ANCIENT WISDOM

A monthly journal devoted to teaching theosophical and occult truths

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—Hamlet

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THE MYSTERY OF DEATH

By GEOFFREY HODSON

[Continued From Last Month]

Is this too difficult an idea to understand? I know that this Theosophical concept of a self-created individual heaven in which reunion occurs seems to be contrary to Christion doctrine, but would ask you not to reject it too hastily, for it is a very beautiful truth. Simply put, it may be said that when those who love us die and enter their heaven, their thought and love construct for them a form of us which is ever present to their eyes. We in our essential Selves at once use this thought-form, as it is called, as a vehicle for communion and companionship. Through it we have been fully present with them all the time. We, in our turn will similarly be surrounded by all those we love. Each one of us thus has our own individual heaven after death wherein for us in perfect bliss and peace is reunion with all those we have ever truly loved. In very truth, in our "Father's house are many mansions."—*John XIV, 2.*

This is not all. We are also certain to meet our loved ones again *physically*. This is a further part of the great and consoling revelation of Theosophy. After the heaven life, which usually lasts for many earth-time centuries of perfect bliss, a return to earth is made. The teaching that man evolves spiritually to perfection through successive lives on earth is found on investigation to be literally true. The Spiritual Souls of men are reborn in new bodies over and over again. In each new birth, they unfold their innate powers a little more, develop added faculties, attain to deeper wisdom, greater insight, nobler love. This process culminates in attainment of the stature of the perfect man. In these continual rebirths, we who have deeply loved are sure both to meet again and again to love.

The very parents who provide our new bodies are loved ones from the past. Our brothers and sisters are linked to us by ties from previous incarnations. Our colleagues and co-workers, many of our fellow citizens, work with us, live near us, suffer with us now, because we have forged bonds with each other in previous lives which have drawn us together again. If there comes into our life one especial individual who evokes from us the deepest love, whose presence is a joy, whose absence a loss, then we may be utterly sure that out of the past a reunion has occurred. This is the reason for the strange selectivity and the extraordinary potency of the experience called "falling in love." Though actual incidents

[Continued on Page 74]

MANY MANSIONS

Anonymous

[Editor's Note: In submitting the MS. the author wrote:

"The enclosed story would never have been written except for the things you made clear to me at the meetings of the Theosophical Society. I thought you might be interested in reading it since it is an authentic account of my own experience.

"Why did the dreams end with the tidal wave? Was it because that phase of my development was terminated? I would be happy to have your opinion on this subject."

The editor's reply will be printed at the end of the final instalment.]

Mrs. Hill set the last of the tulip bulbs on its tee of earth, covered it and packed the soil firmly into place. Every muscle in her body ached. There was a numb spot at the base of her spine; but as she visualized the beauty that would reward her in the sprng, a swift rush of happiness surged through her.

She let her eyes travel slowly across the valley to the hills beyond. The autumn colors were an octave on the ridge. Behind it, the sun had gone down leaving a rim of tarnished gold on the edge of the clouds. Except for the cry of a whippoorwill, the silence was unbroken. Not a leaf stirred. Life seemed to be suspended. It was like a pause between measures of music.

Easing herself into a sitting posture she peeled off her gloves and tossed them at Peter who, after the fashion of Airedales, slept with muzzle on crossed paws. The dog stretched luxuriously and edging his way toward her, laid his nose against her skirt.

"Just the two of us," she murmured, pulling the rough head into her lap. It's perfect, old man, isn't it?"

With a sigh of contentment she turned to look at the low rambling house behind her. Built of pine logs, it sat well back from the road in a semicircle of trees. The walnuts, she noticed, were almost bare, but the oaks and hickories showed a blaze of color against the sky.

Her house, her woods, her books—and Peter! Time in which to think, clean air, serenity. While back in the city, the organized grab went on. Yet no one had understood her desire for solitude.

John had said: 'I can't see what you're thinking about! No electricity, no water system, no telephone—nothing! How'll you get your groceries or the doctor if you're sick? You're not a young woman, Mary,

[Continued on Page 75]

WHAT IS MORALITY

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

[Continued From Last Month]

There is no such thing as an *absolute* standard of morality, at least down here on earth. As a matter of fact there are and can be no absolutes from man's point of view because there is no authority or set of authorities sufficiently omniscient to be able to lay down absolute standards. *Vox populi* may or may not be *vox Dei.* Even the person who invented that well known adage ("The voice of the people is the voice of God") was merely expressing an opinion. He may or may not have been right. The "people" might not agree with him. God might not agree with him.

Who is to say what constitutes an absolute standard of beauty for instance, or absolute perfection in art or sculpture? The Greeks are generally conceded to be the most superb exponents of the latter fine art that have ever lived on earth, but there are still critics who disparage the curves of the Venus de Milo and express preference for the lines of the modern Hollywood product. Jacob Epstein's monstrous creations are by some experts considered better art than the Winged Victory. And the Dalis, Piscassos and other frenzied productions of the subconscious that adorn the modernistic rooms of our art galleries are, by the intelligentsia, regarded as the last word in artistic absolutes beside which the works of the Old Masters pale into insignificance.

In music, too, the cacophonies of the modern school are considered by the fashionable to have "dated" the pretty-pretty melodies of Beethoven and Bach. Who is to judge of absolutes? Or are there such things this side of heaven, if there?

Our forebears had morality all figured out. No doubts ever entered their chilled steel, asbestos-lined consciences. Morality consisted in the copy-book virtues, every one of them. In abstaining from strong drink, tobacco, extra-connubial dallying. In working 12 hours a day, 6 days a week, going to church Sunday and listening to long-winded sermons exhorting them to do exactly as they were doing and to believe exactly as they were believing. It was an unimaginative existence suited perhaps to the unimaginative times. It produced unimaginative characters some of whom had almost unimaginably unimaginative faces, as perpetuated in the miniatures and portraits of the time. Living was hard in those days and people were hard. They slept on hard beds, sat on hard furniture, were hard taskmasters

[Continued on Page 75]

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1942, AND MARCH 3, 1933

Of Ancient Wisdom, published monthly at 320 Merchants' Exch. Bldg., for Oct. 1, 1945, State of Missouri, City of St. Louis. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Charles E. Luntz, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the publisher of the Ancient Wisdom, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form,to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Charles E. Luntz, 320 Merchants' Exchange Bldg.; Editor, same; Managing Editor, none; Business Managers, none.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the name and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Ancient Wisdom Press, not incorporated, sole owner Charles E. Luntz, 320 Merchants' Exchange Bldg.

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5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is (not required) (This information is required from daily publications only.)

CHAS. E. LUNTZ

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 20th day of Sept., 1945.

LEONA J. FREDERICKS

(My commission expires May 19, 1946.)

"Somebody in Russia," says a scientist, "by the year 1965 can push a button and wipe out everybody in the United States." And somebody in the United States, by 1955 or earlier can push a button and wipe out everybody in Russia. When possibilities like that exist we may be quite sure that there is enough good sense in both nations—in all the nations—to take steps to prevent any such cosmic folly from occurring. It won't.

THE LANGUAGE OF YOUR EVENTS

Your own life is for you an intensely fascinating thing if you have evolved to the point of recognizing how each passing event, great or small, is part of an orderly pattern. God speaks to you in the language of events. In every occurrence there is a message. The lights and darks of your conditions are the rise and fall of His voice.

You don't have to listen. Many, perhaps most, do not. The loss is theirs. But the voice keeps on. Events never cease. And soon or late we must listen.

We must listen and we must try to understand—and we can understand. No insoluble problems are set us. Difficult ones, yes. Problems that call for meditation, hard thinking, perhaps prayer. But no insoluble ones.

Events come. They pass us by. They have a message but seldom is it heeded. Perhaps that is the reason for the immense periods of time required to evolve a human being into perfection. Perhaps that is why those millions of years are needed on earth and on other planets, visible and invisible, while events pour over us fruitlessly by the thousand, while one may solitarily achieve at rare intervals a fraction of what karma intended.

We have a strong suspicion that this is so. A million fish are spawned that a few hundred may survive. It is the same all through nature, which prodigally scatters her seed caring nothing for waste or destruction. Some will survive. On these she relies.

By our own choice and effort we can husband the lavish bounty of events, making each of them take root in our lives so that the long road may be shortened, the harsh experiences softened and we may thus more worthily carry out our little part in the universal scheme.

Watch events—*your* events. They speak your own private and personal language, a language known only to you and to God.

A CALL TO REPENTANCE (But not from us)

At a recent ministerial meeting one of the speakers is reported to have made the following plea:

"A deep-rooted repentance must be induced among the people, for unless their mind is changed, the future is a dark one . . . He" (the minister) "must preach a sufficient God, not an easy-going, ineffective deity who can be wheedled and manipulated; one who has an eternal moral judgment under whose law man must live."

This poses some interesting questions. Firstly the generic term "the people" implies that the collective mind of everybody in this country must be changed or the future is dark. We differ with the speaker. It is our opinion that the collective mind of the American people is one of the soundest in the world. Whose minds are to be changed? The minds of our eleven million veterans, representing a cross-section of all of us, who have gloriously won the greatest war of all time over the forces of evil? The minds of these lads which sustained them through hellish bombardments, through prison atrocities, through separation of everything dear, through maiming, blinding, torturing death?

Or is it the minds of those who did their part at home, working long hours, often on night shifts, in soul-killing monotonous routine to supply the materials for victory? Or the minds of the millions of patient civilians cheerfully doing without accustomed comforts and necessities with a minimum of griping and a smaller minimum of cheating, buying their war bonds regularly, obedient to Government behest as their contributions to victory?

These are "the people." Exceptions there were, of course, but to us it seems that the mind of a people that has just proved itself capable of the heroism, the sacrifice, the faith and right thinking that the American people, the British people, yes, even the "godless" Russian people, have shown themselves to possess, does not need the radical "changing" that this minister so ardently desires. If his appeal were directed to the beaten enemies of "the people," it would be appropriate. To those who, fighting in the cause of right, in God's cause, have gloriously triumphed, such an appeal surely is misdirected. If the appeal is to those who do not go to Church or profess some orthodox form of Christianity to repent of their "sins of omission," still less can we go along with him.

We seem to detect beneath the euphemism of the words "an eternal moral judgment," the same old affectionate regard for a God of vengeance and wrath who sends sinners to Hell, who is as obsolete as the flat earth over which he was supposed to reign. We know nothing in Theosophy of "an easy-going ineffective deity who can be wheedled and manipulated." We wonder if the minister has been reading Omar Khayyam:

> ". . . Folks of a surly tapster tell
> And daub his visage with the smoke of hell
> They talk of some strict testing of us—Pish!
> He's a good fellow, and 'twill all be well."

The occultist likes the "good fellow" aspect of deity no better than the "surly tapster." Both are incredible and impossible as applied to the great Life that sustains the Universes.

But the God of infinite compassion, love and understanding who is the only "sufficient God" for those who think sufficiently on this greatest of all subjects with which the human mind can concern itself, is as the breath of life to every struggling creature. The heart of the people of the allied nations is splendidly sound. Perhaps it does not concern itself too much with ancient fundamentalist concepts of an angry Fascist-like God with his great concentration camps for sinners, with its ovens, incinerators and hoofed and horned Gestapo. But neither is

it so weak and foolish as to expect an easy passage through life without effort, by favor of a doting Providence.

We rather think it is the minister who should change his mind.

LITTLE UPON THE EARTH

"There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise:

The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

The conies are but a feeble folk, yet they make their houses in the rocks;

The locusts have no king, yet they go forth all of them by bands;

The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces."

—*Proverbs XXX:24-28.*

An observing eye had the old king or whoever ghosted these proverbs for him, but as usual the King James translators have completely destroyed the inner meaning of the passage in their straining after apt phraseology at the expense of accurate translation. Agur the son of Jakeh (whoever he might be) to whom these words are attributed, did not say that these little "people" were exceeding wise. We are informed in the margin that his words were "wise made wise." Instantly we connect up this wisdom of the ants, of the Palestine rock rabbits, the locusts and the spider, with the occult teaching regarding the "Group Soul." It is this presiding genius of each species of animal and insect that stores up the wisdom accumulated by each generation of its children and passes it on to succeeding generations.

Nothing is more fascinating in the miscellaneous information clairvoyant research furnishes, than the underlying reasons for the extraordinary intelligence of the "dumb" animals. Heredity no more accounts for it than it does in the case of humans. The animal comes into life with nothing that its ancestors did not have. No acquired characteristics are passed on to it through its chromosones, and what additional knowledge it acquires cannot be transmitted through heredity to its young.

As the ego is the missing link in the human kingdom, recognition of which would solve all the geneticist's perplexities, so the group soul contains all of the acquired intelligence of the animal. Animals are "wise, made wise," through countless incarnations —or inzoonations, as Sinnett called them— of the group soul, which stands to the animal, insect, bird, fish, reptile or even plant, as its own particular and personal God. When the tree lifts its "leafy arms to pray," the group soul of its genus and species hearkens and understands. And the spider who, in quaint biblical terminology, "taketh hold with her hands" and due to indifferent royal housewifery is even found in king's palaces, derives her spinning know-how from all the quadrillions of spiders who have spun their way around the earth and, dying, have deposited all they have learned about spinning with the spider god, the group soul.

If these "little of the earth" each have their spiritual Union, taking care of their interests, recording forever their special skills, itself their divinity and part of themselves, all must be very, very well with the way Creation is organized. We, too, who are little of the earth—and which of us, whether king, president or even owner of a baseball club, is big?—we too must be carefully looked after by unseen powers whose only task is our help and guidance, our protection, our progress.

It's a comforting thought; and here's an orchid for Agur the son of Jakeh, long departed, whose wise words made us think it.

SMUGNESS

One of the minor irritations of the Nazi and Jap character which perhaps infuriated many people almost as much as their major unlovable qualities, was their unutterable self-satisfaction. It colored their every public utterance, smirked all over their supercilious faces, betrayed itself in their swaggering walk, their arrogant posture, even their gestures as recorded in the news reels.

Americans detest a holier-than-thou or superior-than-thou pose. The majority of people we meet are cordial, unaffected, anxious to be friendly and without "swank." A minority are not. Wealth and position, have nothing to do with smugness except that it is more likely to be found in those who have neither as a sort of cover for an inferiority complex. The educated sometimes have it but it is more common to the uneducated. The men or women really sure of themselvs never have it. They don't need it—nor for that matter does anybody need it. It doesn't fool people. But it certainly aggravates them.

The Oxford Dictionary really goes to town in defining it. *"Smug,* of commonplace respectable narrow-minded self-satisfied comfortable unambitious unimaginative character or appearance." Perhaps we should strike out "unambitious" as applied to German or Jap, but the rest may stand.

Those who recall the expression of the ex-fuehrer of Germany when he was filmed dancing his little jig after the fall of France, will have a perfect picture of what smugness means. Mussolini as he stood on his balcony and received the manufactured plaudits of the throng, had it. A man on whose pictured likeness it has never been seen is President Truman. Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin seldom look dissatisfied with themselves but it would be impossible to characterize their faces as smug.

Members of some religious bodies (we spare their feelings by not naming them) are a bit prone to smugness. Especially those who are absolutely sure that theirs is the only faith that is a passport to happiness in Heaven or to happiness on earth or in both places. Not all, of course, but those who are especially "sect conscious" tend to acquire it.

And what of us Theosophists? Are we a bit on the holier-than-thou side occasionally? Maybe a few of us. It doesn't hurt to take stock. But smugness implies perfect satisfaction with oneself or one's religious or philosophical stock-in-trade — *perfect.* A Theosophist very new to the movement might have this if he didn't do much thinking about the little he knew. An older and wiser student would tend to be humble rather than smug. Like Newton he feels as a child picking up pebbles from the seashore, so vast he recognizes the wisdom he still must acquire before he is even out of wisdom's kindergarten.

Sometimes people give a false impression of smugness when there is no such feeling present at all—perhaps quite the reverse. For some strange reason this appearance has a way of fastening itself on the countenance when one is alone and driving a car. It seems to afflict women more than men. The look of supreme self-importance on the faces of some drivers is one to tickle the risible faculties if observed for the first time. Usually the smaller and more dilapidated the car, the more queenly or kingly the look. It means little or nothing and is merely noted in passing as a curious quirk of expression in a common situation. After all, millions of people, including 12 and 14 year olds, drive cars. It isn't anything to be particularly haughty about.

But your really smug brother or sister puts on quite an act. His or her expression is so pronounced as virtually to be repeating a self-panegyric which goes on and on forever. "How wise I am," it seems to say, "how beautiful," (or handsome) "how refined, how cultured, how eminently desirable on every count. Nature may have made her mistakes, but as she ended up by producing me all should be forgotten and forgiven her."

The gods must snicker.

END OF THE ROAD

Twenty-four wicked men are being haled to the bar of justice to answer for their foul crimes against humanity. They will be given a fair trial and that is well. They will have every opportunity to present their defense, inconceivable as it is that they can have any defense to which an impartial court can hearken, and that too is very well. They murdered, maimed, stole, lied, and commited every atrocious crime in the long calendar of crime and their victims had no trial, no opportunity for defense, not even a hearing. But those who judge these crimson-handed butchers are civilized and representative of civilized people. The assassins will have their day in court and will doubtless make the most of it. After that . . . the end of the road.

The end of the road here but not hereafter. Imagination reels at the horrors of the astral plane existence in store for these adepts in evil and at their future incarnations of wretchedness and gloom. We do not gloat over their fate. There is no ven-

[Continued on Page 73]

THEOSOPHY AND ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

Confession and Absolution

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

Confession is practiced not only in the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches but also by the Lutherans and from time to time in the Church of England. There were even confessionals (cabinets for hearing confessions) in some Anglican Churches until 900 when a consistory court declared them illegal. Absolution is granted, however, only by priests of the two Catholic Churches. In the Greek Church the priest performs this by some such phrase as "May the Lord absolve thee." This was the practice of the Roman Church until the 13th century when the words *Ego te absolvo* —"I absolve thee" were substituted.

Confession in the hearing of others is encouraged by Revivalist groups and by the Salvation Army. The Oxford or Buchmanite movement is virtually built on the long and often tedious confessions its proselytes must make in the hearing of everybody present, and we would imagine to everybody's great boredom. Accounts by eyewitnesses indicate that many such confessions are of the most trivial nature, introducing tiresome peccadillos almost childish in their nature and often reciting these and more serious offenses with great gusto, as though they were something of which to be rather proud.

The revivalist confessions are not seldom tinged with religious hysteria, making them sometimes incoherent and confused.

The Jews confess their sins once a year on a day set aside for the purpose, and pray for forgiveness.

Have these practices any value from the occult point of view and has the Absolution given by the priest any validity?

To the Theosophist, with his knowledge of karma, his recognition that mistakes are essential to the trial and error method ordained for evolution, the notion that one is "burdened with sin" which may cause him to lose his soul if not wiped out by confession or confession plus absolution is probably amusing. But it is not amusing to those who feel themselves so weighted down. It is deadly serious and terrible. The wrath of God, which to the occultist is a myth, is a dreadful reality to the orthodox. Some method of relieving minds almost unhinged by real or fancied guilt had to be devised. Confession was an efficient instrument and it worked.

In scientific reality confession achieves the same result that psychoanalysis accomplishes for the less religious or more sophisticated. The victim unburdens himself. It is a tremendous relief to get off his chest what is troubling him, and to a sympathetic listener. If that listener is also believed to have the power to forgive him, the psychological benefit is obvious. In the case of the psychoanalyst there is, of course, no forgiveness but the very fact that the guilty secrets are out in the open and the one who heard them does not look shocked nor does he laugh but shows absorbed interest and perfect understanding—that is what effects the cure.

It is probable that to certain types of mind any form of confession is definitely beneficial. Absolution doubtless makes it even more effective, but is not without its dangers. Human nature being what it is, the temptation to "go and sin some more" is pretty strong although this would (says the Church) void the Absolution. The knowledge that the same confessional procedure can be repeated *ad infinitum* right up to the last hour must bulk large in the less enlightened minds. The Church well knows this and cautions against such a course but the fact that the same "sins" are confessed again and again shows either the frailty of human nature or that easy Confession and forgiveness actually encourage the looseness they are intended to combat. The penance, not too difficult of performance, and the admonitory words of the priest may or may not be a deterrent. If the penitent is completely sincere and takes the ritual of Confession seriously and in truly religious spirit it should be helpful to one of the believing type of mind. It is doubtful if any occultist would attach significance to it for himself.

Is any type of confession of value to the Theosophist? The strong minded would hardly want to confess their failings to another person who might have just as many or more himself. Theosophical leaders and teachers are always ready to give helpful suggestions to those wishing to discuss their problems, but there is never the slightest attempt to get the troubled person to unload his "sins." Rather such a practice would be discouraged. One consulting an astrologer in whom he has confidence may properly ask astrological advice to combat weaknesses of character the horoscope shows and which the astrologer would detect anyway upon studying the chart. In such case recommendations may appropriately be made as part of the service the astrologer renders but no theosophical astrologer should offer reproof or condemnation. His task is to help, not to judge.

From our standpoint the only confession that is really worth while is that which one makes to his own Ego which for him is his God. In meditation the mistakes of the personality may be mentally recited and the resolve not to repeat them be made. But occultists do not encourage much dwelling on past errors. "The only repentance worth while" says C. W. Leadbeater, "is the resolve not to do it again." Mulling over past misdeeds in the mind reinforces them with fresh thought, making them tend to repeat themselves. It's a negative performance. Better by far to send out constructive thought in the right direction to build up ahead of you the positive qualities you desire. Steady practice of this kind is worth all the confesssions you could make or absolution you could receive in a lifetime.

We do not condemn these things for those who were brought up in them and feel the need of them. They have their place, perhaps, in the earlier stages of spiritual development. But for those who have taken their evolution in hand, who have cut loose from earlier orthodoxies and fettered thinking, they have no part to play. If you would be a Theosophist your reliance must be first and foremost on your own inner God who is your highest self. Your confession must be to That, your prayers to That, your meditation upon That. For this inner God and the outer God are one. There is no separation. Reverence for the Masters and other great beings there may and should be, but not prayers for aid to them, except to help you to work more faithfully and efficiently in their service. But their help other than this is not for you as an individual—your help is rather for them in their mighty work for the race.

Do not disparage your Catholic brother who confesses to his priest nor your Protestant friend who seeks help by confiding in his minister. But you, if you confess or ask for help and guidance, seek sanctuary in your own heart . . . where your God resides

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We had a three-hour friendly conversation the other evening with an avowed atheist—a college professor. We didn't agree with his views, naturally, but we will say that his arguments were more logical, more good humoredly presented and certainly more to the point than all the arguments in favor of religious orthodoxy we have ever heard or ever read. Clever people some of these atheists. Maybe we should concentrate more on them and less on the fallen away orthodox. If we do bring them into our camp their keen, incisive minds and freedom from ridiculous fears and inhibitions may turn them into great and valuable champions of the supremely logical truths of Theosophy.

We asked our atheistic friend if he were completely satisfied with his nothingarianism. His reply: "Not altogether, but at least it is the truth as I see it. If anything came along that satisfied me as being more true I should embrace that." That is all we wanted to know.

ITINERARY OF L. W. ROGERS

Where halls are not given ring up the local Theosophical Society for information.

Nov. 18, Washington, D. C., 1216 H. St., N. W., 8 P. M.

Nov. 20-22-23, Augusta, Ga.

Nov. 26-27-29, Atlanta, Ga., 243 Peachtree St., N. E., 8 P. M.

Dec. 1-2-3, Birmingham, Ala.

THE ZODIAC IN LITERATURE

8. Scorpio

Ye are wondrous strong.

—*Byron*

PERSONAL OPINIONS

By L. W. Rogers

The Fearsome Atomic

The question which nobody seems to have tried to answer is whether, in the finality, the atomic bomb means good or bad fortune to the human race. Its good and bad possibilities are fully recognized but there seems to be no certainty in the minds of those who have written about it that it may not be used by some future Hitler to blow a large part of the earth to flinders. Our government seems to have made the questionable decision to keep it to ourselves and many writers wail about its discovery as the greatest of misfortunes. Einstein agrees with the official decision while scientists who helped make the bomb are strongly of the opposite opinion. But you may remember that Einstein reversed himself on whether the universe is, or is not, limited and it is probably a good bet that he will do the same thing in this matter. Anyway an opinion is of value not because the person who expresses it knows a great deal about something else but whether he knows anything at all about how the atomic force will affect humanity. It is just because the reality of nuclear energy was unknown and unthought of by the people—with the exception of a few scientists—that they were stunned into mental helplessness and began to imagine frightful calamities ahead for the race and the ultimate disappearance of civilization from the globe.

In this particular matter theosophical students escaped the universal shock caused by the advent of the atomic bomb because they *had* for years been thinking about nuclear energy and what it could and would do for mankind in the future. They were not in the least surprised by the great discovery for they had years ago been told by the late Bishop C. W. Leadbeater that science was very close upon just such a discovery—that they were actually nearer to the goal than they realized. Prior to that statement he had written in great detail about nuclear energy actually at work and under complete control as it operated several centuries in the future. In the concluding chapter of the book *Man, Whence, How and Whither,* he sets forth an itemized account of what the type of civilization that will exist seven centuries hence will be like. The story is the result of his clairvoyant researches relating to the beginning of the Sixth Root Race. He describes a city on the peninsula of Lower California as it exists at that future time and gives minute description of its buildings and various mechanisms which are much superor to what is now used; and some of the improvements that he mentions have already been invented and are now in use. Others are clearly very near at hand. He describes the atomic power as being in common employment all over the world. It is used for light, heat and all sorts of applied energy. It is unlimited and is even used for locally changing the climate of a city so that a northern city may have tropical vegetation if it wants it. Those who personally knew Bishop Leadbeater have unbounded confidence in the accuracy of his clairvoyant investigations and those who did not are now having the proof of it through the corroboration of events.

Theosophists will not be in the least disturbed by the fears of many writers that calamities of shocking import are somewhere ahead for the human race because the awesome power of the atom has been unlocked. Bishop Leadbeater writes of what the earth is like centuries in the future, referring to the cities we well know, such as Paris, Amsterdam, London, as being so greatly improved that they are hardly recognizable. Other parts of the world have made similar progress and civilization in general has enormously improved. That being the state of affairs seven hundred years after the discovery of the atomic bomb, we should all be able to sleep comfortably at night while the alarmists continue to shudder. But even without the great work of the psychic scientists our common sense should assure us that the Spiritual Hierarchy will permit no such interruption of evolution as the total destruction of civilization.

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS

By Ella Welge

Again we approach the Thanksgiving season and we are reminded to count our blessings and to be grateful for every evidence of good in our lives.

The various seasons represent certain qualities of character to be recognized and developed within our own selves.

For example, the Christmas season emphasizes its characteristic quality of love, joy, peace and goodwill toward all men. Easter symbolizes life and resurrection. Thanksgiving, praise.

These qualities or attributes are potentially within the soul of every one of us. We need to realize the importance of uncovering or unfolding them by faithful endeavor to express them in our daily lives until they become living powers within our soul.

Let us give consideration to the power of thanksgiving and praise.

The really thankful spirit is a happy one. When appreciation and gratitude wells up within our heart, our whole being radiates a warm and friendly glow. Everybody loves a radiant soul and responds harmoniously to its power of attraction. Such a soul attracts the beauty and riches of life into their experience.

Gratitude is one of the most active healing agencies man can employ. Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the command to give thanks at all times for everything that contributes to our happiness, welfare and growth.

The grateful heart and mind is in harmony with the activity of good and its needs are always supplied. One with such an attitude shall never want for any good thing.

The thankful heart is a fertile field for the planting of rich ideas which shall bear good fruit in due season.

Begin your day with being thankful for life itself and that you are given another chance to learn more about its wonders and to enlarge your understanding and capacity to receive and to give that which is really of value and importance in the great scheme of things.

Learn to appreciate the small joys as well as the larger ones, the new flower, the book, the letter, the meeting with a friend, the kindly word and the cheerful smile of someone.

Be thankful for the knowledge and understanding acquired through your daily experiences.

Look for a valuable lesson in every experience, especially the experience of trial and adversity. There is a silver lining in every cloud and you will see it if you will look for it with a grateful heart.

A sincere feeling of gratitude and praise for the benefits of life will do wonders toward calming the prevalent unrest in the world; it will bring harmony where there is discord; happiness and contentment where there is doubt and fear.

Ceaseless and everlasting gratitude and praise to God and to man for every blessing, large or small, will keep our channels forever open and receptive to the greater good that is ours by divine right.

There is a renewal of spirit and a transformation in body and affairs when we forget petty things, things that clutter our minds with non-essentials, things that do not really matter, things that take away our poise and peace of mind.

Lift up your eyes unto the hills from whence cometh all your good. Live in the higher regions of your own divine Self and you will learn to appreciate everyone and everything for the truth, the great reality, that lies inherently within all.

"Be ye thankful." Col. 3:15.

You are not old until you have lost interest—in everything. So long as you retain interest, genuine interest, in even one thing you are young.

END OF THE ROAD

[Continued from Page 71]

geance in our hearts. Only supreme awe at the mighty workings of karma which in so short a span has brought these guilty ones to ruin and retribution as a colossal object lesson to the world of what it means to set oneself against God.

Hell indeed awaits the 24 incarnations of all that is vilest and basest in animal man—not a flaming hell, but a self-created torture which may at long last purge the guilty soul of its concentrated wickedness. May their millions of victims rest in peace, knowing that justice has been done and will be done also on the lesser vermin of the swarm. And may their richly earned fate act as a lasting deterrent to other fools and scoundrels who might think to substitute a devil's new order for God's eternal order.

OCCULTISM IN THE BIBLE

Mental Versus Astral

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

Who is Isaac who bestows the fulsome blessing on Jacob and the stingy, ungracious pseudo-blessing on Esau? As Abraham was Atma so Isaac is Buddhi and Jacob Manas. And as Sarah, Abraham's wife, was also an aspect of Atma so is Rebekah, wife of Isaac, an aspect of Buddhi which is Wisdom, Love, Intuition.

Occultly it is taught that the physical body is a reflection of Atma and the astral body of Buddhi while the lower mental is or should be a reflection of the Higher Mental. We need not go into the esoteric implications of this except to point out that the symbolism of Esau as the *elder* son and Jacob as the younger is quite appropriate if the Buddhi, so to say, reflects itself in the astral rather than in the mental. As a matter of fact, on this plane intuition does have to manifest via the emotions. The mind invariably gets in the way and prevents its coming through.

Why is Isaac blind? He is blind to Jacob but suspicious of him. Intuition works independently of mind but should be capable of justification by mind. Rebekah was Buddhi too and she was not blind but very keen of vision and alert to the interests of her younger son. Intuition can illumine the receptive mind and Jacob was receptive to the words of Rebekah. Neither mind nor emotion is divorced from Buddhi but each expresses it in a different way. Two or more people—often husband and wife—are frequently used esoterically to express different modes of manifestation of the same principle.

Very interesting and significant is the fact that Buddhi is ruled by Venus and that the spark of mind was prematurely conferred on man by great beings from the planet Venus. This was positive action from the Buddhic plane and Rebekah's very positive handling of the situation with Jacob is the homely means used by the Genesis author to signify this.

Isaac blessed Jacob with "the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine." All four of the astrological elements are thus brought in: dew (water), earth, corn (which grows in the air), wine (always a scriptural symbol of spirit, fire).

It should be remembered that Jacob is generically *mind*. Not higher or lower mind but *Manas,* mind as a unit. He is therefore the lower expression of the ego. His brethren (the astral and physical) were to bow down before him and serve him. This included Esau.

All that the latter received was permission to work for Jacob and to live by the sword —a truly astral occupation. "But," said Isaac, "it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck." There would come a time when mental and astral would labor together in perfect harmony, not as servant and master.

Most of us are still working on that.

[To Be Continued]

DO YOU KNOW?—

That Astrology is an integral and important part of Theosophy?

* * *

That more than two hundred references to it are found in *The Secret Doctrine,* all approving?

* * *

That no Theosophist is bound to accept it as true any more than he is bound to accept Reincarnation or other theosophical teachings as true, but that to ignore or reject anything without investigation is not usually the theosophical way?

* * *

That the best proof obtainable that Astrology is based on truth and not on invention or imagination is to undertake its study for oneself?

* * *

That many former skeptics who now practice, teach and write books on astrology (including the Editor of ANCIENT WISDOM) were hostile to it before taking up its study?

* * *

That nearly all popular beliefs regarding it are untrue, including the notion that it is a fortune-telling device?

* * *

That it is impossible to predict the future by astrology?

* * *

That the horoscope does not tell what one *will* do but what one *should* do for great-greatest success and happiness?

* * *

That it is possible to build into the character qualities that the natal chart shows to be lacking?

* * *

That, to the occultist, the deficiencies shown by the horoscope are a challenge, not a discouragement?

* * *

That the horoscope is God-given, a guide to chart our way through difficult places?

* * *

That the planetary aspects, good or bad, may be regarded as the automatic thoughts of nature about us if we have no custom-made thoughts about ourselves?

* * *

[More about Astrology next month]

We question the good faith of the Japanese, in their surrender as in everything else they do, because to the best of our knowledge there is no single instance where they have ever shown good faith in dealing with other nations if they considered it to their interest to show bad faith. This, in spite of the fact that to date they have done everything they were told to do—because no other course was open to them.

THE MYSTERY OF DEATH

[Continued from Page 69]

from the past are not usually remembered—sometimes they are—the heart is moved by the reunion, recognizes, greets and loves once more the loved one of long ago.

So you see, the parting caused by death which seemed so final, is not really so. The decree of separation is not irrevocable. On the contrary, reunion is assured, both in heaven after death and again and again here on earth. One day, by virtue of these successive lives of ours the purpose of human existence will be fulfilled. Evolution will bring us to "A perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," as St. Paul has beautifully described the summit of human achievement. (*Ephesians IV, 13.*) Then the illusion of physical death will have been dispelled. Then parting will be no more, for we shall live in the full realization of our immortal spiritual nature. Then we shall know fully and openly that truth which already is part of the secret wisdom of the heart of every man and which the poet expresses so beautifully, saying:

"Never the Spirit was born; the Spirit shall cease to be never;
Never was time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams!
Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the Spirit forever;
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems."
—*The Song Celestial,* Sir Edwin Arnold.

Such, briefly and but partially expressed, is the consolation and the illumination which the teachings of Theosophy give to those of us who are bereaved. May these sublime truths console and illumine you who read them as they have consoled and illumined countless thousands of those who throughout the ages have found and studied them.

These teachings also apply to the nations of the world. As these words are written, the second World War is in its sixth year. Millions have died, towns and cities have been devastated, unbelievable cruelty has been made manifest, but whatever the immediate physical course of the war, spiritually there is naught for mankind to fear. Though the bodies of men may die—indeed will inevitably die whether in war or peace —the soul of man is immortal, being created in the image of the eternity of its Divine Creator. Though the forms and buildings of civilization, being material, may crumble, nay inevitably will crumble, whether in war or peace, the spirit which raised them up, the vision and the power of attainment which they represent cannot be destroyed; for they are acheivements of man who, having thus attained, has devleoped within himself for evermore the power of similar attainment. For powers once developed by the soul of man are never lost. They belong to man forever more. Even should the present civilization disappear, others will be raised up, more splendid, more beautiful by a humanity which ever becomes wiser, saner and more humane. Civilizations may conceivably be destroyed, but civilization can-

not, for it is a power developed by and pertaining to the immortal Self of man.

Despair, therefore, should have no place in human hearts at this critical time. Certainly it can have no place in the heart of the student of Thoesophy who cannot fear that man's highest achievement could be swallowed up in unheeding, everlasting night. The Theosophist has no fear of any futility overshadowing man's highest dreams. On the contrary, he knows that man moves through innumerable ages to ever-increasing power and wisdom and glory.

Ultimately every human being will prove for himself the words of Our Lord, Who said, 'Ye are Gods" and will fulfil His command: 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—*Matt. V, 48.*

[The End]

MANY MANSIONS

[Continued from Page 69]

and your nearest neighbor will be a mile away."

John was a good brother, she reflected; kind, generous, reliable. But his mind was built on a triple A last.

"Oh, it isn't the lack of comforts," Alice had interposed "though I do think oil lamps and outdoor plumbing simply terrible. It's the oneliness that would drive me mad."

Alice didn't allow the world to pass by her door. She brought it in and placed it about beautifully appointed dinner tables or set it dancing to the music of her radio.

Finally, Tom had spoken, wrathfully, as became his youth. "In two weeks time you'll be counting the fringe on your bed spread, Sis! What the devil will you do with your time? Oh, the whole thing's screwy, if you ask me."

How much "screwier" it would have seemed if she'd told him that time had no meaning in the place she was seeking! Dear, unimaginative Tom. Everything about him was ready made except his clothes.

Well, it wasn't to be expected that any of them would understand. She didn't herself. For this reason she'd wanted a house in the woods. Trees helped her to think. Especially the pines. Trees seemed to be the starting point. They were symbolic of all life. When shade was no longer needed, their leaves withered and the sap that flowed through their branches went back to the earth from whence it had come. To all outward appearances, they were dead. But when their usefulness was again needed, they were re-quickened by the force that creates all living things. If this happened to trees, why not to people?

Four lines of Kipling occured to her. She repeated them aloud:

"They will come back, come back again,
As long as the red earth rolls.
He never wasted a leaf or a tree,
Do you think He would squander *souls?*"

Alice would have laughed at the idea of rebirth. Alice was orthodox and went to Church with the same regularly that she sent her clothes to the laundry and with much the same feeling of righteousness.

John and Tom would have considered her a threshold case for even considering such a possibility.

That was because none of them had crossed the frontiers of sleep to enter a place only in dreams. If this had happened to her only once, the experience would have have seemed merely odd and amusing. But when night after night a pale luminous glow appeared at the foot of her bed, and she knew that by taking a few deep breaths the light would increase and the adventure commence, the happenings took on a new significance.

Where was this place that she visited each night? How could she, who had never been away from her midwestern home, know the flavor of pomegranites, the perfume of mimosa and the name of the brilliant tropical flowers that were unlike any she had seen in her waking hours? And—the steep cobbled streets bordered by stunted trees—every fissure in the cliffs—each cove in the bay—These things were almost painfully familiar to her. Then there was Father Antoine, Manoel, Anita and Mother Pasquale, who were as real and intimately known as Alice, John and Tom.

It was all very puzzling. But with each recurrence of the dream, things became clearer. In time, she might understand it all.

She got to her feet and stood for a moment listening to the quiet. Not a wagon on the road. Not a house in sight. Sunset clouds. Stillness.

Tired from her hours in the open, Mrs. Hill ate her supper in the kitchen. There was milk and stewed fruit in the cupboard, a loaf of brown bread and a roll of country butter. She put a plate of scraps on the back porch for Peter, then carried the tea kettle into the living room and hung it on a crane in the great stone fire place. The logs needed only a match to set them ablaze.

Presently the odor of burning pine filled the book lined room. Except for the crackling of the fire and the low hum of the tea kettle, the quiet was unbroken.

Her thoughts went back to her first dream of the Island. It had occured nearly a year ago. Less than a month, she had visited the place again, and after that, she returned almost nightly. That it existed somewhere, she felt certain. Why couldn't she remember to ask Father Antoine? But every detail of her daily life was obliterated the moment she set foot on the beach.

[To Be Continued]

WHAT IS MORALITY

[Continued from Page 69]

and hard to get along with—and they looked it. Their morality was like themselves and their environment, hard. But it suited them.

It would not and does not suit us but there are still many who would have us return to it; who look upon it as the only God-given way for man to live. To them that is the absolute morality fitted to all men in all climes in all times. They will not push us back to it, of course. But they make a good try. The return to the "good, old-fashioned Christian virtues" so beloved of our religious writers would mean, if some of them had their way, the return to the repressions of small town America of 1855 or earlier.

Morality is and must be an individual thing. There may well be a standard of absolutes for the individual; there cannot be such a standard for all the world or even for one nation; not for a group or a family, though certain "relative absolutes" if the term be permitted are applicable to each aggregation, becoming more and more numerous as such aggregation is divided into smaller and smaller units.

The civilized world, for instance, which includes everybody but the war criminals and their sympathizers, has certain great standards to which every right thinking person subscribes as a matter of course. The wickedness of war, murder, rapine, oppressions and their concomitants, these things are so obvious that the bloodiest war of all time has just been fought to outlaw them. The common morality of abstaining from theft, cheating, lying, and flagrant laxity of behavior is and has been since early times gladly accepted by all men of goodwill and by others because state compulsion forced acceptance upon them.

It is when we come to the division by groups that we run into our first real conflicts. The churches have no quarrel with each other or with the non-churchgoing as to the rightness or wrongness of the virtues or vices which all the world accepts as virtues or vices. It is on what might be termed the special catalogue of both which each group has compiled that the battle begins. To the Catholic and to some Protestants divorce is a highly immoral proceeding. To equally devout churchgoers of other denominations divorce, while undesirable, has nothing immoral about it. Indeed there are good people, religious people, who believe it far more immoral for a couple to live together when love has ceased than to sever their matrimonial bonds. And while it would be officially denied, there are churches where steady attendance and ample contributions may cause the pastor and the congregation to turn a somewhat blind eye on moral peculations which in someone less dutiful and generous would arouse a storm of outspoken disapproval.

Even in the family one favored son or daughter may "get by" with goings on which in the black sheep of the flock if there is one would cause his expulsion from home.

So it will be seen that to rely on outside standards or outside judgments to set us right on what is moral, what is not, except in the widest sense, is to lean on a broken reed.

There is a better standard.

[To Be Continued]

A fool must now and then be right by chance.

—*Cowper.*

WE MAKE AN EXPERIMENT

★ ★ ★

As our readers know, we have gained considerable increased **paid** circulation by sending one-year subscriptions paid for by donations of generous readers, many of the recipients renewing for themselves when the complimentary subscriptions expired.

Of late years the names of former students of the classes or attendants at the lectures of Mr. L. W. Rogers have furnished almost exclusively the "prospects" to whom these subscriptions were sent. Mr. Rogers supplied these lists, which in some cases were several years old, and the "wastage" in returns of the first papers sent out, due to change of address or in some cases to death, was very great, amounting to as high as 40 percent.

Recently a new method has been pursued, Mr. Rogers furnishing names and addresses of members of his current audiences and classes whom he had reason to believe would be interested in what ANCIENT WISDOM has to offer. This, of course, has completely eliminated the unproductive mailing of papers besides providing a list so completely up-to-date that it constitutes even more promising material than the older ones.

But Mr. Rogers is such an indefatigable worker, covering so much ground and giving so many lectures, that the names are coming in at a rate much faster than there is money in the "Editor's Discretion Fund" to pay for the subscriptions. In the case of the old lists that did not matter because he people on those lists had not been informed that they would receive ANCIENT WISDOM and were not expecting it. But under this new method Mr. Rogers necessarily **does** inform them and a long wait would be likely to dampen their interest and throw doubt on the promise made of the complimentary subscription. For reasons of economy subscriptions must be mailed in batches of 100 or more. It is not practicable to handle them in smaller lots.

Mr. Rogers has suggested to us that when the money in the fund runs out we ourselves underwrite the expense of additional subscriptions to those whose names he sends in, to the extent that we feel the finances of the paper will permit. To this suggestion we are immediately agreeing, hoping that our readers who have so wholeheartedly covered every need of this journal in the past will not allow the fund to go too deeply in the red.

Each complimentary subscription involves not only the cost of the twelve issues sent but also of the addressograph stencil which has to be made, the notification postcard, postcard advising expiration of subscription, cost of twelve mailings (postage) and extra office work involved which is paid for on a time basis.

But the risk is well worth taking to bring ANCIENT WISDOM to the greatest possible number of those likely to be interested and we cannot conceive of a more productive list of names than those Mr. Rogers is now sending in so continuously.

That is the problem we put up to our readers as we have put up so many problems before. By their aid we have solved them all. We have no doubt that this one will be solved too.

"Unless you are prepared to pay $8,000, please do not bother us," requests a real estate firm in advertising a house for sale. On that courteous approach, we should think few people would bother them even if they *were* prepared to pay $8000.

Why do people predict the end of the world? We don't want to be cynical but it does appear to be the quickest known way for an unknown to make page 1 of the newspapers and to get into Life magazine.

A. D. 501,945

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

A famous scientist declares that half a million years from now human beings will look like bad dreams. They will have globular, hairless heads, small faces, only four toes. But they will be very intelligent, conversationally brilliant, and with no appendicitis, sinus trouble or fallen arches.

In the year of our Lord Five hundred and one thousand, nine hundred forty-five
According to a well known scientist, if we happen to be alive,
We shall, whether male or female, be something far short of pretty.
But to compensate for our ugliness, we shall be indescribably witty.

Our heads will resemble billiard balls, but with plenty of brains inside 'em.
Our children will be born so clever they won't need any parents to guide 'em
How wonderful to dwell on the fact, as time to that Utopian era marches,
That there won't be the least danger of anyone suffering from appendicitis or fallen arches!

There will be no sacroiliac displacements our backs will be shortened and strengthened
But our skulls will definitely be larger and our legs will be lengthened.
And men will have foreheads as beautiful as women (some) have now;
While woman will rejoice in a not very lovely bulbous brow.

And civilization, says the scientist, must inevitably spring to heights that are dizzier.
We think that man's a busy creature now but in those days he's going to be busier.
There won't be any wars, there won't be any grief, there won't be any woe.
All these will disappear about the time we lose our little toe.

But following on these speculations, we find ourselves against a blank wall
When we're told that very likely half a million years hence man won't be here at all.
Nature may long before have tired of human beings with their many quirks
And have decided to wipe them out, as Nature often does when one of her works irks.

We are frank to admit that this drab picture does not appeal to us greatly.
In fact, it's about as depressing as anything we have read lately.
For in A.D. Five hundred thousand, etc., when around it rolls,
Theosophy isn't concerned with the ugly bodies we may or may not have, but with whether we shall be beautiful Souls.