, do we, in our generation. It was not so, however, with the gospel of Christ, which was for all times, and all persons having ears to hear. Christ's precepts on the manner in which we are

to treat our enemies, persecutors and slanderers are in direct opposition to the Mosaic teachings. Moreover, He repeatedly tells us, in varied terms, "to mind not the teaching of them of old times," meaning Moses and others. He is ever at pains to point the difference between laws made to suit the slowly growing mentality of the physical world and those which were instituted by Deity in the beginning. In the fifth chapter of the Gospel of St Matthew, for instance, we may mark the wide difference between Christ's teaching of the law of Divine justice as it existed in the beginning and that which has since been made by man to suit the hardness of our hearts : Christ says : "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth ; but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil ; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven : for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye ? do not even the publicans the same ? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others ? do not even the

publicans so?¹ Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Now this is alike the law of deity (otherwise Nature) and the Gospel of Christ, which the Church, the law and the greater portion of mankind find impossible of application in the physical world because they are ignorant of the nature of the basis from which it springs ; and so long as the orthodox Church draws an arbitrary line between herself and science, and ignores the value of Christian doctrines other than her own, she will remain thus ignorant, and continue to "teach for doctrines the commandments of men," for the precept of love your enemies, which Jesus taught, has a purely scientific basis, which, briefly stated, is this: When pure love is sent forth from the subjective mind of man it manifests as a constructive force having its own particular high yellow rate of vibration. Anger, being an emotion and proceeding from the objective mind, vibrates at a lower rate, which is red. An enemy sends a red current of thought towards you ; but if you send loving thoughts in return, you are projecting a yellow rate of vibration, which is infinitely higher and more forceful than the red, and so the yellow deflects the red and it never reaches you. The higher rates of vibration will protect you from harm, and if you live according to ethical principles you attain a high quality of thought or vibration.

Thought is the creative power of life, and the teachings

¹ Publicans were regarded as so many thieves and pickpockets in the days of Christ, and among the Jews the name and profession of a publican was the most odious thing in the world ; yet they were only Roman tax-gatherers, occupying the same position as British officials in India and other conquered countries.

of Christ and the scientific researches of men both show us that thought is vibration. Thought vibration is coloured according to its rate; its rate being determined by its quality—the higher and purer the thought the more rapid the rate of vibration and the paler the yellow shade of colour. The higher your thought vibrations are the greater your power over all that exists in the physical world, from mineral up to man. The action of thought vibration is governed by the great scientific law of attraction and repulsion whereby the thoughts and emotions of persons of similar coloured rates of vibration are attracted towards each other—as a magnet draws a needle—until they finally mingle and by amalgamation produce larger results; on the other hand dissimilar rates cannot blend. And so the higher deflects the lower, which means that, wherever anger is met by love, the projector of the angry vibrations, instead of sharing the evil effects of his anger with the person he is angry with, as would have been the case if both had projected angry thoughts, receives the *whole* of the ill effects himself, because the red current, having been deflected by the yellow one projected by the good person, has no alternative but to return to its sender; and thus a significant sidelight may be cast upon the scientific value of the time-honoured adage: “Curses are like young chickens, *they always come home to roost.*” In cases where both the projector and the receiver of evil thoughts are angry, the red current flows uninterruptedly between the two, each person thereby receiving his just due of evil effects. The good vibrations of a good man’s

thought blend and swell the current of good, so likewise do the evil vibrations of a bad man's thought blend with the universal evil ; but good is a positive force, whereas evil is negative, and though the two forces are absolutely necessary to each other for the purpose of progression in physical life, it is law that the positive shall finally overcome the negative ; it is law, moreover, which, although Divinely instituted in the beginning, is mechanical in its action and impossible of alteration, as Christ and all other great reformers knew, though the majority of persons are even now as ignorant of its very existence as were the Pharisees when they accused Christ of casting out devils by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils ; in other words, of casting out a negative force by the power of its own vibrations—a scientific impossibility as opposed to the law, “one jot nor one tittle of which shall pass until all be fulfilled.” If the *science* of good and evil were logically dealt with in the pulpit, sheer, level-headed common-sense would lead most persons to see *how* they were injuring themselves in deceiving their neighbours, and also how, by honourable and pure thought, they attract the honourable thought of others. But we are advancing towards the time when the impossibility of curing evil with evil will be more generally recognised, and the Mosaic law, which is now practised throughout our so-called civilised countries, will have served its turn in providing us with that wisdom which results from bitter experience. “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth ” has never stamped out crime in any nation, but love has

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transformed the greatest criminals into holy men. Therefore as the purpose of physical life is progression towards spiritual wisdom, ripened understanding must result in reorganisation of constitutional law. Purity is the keynote to spiritual knowledge, and to all who persistently turn the hearts (otherwise the vibrations) of their enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and overcome evil with good, the conditions of heaven may become manifest on earth.

THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA AND
REINCARNATION

THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA AND REINCARNATION

WHEN properly understood, the doctrine of Karma is well calculated to guide and assist those who realise its truth to a higher and better mode of life ; for not only our actions but our thoughts also are assuredly followed by a crowd of circumstances which will influence for good or evil our own future, and also the future of many of our fellow-creatures ; and it is the fact that every thought and act through life carries with it for good or evil a corresponding influence on others, as well as on ourselves, which renders a strict sense of justice, morality and unselfishness so necessary to future happiness or progress. For, whatever crumbs of comfort the Orthodox Christian may gather from his belief in the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus, the believer in Karma fully realises that a crime once committed, or an evil thought sent out from the mind, is past recall ; no amount of repentance (either death-bed or otherwise) can wipe out their results in the future, for Karma, which is the natural law of cause and effect, working as automatically and as surely as that of gravitation, has no mercy and knows no vengeance ; it neither creates nor designs anything ; it is Man himself who does both, and Karmic law merely adjusts the effect of the causes

which he produces; this adjustment, moreover, being but universal harmony, tending ever to resume its original position, just as a growing bough forcibly bent to the ground rebounds with corresponding vigour; thus, whatever the nature of the cause put forth by man, Karma will unfailingly return to him, and to those whom he either injures or enriches by his thoughts, its exact measure of effects, either in this present life, or during the next rebirth, for the law of Karma is inextricably interwoven with that of reincarnation, which is clearly the only doctrine capable of explaining to us the mysterious problem of good and evil and reconciling man to what appears to be the terrible injustice of life. Our ignorance of those ways which one portion of mankind calls the ways of Providence, another chance and another luck, would disappear if we would but attribute all these to their correct cause; if we could but realise that there is no destiny but what we ourselves determine, no salvation or condemnation save that which we ourselves bring about. The doctrine of Karma, however, offers no shelter for culpable actions, and necessitates a sterling manliness; for which reason, it is to be feared, it is less popular among weak natures than the easy religious tenets of vicarious atonement, intercession and death-bed conversions. Karma is the Divine law of retributive justice, and although its action is automatic and unintelligent no more perfect and ideal form of reward and punishment can be offered to humanity than the absolute working of cause and effect. This great fundamental principle which works in nature, as it does in man, can

neither be administered nor altered by any power in the universe, and on awakening to true spiritual wisdom man is, at first, appalled by the vast difference between the mighty power of those natural forces whose Divinely directed action has been, and is, answerable for the creation, evolution and disintegration of all things and that dogmatic nakedness of the so-called Christian system which, by converting spiritual principles into physical personalities, has dragged down true Christianity to a degrading materialisation as hopeless even of physical comprehension as it is impossible of spiritual application.

Orthodox Christians believe the natural forces of the universe to be quite apart from religion, and it is for this reason that, with all their material conceptions concerning the origin of life, scientists come nearer towards the elucidation of Divine truth than those who have been appointed to teach it in our churches. It is often objected by persons who have only cursorily studied it that Karma is a fatalistic law; but although in one sense it may be said to be destiny it has only to be made clear that it is destiny of man's own making throughout a series of lives lived out upon this earth, when the superiority of the Divine scheme of justice over that conceived and practised by man appears, and a flood of light illuminates St Paul's beautiful interpretation of this law in the words "As a man soweth so shall he also reap."

Briefly, then, the doctrine of Karma is that we have made ourselves what we are by former actions and are building

our future eternity by present actions ; every individual is making Karma either good or bad in each action and thought of his daily round, and is, at the same time, working out in this life the Karma brought about by the acts and desires of the last. In all walks of life we are struck by what, to the superficial student of spiritual law, appears to be the unreasoning injustice of a blind God. We see the noble-minded man, through no apparent fault of his own, overtaken by poverty, sickness and misfortune, while honour is paid to the shallow-souled profligate luxuriating in an ever-increasing wealth. To the superficial observer the position of the shallow-souled individual appears at once desirable and unfair. Such an observer will object to the apparent flourishing of the wicked because he can see no reason for it, and he will urge that, in strict justice, the positions of the two men ought to be reversed ; but this is only the inevitable opinion of a well-intentioned materialist who judges the visible effects of a cause which, by reason of his own unbelief, is invisible to him ; but to the student of spiritual law, who recognises material life as the manifestation of thought, the position of the wealthy profligate is obviously the more deserving of pity ; for he can see both men, not as they appear to be, but as they are, the poor one rapidly scaling the ladder of spiritual wisdom leading to more abundant life ; the rich one unable to reach even its lowest rung. It is no haphazard accident of fortune which has placed these two men where they are. Their present conditions are the materialisation of former thoughts and desires. Years ago, either in his present life

or a former one, the poor man was surrounded by the worldly honours and riches now enjoyed by the profligate, but he stood upon a higher level of spiritual evolution and, being an "older soul," sickened of wealth and the insincerities of his so-called friends and longed for a simple life and honest companions ; the desire for simple life occupied the greater part of his mind for years, maybe for a lifetime. But all the while he was thus earnestly thinking he was unconsciously creating the force which finally materialised his own strong thoughts and desires into his present condition and environment, for Karma decrees that no man shall progress in moral worth and spiritual understanding without passing through the fire of suffering ; therefore, in making good Karma we are at the same time casting out the bad. And it is just this casting out of the bad Karma which excites the pity and indignation of the materialist, because he is so loth to acknowledge that the experience which produces wisdom is born of pain ; yet the noble-minded man, *because* he suffers for awhile and without blaming others, is freeing himself by leaps and bounds from the power of the great law of Karma to which the profligate is binding himself the closer by every act of self-indulgence. Provided, therefore, that sorrow, suffering, and misfortune are resolutely met and nobly borne, the quicker they fall upon the man who is beginning to see the light of true wisdom, the better will it be for him, for he *must* reap the harvest of the evil he has sown in ignorance, and the quicker he can do so the quicker will his heart's desire materialise. The Bible tells

both the Orthodox and the true Christian that the state of those who suffer is to be preferred to that of those who do not ; inasmuch as the time of the sufferer's redemption "draweth nigh." But the Orthodox Christian can scarcely be blamed for attributing this statement to mere Biblical sentiment, for its interpretation lies hidden amongst those "mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven" of which the Church is ignorant ; nevertheless it is law—the same law which Jesus taught, that we shall learn wisdom only after "that we have suffered a while." We suffer while we are ignorant of the laws of nature but when we have learnt wisdom through the experience which this suffering brings "the time of our redemption draweth nigh." When we understand that the rich profligate whose case we have been considering will, in his next rebirth upon this earth, manifest his present deformed ideas of happiness in the deformity of his own body and his vicious life in loathsome diseases of his own flesh ; that even as he now wrongs others so will he himself be wronged when he has neither wealth nor intellect to use in self-defence, we cannot but pity the ignorance which makes him content with his present position. Man suffers no injustice from the rule of Karma, because it is a doctrine of freewill—the freewill power limited, it is true, by natural law inasmuch as it cannot override the law that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" but it can provide that the seed sown shall be such as shall yield a bountiful harvest and therefore it is only until man is sufficiently evolved to *know* this that mistakes in life are inevitable, as he grows

towards realisation of the fact that he is a manifestation of his own prevailing thought he will also grow more charitable in his judgment of his fellow-men, whose characteristics, like his own, are all reflected in their faces, for beautiful thoughts held constantly in the mind produce beautiful expressions of countenance; truth and honour manifest in physical grace, moral courage in dignity, while on the other hand deceit looks out of furtive eyes, fear shuffles with uncertain gait, and sensuality is reflected in coarseness of face, form, and voice. Most of us realise the importance of exercising control over our words and deeds, but few reason that far greater care should be taken in the selection of our most prevailing thoughts which form the creative force of both words and deeds, for verily it is thought which makes us what we are and carries with it a real power for good or ill (according to its quality) to other persons of whom we think. Fair words devoid of corresponding fairness of thought harm both him who speaks and those who hear, because in the hearts of the hearers the words materialise into the insincerity felt by the speaker and thence return to him in the form of incredulity and disbelief; whereas the habitually pure thinker has no need of arguments, or even words, to draw the love, respect and willing servitude of those who come in contact with him, his presence alone will suffice to attract from others a full measure of the pure, honest quality of thought which he gives out to them. Thus by just, wise and beautiful thoughts do we, by nature's law, beautify ourselves and our environments, for most truly

has St Paul said : " As a man thinketh in his heart so *is* he." It has already been stated that the law of Karma is inseparable from that of reincarnation, and when we fully realise, instead of merely believe, that the soul is immortal we find no other doctrine which offers so satisfactory an explanation of man's history and destiny, for we cannot fail to see the utter unreasonableness of the notion that a spirit which has existed through all eternity is breathed into a body which it is to inhabit, at best, only a few years, and that in that body, and in that short time, it has to solve the problem of its happiness or perdition, its life or death through all the ages of eternity beyond. If the perfecting of the soul by experience is the great object of life then the curtailment of physical life before that experience has been gained is obviously inconsistent with the absolute justice which the devotees of Christianity attribute to their God ; but if we, holding our destinies in our own hands, choose to make a bad use of our time in one physical life, who can quarrel with the perfect justice of the law of Karma which obliges us to return to physical life and to an environment which will ensure the gathering up for ourselves of the exact equivalent of the seed which we have sown. The false notion of the relative importance of body and spirit, however, which obtains amongst Christians of to-day, presents a formidable bar to a belief in reincarnation, for although they have always *said* that the body is merely a covering of clay they experience considerable difficulty in realising that the spirit is I, the true individuality, and therefore imagine that in

the next physical rebirth they will not be themselves but somebody else, thus disclosing a peculiar confusion of ideas most difficult to combat. We know that many of our thoughts never find fruition in this life, and therefore, in following up Theosophical beliefs, it is as logical as it is just that at death the accumulated thoughts of the lifetime should cling to the individuality, and form, when the time of reincarnation arrives, the model on which the new personality is built, and that these thoughts should form the disposition, temperament, natural inclination and ability, so that a person who has devoted special attention to one branch of thought or class of study in one incarnation will begin life in the next with a "genius" for that particular subject; and in the same way with purely spiritual attainments, he who in this life sinks the ideas of self, controls his lower nature and lives for the good of others, so far as his circumstances permit, will begin the next life with a strengthened power of self-control and with a nature more pure, more spiritual and more powerful for good—the inverse, of course, is also the case, the man who, when he is offered the choice, persistently refuses good and who rejoices in iniquity will re-enter life in circumstances fitted to his debased habits; nevertheless the fact that a person gives way to sin in this life does not necessarily prove that he is going downward; it merely shows that the particular temptation to which he gives way is one which his spirit has not yet learnt to control, his temptations and liability are the result of the thought forms of a previous life; but if his higher nature strives against temptation, the striving

alone will give him strength while creating new and better thought forms which will lead him to victory in the future even though the temptation triumphs for the time. It is not possible for man, during the one short life on earth allotted to him by the Christian system, to reap the full harvest of the seed which he has sown, and although the sinner, on passing out of what he believes to be his only existence on this earth, may cling to the thought of repentance and forgiveness, he cannot but question the soundness of a teaching which thus gives men licence to commit every possible sin and awards no justice to the victims of their crimes, for if the God of Christianity is a God of justice this doctrine is none of His.

On the other side of what we now call death, the sinner will awaken to the knowledge that Divine forgiveness does not imply escape from Karmic law, for retributive justice is not a matter of sentiment but of Science, and though forgiveness be Divine, and absolutely necessary to our progress here, it does not, and never was, intended to screen us from the effects of evil doing ; otherwise the great Divine fundamental law of justice would be as imperfect as that which we have made ourselves and which teaches us to consider whether it be *politic* to punish the rich and influential person as rigorously as the poor and unbenefriended. Christ forgave, but he did not judge because he knew that all men must be judged by their own thoughts and words, without which faultless system of justice they could never work out the salvation which was, and is, in them ; therefore He worked in unity with the law, never

in opposition thereto.¹ Thus, though we may be forgiven, we, ourselves, must set right the mischief we have done, and accordingly we return again and again to earth for the purpose of picking up those burdens which properly belong to us but which we, in our selfishness, have cast upon the backs of others; over and over again we come until we have paid back to the uttermost farthing every debt we owe. It is in the course of payment of these moral debts that we see men and women in all conditions of grief and suffering around us and although Theosophists know that there is not an accident of their lives, nor a single misfortune, that could not be traced back to their own doing in this or in another life, they withhold neither sympathy nor charity from the sufferers, for both are Christlike, though they *do* maintain that a cup of cold water given by their own hands into those of the sufferer himself is of far more moral value than are the vast sums of money collected by persons who come between the donors and the objects of their charity, because it is not money but sympathy which permanently binds the units of the human race. So-called charitable persons of fashionable life who, blinded by social rule, lavishly bestow gifts of money or food upon the "deserving cases" of poverty officially brought to notice, often stand aghast at the ingratitude of the recipients and the unabated prevalence of national poverty, distress, sickness and dissatisfaction. But how

¹ "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil."—St Matthew, v. 17.

"Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."—St Matthew, v. 18.

can it be otherwise while we deal only with the results of causes which we rarely even inquire into, much less study from a scientific point of view. Would not a little logical reflection yield the facts that Nature provides hunger as the outcome of idleness, and that, therefore, from one of its aspects, hunger teaches industry ; also that if we remove the hunger by so-called charitable gifts of food which the individual has not earned we defeat Nature's law by leaving the individual's character unchanged—and do him serious wrong by casting back his Karma to some future time when he may be physically less able to work it out. The knowledge of these facts, however, must not lead us to suppose that we should leave any man to starve, but that we should give everyone the opportunity of earning food by labour. For if we can induce the idler to labour, even for the purely selfish motive of avoiding starvation, we lift him to a plane above idleness, and thence may be able to lift him to one higher still whereon he will continue to be industrious, but from an unselfish motive, and so on from plane to plane until he is able to recognise and appreciate the wisdom of the friend who, instead of money and food, bestowed upon him love and sympathy. It is natural to suppose that if the soul is on earth to be perfected by experience it must not only have its experience in many different races under various conditions and circumstances, but also in both sexes. Theosophists, however, teach that as there is no distinction in soul it may inhabit either a masculine or feminine body, and thus it would, of course, reincarnate in the sex and

race best fitted to the working out of its own salvation. There are, undoubtedly, millions of persons who are quite unconscious of the law of Karma, but that is no argument against its existence, any more than the ignorance of animals and plants of the law of evolution prevents its action from gradually modifying their forms and causing them to grow from the most rudimentary beginnings to the complex organisms which we now see around us. In ordinary life we know that similar causes acting under similar conditions invariably produce the same results whether we know what those results will be or whether we do not ; for instance, if a person falls into the sea, it makes no difference whether he be saint or sinner, a voluntary suicide or a child with no knowledge of danger, the result of lengthened immersion will be death ; and in the same way, whether we know it or whether we do not, under the law of evolution, progress is made ; but it is also true that if we could awaken the intelligence of an animal or a plant as we can that of a man, teach it the laws of life and evolution and show it an ideal at which to aim, it could immensely hasten its own progress by adapting itself to the laws of nature ; in the case of domesticated animals and cultivated plants this intelligence is artificially supplied by the farmer, the fancier or the gardener, who rapidly evolves a type in accordance with his own ideal ; and as the law which applies to bodily things also applies to Spiritual, we see that if we really wish to help our fellow-men in the only way in which they may be permanently benefited, pure and unselfish motives and a knowledge of

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the laws of nature are absolutely indispensable. In a word, the straining after ideals tends to perfection all along the lines of physical and spiritual evolution, and it follows that knowledge of the laws of nature and compliance therewith immeasurably hasten individual progress; but the great difference between evolution and Karma lies in the fact that, while one deals with the improvement of a race or species by the cumulative action of natural laws upon successive individuals, the other deals with the improvement (if we may so speak) of one individual by the action of natural laws upon successive personalities. The doctrine of Karma, embracing reincarnation, shows us that we are neither the puppets of cruel destiny nor the recipients of undeserved favours from an offended God, but that we have to work out our own salvation and raise ourselves by individual effort to a noble and independent pedestal of true manhood. Therefore we cannot reasonably envy the man who in intellect or spirituality is high above us, for he is only on a plane which we have the power of reaching by taking the same means, exercising the same self-control and cultivating the same high thoughts, that have raised him to such an eminence. On the other hand, we owe those who are wretched, low and debased, help and sympathy rather than scorn and reproach, because they are only what we also have been in the past, when we, too, were "younger souls." But at the same time we must fully understand that to provide a man with food for which he has not laboured is to do him serious wrong and that the only way to truly help one's neighbour is to induce

him to help himself. To this end, however, it is not necessary to enter the Church, to harangue multitudes from public platforms, or even to circulate our views through the medium of magazines and newspapers, *but it is absolutely necessary to train ourselves up to the standard which we aim at for our neighbours*, because in no other way can we rouse their noblest thoughts and form a bond of love and sympathy which requires us simply to go amongst them to effect our ends.

It is not proposed in this brief sketch to touch the subjects either of family or national Karma, both of which may and should be sought at the fountain-head ; nor is it the purpose of the present writer to prove the existence of the law of Karma and reincarnation, but only to plead that these Theosophical "theories," as they are generally called by materialists, should be tried by the common standard of results as laid down by Christ in the words: "by their fruits ye shall know them," for if the fruits be good the tree cannot be evil.

THEOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

THEOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

BEFORE commencing the subject now in hand it is necessary to point out to the general reader that although a man may be a very good Theosophist it does not necessarily follow that he is also an Occultist. As a good Theosophist he must put in practice the loftiest moral ideal, strive to realise his unity with the whole of humanity and work ceaselessly for the good of others ; but if, without the light of Occultism, he practises the powers called abnormal, he is drifting towards a dangerous form of mediumship because, although holding to Theosophy and its highest conceivable code, he is practising in the dark on sincere but *blind* faith. On the other hand, no one can be a true Occultist without being a real Theosophist, because, otherwise, whether conscious or unconscious, he would be simply a black magician, for if he does *not*, like the good Theosophist, put in practice the loftiest moral ideal, strive to realise his unity with the whole of humanity and work ceaselessly for others, he must act selfishly for his own personal benefit, and having acquired more practical power than ordinary men, he becomes a far more dangerous enemy to the world and those around him than the average mortal ; for Occult Sciences, instead of being *imaginary*, as described in encyclopædias, are real, actual,

and very dangerous indeed, inasmuch as they teach the secret potency of things in nature and develop the hidden powers latent in man, thus giving him tremendous advantage over his more ignorant confraternity.

Hypnotic power, now so common a subject of serious scientific inquiry, is a good instance in point, for an able hypnotiser can do almost anything with it, from forcing a man, unconsciously to himself, to play the fool, to making him commit a crime, often by proxy for the hypnotiser himself, and this, though only one of the minor branches of Occultism, is more than sufficient to warn the public of its terrible nature if left in the hands of unscrupulous persons. Let us understand then that a good Occultist, who is necessarily a real Theosophist, practises Scientific Theosophy based on accurate knowledge of nature's secret workings; which knowledge, it is needless to say, he employs for no other purpose than the good of his race. It is with the relationship to Science of this true Theosophy which it is now proposed to deal.

Occultism teaches us that there were no mysteries in the beginning, that knowledge was then common property and reigned universally throughout the Golden Age,¹ for in those blissful days of purity men were of Godlike rather than human nature and had therefore not created evil; but as mankind increased, not only in numbers but also in variety of idiosyncrasies of body and mind, incarnated

¹ The Ancients divided the life cycle into the Golden, Silver, Bronze and Iron Ages. The Golden was an age of primæval purity, simplicity and general happiness.

Spirit revealed its weakness, and in the less cultured and more unhealthy minds exaggeration and superstition arose while selfishness was born of desires and passions which had been hitherto unknown ; knowledge and power were abused until it became necessary to limit the number of those who *knew*, and thus arose initiation, for it is but in accordance with the inimitable system of Divine Justice which has always governed humanity that indiscriminate knowledge of the Occult Sciences should be withheld from the world as soon as the world proved itself unfit to receive it. The Initiates of old jealously guarded their secret knowledge from the profane, lest humanity should suffer from its abuse, but in the course of time some of the minor branches of Occultism became known to persons of insufficient moral and mental development to abstain from abuse, and this resulted in the practice of black magic (embracing modern Spiritualism, Hypnotism, Mesmerism, and the like misuses of Occult Science) by the few at the expense of the undeveloped psychic nature of the many ; for humanity showed itself too unbalanced to withstand the potency of Occultism, with which it was, and is, possible to deal only through superior knowledge of, command over, and guidance of the psychic nature.

With early humanity this knowledge of, command over, and guidance of the psychic nature were innate and congenital, but civilisation has ever developed the physical and intellectual at the cost of the psychic and Spiritual, with the result that, since the withdrawal of that general knowledge of Occultism which obtained in the beginning,

humanity has been growing less and less capable of grappling with the Spiritual powers of nature which, though their corresponding powers in the mass of humanity have been for millions of years thus ominously failing, have never departed from the universe; and so it happens that whereas in the beginning all men understood the relationship of their own innate Occult powers to those of the world's constitution, made proper use of them and collectively moved towards the one goal of Spiritual perfection, we now have two factions of advanced humanity which, under the denominations of Theosophy and Science move, the one consciously and the other unconsciously, towards the same goal, while the greater part of mankind, still clinging to belief in the vagaries of modern theology, suffers its Spiritual education to remain stationary.

With the masses it is proposed to deal in another paper; therefore let us now proceed to discriminate between these two great intellectual factions which are claiming our present attention.

Theosophy considers humanity as an emanation from Divinity on its return path thereto, but the reader will understand that the Divinity of the Theosophist is not of the nature of that recognised by orthodox Christianity. The Theosophist believes in one absolute, incomprehensible, supreme and infinite Essence of Deity as being the root of all nature and of all that exists, either visible or invisible; also in man's eternal, immortal nature as a radiation of the Universal Soul,¹ and consequently of an

¹ The God of Theosophy is not anthropomorphic but atomic.

identical essence with it—to him the visible universe is the result of Divine Ideation or Thought, its periods of activity being regularly succeeded by periods of rest; in other words, he believes that it appears and disappears periodically, returning, after the performance of its cycle of evolution, into the Infinite Essence from which it emanated and which Christians call God; the Creation of Genesis, therefore, is recognised by the Theosophist, but as one of an endless series of Creations which, having been set in action and guided from within outwards by the same Abstract Principle of Divinity, which is latent in every atom, periodically manifests as our external world in the same manner in which every internal feeling, volition or thought of man (a facsimile of the universe) is reflected in his external motion, act or gesture. The ancients divided time into endless numbers of cycles of various duration, some of only a few years, others of 120,000 and upwards: each one, however, marked the beginning or end of some event, either cosmic, mundane, physical or metaphysical; and we also learn from this doctrine that the action of cyclic law causes the evolution of life upon our own, as upon every other, chain of worlds to proceed on seven globes from the first to the seventh in seven rounds or cycles; therefore both man and the universe are septenary, both being conducted on sevenfold principles, and the seven senses of man—five of which are physical and two Spiritual—are attuned to these seven globes or planes of nature.

The doctrine of the ancients is, moreover, that every

life cycle¹ on our earth is composed of seven root-races, commencing with the Ethereal and ending with the Spiritual; according to them 300,000,000 years of the mineral and vegetable development preceded the appearance of physical humanity upon our globe—physical humanity having been preceded by two races of ethereal and semi-ethereal beings who cannot be referred to as “Man” but must be regarded as a Monad imprisoned in ever-changing forms, for the Monad, or that which becomes Man, has to pass through its mineral, vegetable and animal forms before the Divine Spirit is awakened in humanity, and hence the Kabalistic axiom “a stone becomes a plant, a plant a beast, a beast a man, and man God.” The third race, therefore, of the present life cycle which appeared under the generic name of Adam marks the period of physical humanity’s first appearance on our earth.

Concerning the genealogy of the pre-Adamic races of mankind the would-be student of Theosophy is advised to avail himself of the information afforded through the proper channels,² for the Cosmogony of the Secret Doctrine (the accumulated wisdom of the ages) is the most stupendous and elaborate of all systems, and therefore does not admit of adequate treatment in a paper which proposes to deal only with the difference of judgment existing between Theosophists and Scientists, although, even for that purpose, it is necessary to state here that, according to

¹ Every life cycle is, as allegorically described in Genesis, a manifestation of Divine Thought.

² Records of the existence of pre-Adamic races are still available.

its teaching, our own chain of globes has, like every other chain, its period of activity or life, followed by one of inertia or death, and, like the rest, is formed by a process which Occultists call the "re-birth of Planetary Chains." We represent the fifth race in the fourth round¹ of the present life cycle, and our earth is the visible representative of its superior, though invisible, fellow globes, and has to live, as have the others, through seven rounds, during the first three of which it forms and consolidates, during the fourth it settles and hardens, and during the last three it gradually returns to its first ethereal form. Man's organism has always been adapted to his surroundings. In other words, Man and the Universe evolve sympathetically, and therefore whatsoever man is fitted to receive that the universe is ever ready to supply. Man is but required to ask, in the right way, and he will certainly receive, for the Christ of Judea taught a sound, scientific, fundamental, cosmic law in the words: "Ask and it shall be given you: seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you," as thousands are now able to demonstrate.

It should be clear even to the materialist that, if the universe commenced ethereally, and man has always been attuned to it, he must have been ethereal also or he could not have existed, for it is as illogical as it is unscientific to suppose that the refined elements of an ethereal world but newly evolved from the Spiritual could support physical humanity as we now see it. We have to remember that

¹ By rounds, æons or periods are meant.

evolution proceeds on triple lines—namely, Spiritual, psychical, and physical, so that, although it is not denied to Science that, from its physical point of view,¹ that which compels the development of man, or any other atom, towards perfection is largely mechanical, this only embraces the study of one, and that the lowest, of the three aspects of evolution, thus leaving material Science entirely in the dark as regards the causes of physical phenomena.

Man is in the workshop, so to speak, of material life for the purpose of perfecting himself psychically and spiritually as well as physically; otherwise Christ's injunction to humanity, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is also perfect," would have no meaning; but our academicians, steadfast in their belief in the overwhelming importance of our much-boasted modern education, voluntarily bind themselves to the plane of effects whose causes are on the invisible but superior globe lying next to and interpenetrating our own, but attuned to the sixth sense of man which is inactive in the physicist from lack of belief in its existence, for during the perfecting of one aspect of evolution there is always a corresponding loss in the others, and as the attainment of physical perfection by the present race is due about the middle of the fourth round, in which we now are, both we and the universe, to which we are attuned, are now passing through the most materialistic age of the life cycle, and when we have care-

¹ The Monad, a concrete manifestation of the Universal Energy which itself has not yet become individualised, compels the development of man.

fully considered what this means we shall have discovered the key to the mystery which has caused the gulf between Science and Theosophy.

Presumably the reader has grasped the fact that, while our universe is passing through its ethereal ages, the Monad which finally becomes man is but a concrete manifestation of the Universal Energy, and has to pass through all the lower kingdoms of nature before it is ready to ensoul humanity. It is in the mineral kingdom, in what is called "chemical affinity," that we notice the first faint signs of the presence of this Universal Consciousness which steadily improves in quality as it passes through each succeeding kingdom, until it appears in mankind in the form of personal magnetism, the mainspring of love.

Even the physicist will probably admit that between "chemical affinity" and personal magnetism there is a very considerable difference, and such countless ages have intervened between the first appearance of this spark of Divine consciousness on our earth and the acquisition of the cultivated condition in which we now recognise it in the human kingdom that humanity knows nothing of the origin of this link which binds, not only man, but all nature, unto God. The purpose of this paper, however, being simply and briefly to point out the reason why material Scientists and Theosophists disagree, the suppression of a vast number of facts, both intimate and outlying, is inevitable, although the would-be student of Theosophy is, at the same time, warned that he must, through other sources, subsequently familiarise himself with these facts ;

just here, however, it suffices to impress upon the materialistic mind that, while cyclic evolution is perfecting humanity from its physical aspect, its Spiritual senses are receding from use and stagnating in proportion to the degree of scholastic intellectuality attained. But when man has passed the meridian of his physical perfection and begins cycling back towards the Spiritual (as we are now doing), the physical senses gradually grow less reliable and the Spiritual more and more acute. Thus intuition, the foremost principle of the sixth sense of man, guides him during his ethereal infancy into his proper course of evolution; but in proportion as man and the visible universe grow older, and consequently more unlike their invisible prototypes, the human race loses the senses which formerly connected it with the invisible world, and as the visible world and man grow strong in materiality, intuition gives place to mundane reason, the highest principle on the plane *below* it; thus it follows that our academicians, being, from a material point of view, more highly educated and cultivated than the majority of persons, have the least faith in intuition, for accustomed as they are to self-made limitations binding them by actual materialistic lines exclusively to objective research they will in no wise abandon these lines for what appear to them to be the purely fanciful notions of the subjectivist; nevertheless, there is no limitation *outside* man, and therefore it by no means follows that what our modern material scientists cannot discover by the aid of their five physical senses remains equally unknown to those who have cultivated senses

belonging to a plane above the physical. The physicist strengthens his own judgment by the written or spoken proof of great material scientists, past and present, while rejecting as unworthy of serious consideration any hypothesis which savours of the superphysical; but although up to a certain point material proof is undoubtedly indispensable to scientific research, sheer level-headed reasoning will one day teach the physicist that its use is limited to the material plane of nature, and, inasmuch as the cause is higher than its effect, it must be sought on a higher plane and through the higher principles of nature thereto attuned; for intuition, because developed through faith in and cultivation of the sixth sense of man, will be responded to from the sixth plane of nature after mundane reason has lost its value. Meanwhile the physicist, because he *is* a physicist pure and simple, remains dependent upon the evidence of his five physical senses and so requires proof all along the lines of material advancement; whereas the Theosophist, though still in the physical world, has outgrown these conditions either in his present life or in a previous one, and, having passed the meridian of his physical evolution, is cycling back towards the Spiritual, thus inevitably benefiting from the natural insight into Spiritual matters which his position on the Spiritual line of evolution affords.

On the higher planes of nature intuition supplants reason, and proof becomes unnecessary because all who have evolved to the same point of progression intuitively know the same truths; and knowledge and wisdom

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become common property again in proportion as the real Spiritual capacities are reawakened in the race as it cycles towards the source from whence it came. Acceptance of the doctrine of Theosophy would, for our modern men of science, necessarily mean the surrender of that prestige, however false, of infallibility which they have secured amongst the ignorant though cultured masses of the profane, but it would, at the same time, enable them to see that, although the belief of Theologists and the unbelief of Scientists may both be right from their own respective standpoints, yet both Theologists and Scientists are wrong when they imagine that within their own special and narrow boundaries they can circumscribe the whole infinite horizons of Spiritual and physical manifestations of which both belief and unbelief occupy but one small corner. As regards proof of Theosophic truths it matters not whether we are Scientists or Theologists or neither, inasmuch as we require but to be logicians to understand that if the organism of man is attuned alike to the Spiritual and physical planes of nature existing in the universe, yet the former is invisible and consequently irresponsive to the five physical senses he habitually uses, he must, in addition to these, be possessed of others which, when cultivated, place him, more or less, according to the degree of cultivation, *en rapport* with the Spiritual side of nature also. The Theosophist keeps himself in touch with this finer side of life through cultivation of the senses to which it is attuned, and as the visible universe and its material phenomena are manifestations of Causes which are, so to

speak, out of the radius of the physical senses, it follows that the Causes of physical phenomena, though obscured for centuries from the vision of our material Scientists, have always been visible to Theosophists. At this point some such question as the following will probably rise in the reader's mind. If all men have senses which are attuned to Spiritual nature why do not all our modern men of science use them? The answer is very simple—namely, because they do not believe that these senses exist. Let us further explain by stating the following facts appertaining to Spiritual law—not Biblical sentiment, yet arrived at by the aid of the Spiritual senses. All the great fundamental laws of nature are reciprocal in their action, and thus men reap neither more nor less but the exact equivalent of what they sow ; in matters of belief or disbelief the law works out in this way : whatsoever a man disbelieves, for the disbeliever *himself* does not exist, but that which he steadfastly and persistently believes will, whether supported or unsupported by material proof, finally manifest itself in his life. That it is hard to believe in what can neither be seen, touched, tasted, heard nor smelt may, in support of the physicist's view, here be justly advanced, but when the physicist considers that if the human race were to cease from speaking for thousands of years its faculty of speech would disappear he will acknowledge that, in precisely the same way, it would then be as hard for the race to believe that it ever *had* spoken as it is for him to believe that, through the activity of certain principles of his own organism which academical education has taught him to suppress, he once

was, and will be again, possessed of greater knowledge than the physical universe can supply. But, always bearing in mind that man is a facsimile of the universe, visible and invisible, which he inhabits, and that by natural law he and that universe evolve sympathetically upon three lines of life—namely, spiritual, psychical and physical, we understand that if, by our own inclination or the advice of others, we elect to evolve upon one line only, we suffer such loss of power in the senses which are attuned to the others which, in Spiritual and physical life alike, inevitably results from disuse ; but this is not to say that the forces of nature, otherwise Deity, which originally supplied these senses to man, have departed from the universe nor from the organisms of those who are evolving equally upon the three lines enjoined by nature's rule, and therefore when Theologists limit themselves to orthodoxy and Scientists to downright disbelief they show little more wisdom than the ostrich when, hiding its head in the sand at its feet, it imagines that there can thus be nothing beyond its own point of view and the limited area occupied by its own head. The speciality of the material Scientist is to discover the behaviour of matter apart from soul or spirit, in the existence of which he does not believe, and therefore, in accordance with the reciprocal action of the unalterable laws of life which limit man's achievement to the scope of his belief, his discoveries are strictly confined to matter and cannot extend beyond the physical plane.

When, however, in the natural course of his evolution he has passed the meridian of his physical intellectuality,

and begins to awaken senses which will eventually put him in touch with the mechanism of the higher Science of life, he will see, as Theosophists do, beyond the veil of matter to where superphysical causes blend into physical effects, and materialistic Science finds its complement and missing soul in Occultism. He will then no longer ask the Theosophist to prove his "theory," for he will understand that a superphysical truth cannot be proved to the physical senses of man, and that only when man himself awakens the dormant sense within himself through which he is attuned to the plane to which that truth belongs can he *know* it for a truth, for before we can convince either the individual or the masses, in accordance with the great fundamental law of nature, by and through which Christ worked on earth, and of which he declared one jot nor one tittle should pass until all (the evolution of man and the universe) be fulfilled, there *must* be sympathy between the teacher and the taught. Sympathy is on the psychic line of human evolution, therefore, though Theosophists, through the activity of their psychic and Spiritual principles constantly bring down great truths to the world; these truths can only be received by men and women who have sufficiently evolved upon these lines as to have grown "ears to hear and eyes to see." Over the heads of those whose psychic and Spiritual perceptions are still inactive they pass unheeded and unknown.

To sum up, then, it is lack of faith in the Unseen on the part of the material Scientist which forms the barrier between Science and Theosophy. This lack of faith,

however, is by no means the fault of the Scientist, neither can it be truly said that it is his misfortune; for though it may cause him pain, not to say despair, in the course of his present researches, it is nevertheless the natural condition resulting from the particular point of evolution at which he stands; and, as suffering brings experience whereby man greatly profits, his baffled efforts finally urge him to break the bonds of conventional thought, and his reward is *conviction* that limitation is of man and not of God. The intellect of the great material Scientist is in the zenith of its physical perfection, and consequently rejects as illogical the orthodox doctrine of the modern Christian Church; but not having evolved to the point of ability to distinguish between the Anthropomorphism of Christian belief and the Atomic Deity of Theosophy he never dreams that, though he has discarded the Church, he will, in the natural course of the very work which has *caused* him to discard it, find the same God whom Christian doctrine so monstrously misrepresents; that he will recognise Him, or rather it, reflected in himself and in all nature round about him, shining like specks of gold amongst the very atoms and molecules of Science, which, while he remained a physicist, he studied *apart* from Divinity; for even as mechanism under the control of man is the greatest power below so, under Divine direction, it must be above because, as it is above (more correctly speaking, outside, man's physical vision and comprehension), so it is below, the material being the reflection of the Spiritual and man the microcosm of his higher

macrocosm. In this present age, according to Theosophy, the race from its physical aspect attains its intellectual perfection, and it is not difficult for the many individuals who have passed that point of evolution to see that our modern system of education, with its cramming of hard, dry, material facts, its frequent examinations, its academical honours and exhaustive physical exercises, although deadly in effect upon the Spiritual perceptions of humanity, provides exactly what is necessary to its purely mental and physical development.¹ The psychic and Spiritual perceptions of man, belonging as they do to other lines of evolution, suffer by nature's law during the acquisition of his mental and physical perfection; this therefore, is that point of evolution at which men and women, though they have eyes to see, see not, and having ears yet hear not, for not until the individual has passed the meridian of his material greatness and begins to revert towards his Spiritual origin does he once again, as a little child, begin to effect an entrance into the Kingdom of God—in other words, to understand Divine truths as they were understood and trusted by the race in its Spiritual childhood. Knowledge may be acquired in the visible world, but wisdom is born of faith in that which is invisible to the terrestrial eye, and that intuition, which is the keynote to faith, should be *the quality par excellence* now lying under academical condemnation is a fact of sufficient significance to warn the scientific student against too implicit a trust in our modern system of education, for

¹ That which applies to the individual applies also to the race,

whether we will receive it or not, this fact remains a truth throughout all ages—namely, that in the natural course of human evolution we climb from intuition to reason and from reason *back* to intuition. Therefore, he who fears not to trust his intuition before his reason, possesses the greater knowledge of things unseen, and consequently of the true nature of Divinity, because he has learnt how to attune his own perceptions to, and thus to function upon, a plane of nature which is nearer than the physical to the source of all knowledge. The mundane knowledge of the purely material scientist is, like that of the chemist, based upon reason and experience, and supported by material proof, not by faith in the Unseen. They know what will result from the admixture of certain compounds and (usually) the reason why, but they have no idea that the science they study so absorbingly is but the *reflection* of another far more refined and wonderful but beyond the comprehension of the very greatest material savant so long as he remains purely material, for this is the knowledge which is hidden from the (materially) “great and wise” and revealed only unto babes.¹ Without faith in the Unseen, we are bound by self-made limitations to the physical knowledge of the physical plane; with faith we soar above these limitations, awaken our spiritual senses, and, through these, discover the Spiritual side of life. The Theosophist’s faith in that which is Unseen with the

¹ By the terms “babes,” “little children” and “little ones” the reader should recognise those who are spiritually evolving at the cost of physical and (materially) intellectual development.

physical eye is far stronger than that which can be seen, and, though he cannot prove it to the materialist, because the materialist is not yet in practical possession of the senses which would enable him to comprehend it, he knows that the laws of nature are not self-guiding, as physicists suppose them to be, and dares to believe in the existence in the universe of that which learned men have decided does not exist therein, and in accordance with the inevitable reciprocity of nature's law, realisation of what is faithfully believed is returned to the believer. The relative positions of Theosophy and Science in the universe are clearly and beautifully shown in the allegorical story of the manner in which Mary Magdalene and doubting Thomas (respectively) receive the Spirit of the risen Christ. Mary (as woman impersonating the soul on earth) here represents the psychic line of evolution. Soul is substance and feminine, spirit being its masculine complement, and these two form the duality of the Godhead whose masculine and feminine principles are reflected in man and woman. It must, however, be clearly understood that spirit is the God in man—that is to say, man as he was in the beginning, and will be again at the end, of his earthly pilgrimage, not as he appears on the physical line of evolution—whereon he represents matter, and is here impersonated by Thomas. This is the line on which spirit, as the inevitable result of its fall into matter, is crucified daily; yet it is matter that spirit finally overcomes, therefore though it be absent for a time, it must return, and being too fine and sensitive to deal with matter with-

out a medium, it employs the soul (or psychic line of evolution), its helpmeet, to impart it to man. The qualities of love, faith, intuition and imagination being all more active in woman than in man it is she who represents the soul on earth and is therefore the medium between God and man; thus Mary needed but the voice of the spirit (Christ) to awaken instant conviction of the presence of her Lord and it is because the intuitions of love, the foremost quality of the soul, are too keen to admit of doubt that spirit first speaks and reveals itself to man through the intuitions of his soul, before it can be received by his intellect, however colossal his intellect may be; and thus Christ through the medium of Mary (the soul) prepares matter (his disciples) for the reception of the spirit, but Thomas has not yet evolved beyond his material conceptions of life and, notwithstanding his great love for the Master, even in connection with Him he cannot accept a bare fact unsupported by material proof: thus he doubts, nay, disbelieves, and, still functioning exclusively upon the lowest plane of nature, is the last to see his Lord.

THEOSOPHY AND THE MASSES

THEOSOPHY AND THE MASSES

BEFORE touching the subject of Theosophy in its connection with the masses, it should be distinctly understood that wherever, throughout these pages, the word "Man" occurs Woman is included in the term, Man being systematically used simply to avoid confusion. For the masculine and feminine principles of the Godhead which are reflected in physical man and woman were in the beginning, as they will be again in the end, embodied in a single personality¹; therefore, however we may have misinterpreted the marriage law in its application to physical humanity, the masculine and feminine principles of Deity and Man—viz. Soul and Spirit or Love and Wisdom²—having been spiritually joined together in the beginning in order to form the basis from which all being should spring, are impossible of separation, and the French wit who wrote: "L'homme, terme générique, qui embrasse femme," either intuitively sensed, or unconsciously stumbled upon, a great Divine truth. Turning our attention now to Theosophy as regarded from the point of view of the

¹ "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."—St Matthew, xxii. 29, 30.

² See article on "Mock Marriage," by present writer, in *Broad Views* for August 1905.

masses we shall find that the first question which agitates the material mind is this: How is it possible for the doctrine of Theosophy, which is so abstruse and difficult of comprehension even by the most learned and cultured amongst us, to be understood by the ignorant majority? In combating this question we have to ask the materialist to bear in mind that whatever the nature of the truth to be imparted, the primary essential to its successful reception is sympathy between the teacher and the taught; that this necessarily entails ability on the part of the Theosophist, not only to meet all grades of intelligence upon their several levels of mentality but also all degrees of intuitive perception; that, for reasons already specified in a former essay, great scholastic intellectuality, when unaccompanied by psychic perception, detracts from rather than attracts spiritual knowledge, and thus the ignorance of soul with which the Theosophist has to contend amongst the "most learned and cultured" is more difficult to deal with than with ignorance of mind; therefore, though he must meet the scholar, like the labourer, upon his own ground and fight him with his own weapon, the material scholar inevitably takes the longest way to true wisdom, and the labourer, whose intuitions are awake while his mundane knowledge slumbers, reaches the goal in less than half the time; for the quickest way to Spiritual knowledge is intuitive recognition of the reality of the Ideal and the unreality of the—so-called—Real, and this is precisely what the keen academician will not do: he invariably demands proof; and, until he has outgrown its

seeming necessity, in so far as possible, proof must be given him, as it was given by Christ to doubting Thomas. Nevertheless, let us not forget that Thomas was the last to see his Lord—the less cultured classes are more intuitive; and if the mechanic, the labourer or the vagrant *feels* that what the Theosophist says is true, he will not ask for proof but implicitly rely upon his own convictions. This may be blind faith, but it will get its eyes open in time, and meanwhile is far easier to deal with than scholarly scepticism, for it shows that, whatever the mental capacity of the man may be, his psychic nature is alive and healthy.

At the same time it must be remembered that, until intelligence follows faith, such persons are as incapable of distinguishing between white and black magic as their cultured confraternity, and more easily drawn into the paths of the latter than the material scholar who disbelieves in both powers. How then, it may be asked, does the Theosophist combat the Spiritual dangers which thus menace the tranquillity of the awakening soul of what we call “the lower classes”? Simply by providing them with an ideal which they instinctively admire and love. How is this done?

The Theosophist is pre-eminently honourable, and consequently the exact opposite of the black magician. Whatever black magic *is* that Theosophy is *not*, therefore the vibrations of the Theosophist are pleasing, inspiring, and attractive to all instinctively honourable persons who, sooner or later, gravitate, by natural law, into his vicinity.

They do so because physical life results from thought and thought is vibration ; therefore the noblest individuals, in putting forth the strongest and most compelling vibrations for good, form themselves into centres of attraction for all the sympathetic thought vibrations of humanity, in precisely the same way as the constitutional criminal forms a centre for all the evil thought vibrations of his neighbours ; for the mechanism—so to speak—of evolution, as seen subjectively, shows the universal forces, under normal conditions, to be always moving towards some centre of attraction—evolution being the expression of primal matter by innumerable centres. Faith—blind or enlightened—belongs to the psychic line of evolution which is not approached through man's mental capacity but through what we may here describe as his conscience ; thus the Theosophist abstains from rushing forth to assist in the indiscriminate training of the masses after the manner of the well-meaning but ignorant material philanthropist knowing that with them as with the cultured classes, there must always remain a certain percentage of souls who—being younger and consequently unready to learn—can neither be touched nor inspired by nobility of character, and that these, being still engaged in casting off their Karmic debts, will find their own spiritual teacher in due season ; meanwhile, as he can no more interfere with the law of Karma than he can with any other fundamental law of nature, he silently and systematically trains himself in every virtue he desires to see reflected in his neighbour, in order that he may become sufficiently pure, honourable,

lovable and true to form a centre of attraction for all the stray vibrations of those whose pure and honest thoughts draw them within the radius of his aura.¹

Little by little, as the race outgrows its age of crass materiality and reaches forth for the practical Christianity which Jesus taught, the Divine influence of Theosophy will spread over the whole visible universe, bringing with it so great a wave of human pity for those younger souls we now call criminals and lunatics, who err through ignorance which is inseparable from the earlier stages of human evolution, that we shall find it not only possible but expedient for the general welfare of a race which is rapidly climbing on to a higher level of mentality to change our Judaic law of vengeance into the Christian law of love, to practise Christianity in the land as now we only preach it in the Church. There is a bond of sympathy between the psychic and the Spiritual lines of evolution which requires no proof from the physical, and as the race, in the course of its reversion to its spiritual origin, functions less and less upon the physical line, we shall discontinue the judg-

¹ We are all surrounded by an atmosphere created by our own thoughts. The prevailing tone of each individual mind is radiated by that mind into the ether about it and becomes a real thing capable of affecting those who come within its radius either by repelling or attracting them—according to the quality of thought thrown off from the individual or radiating centre. These rays of thought are in form similar to the halo with which artists encircle the head of the Christ, their colouring, invisible to the terrestrial eye, being determined by the nature of the thought—red indicating the most sensual, yellow in varying shades showing the degrees of purity until, merging in light itself, it becomes a manifestation of Divinity.

“Then spake Jesus again unto them saying, I am the Light of the World.”
—Gospel of St John, viii. 12.

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ment of offending units by the hard material proof of—often—mere appearances, because our perception of the intrinsic value of human intuition—the unerring, foremost principle of love—will have grown keen enough to show us *why* “the wisdom of this [visible] world is foolishness with God.”¹

Love is the beginning, as it is also the end, of all things, the highest and purest expression of spirit because it is—in Christian parlance—God Himself; no other law can therefore govern or satisfy the human family either at the beginning or the end of its earthly pilgrimage, although an intermediate period of Spiritual blindness is necessary to the production of those earthly evils which provide it with the experience which results in wisdom, hence we function for a while almost exclusively upon the physical line, thereby walking in darkness until the light shall reappear, and Spiritual advancement be made manifest through love. To the extent therefore that men manifest love are they spiritual and to the extent of their ability to control their love through desire for truth and goodness have they outgrown the animal and truly approached or arrived at man’s estate. Through striving after ideals humanity learns to love, and wherever the ideal is sufficiently exalted and the individual sufficiently pure in heart, the sickly sentiment which serves materialists for love soon

¹ “He that loveth not knoweth not God ; for God is love.”—First Epistle General of St John, iv. 8.

² “Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you : for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.”—Gospel of St John, xii. 35.

passes into the holier, happier state of deep, true, honourable and altruistic reverence for the ideal accompanied by constant effort and intense desire to become like it, for this is both love and law, and the key, moreover, to that short cut to Theosophy which, without scholastic knowledge, the intuitive person takes because, while the materialist is storing his mind with tenet, data, opinion, and proof, *he* has learnt how to love and what to love, thus grasping the spirit of a doctrine over the letter of which the learned materialist still puzzles only because he has yet to understand these two plain facts—firstly, that man is required to judge spiritual affairs by *wisdom* not by mundane intellectuality ; secondly, that wisdom does not *precede* faith, but follows it. If, then, we would enter upon that short cut to knowledge of spiritual things let us not be faithless, but believing, bearing in mind Christ's memorable rebuke : "Thomas, because thou hast *seen* me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed."

NOTE

THE Author of these Essays claims no originality of thought respecting the description of Theosophy (including the doctrine of Karma and Reincarnation) herein given; these descriptions having been, more or less, compiled from various Theosophical books published by the Society; the purpose of the present writer being simply, in so far as has been found possible, to reduce the abstruseness of the nature of Theosophy to the extent of bringing it under the notice of those who, while conscious of the inadequacy of Orthodox Christianity, are at the same time too prejudiced to study Theosophy as a means of elucidation of the mysteries they are unable to solve, and are therefore reduced to the necessity of classifying the clearer thoughts and purer desires which have come to them in the ordinary course of Spiritual evolution under the titles of "The New Theology," "New Thought," and the like, believing these doctrines to be quite apart from Theosophy, whereas all such so-called *new* thoughts are but off-shoots (fitted to the various mental capacities of the units of a growing race) from the trunk of the one tree of Theosophy.