Fig Tree

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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GEMS OF OCCULT THOUGHT

By F. MILTON WILLIS

Why Not Control Our Desireful Servants?

Why run after the things of the senses, impermanent, unsatisfying with always a sting with the honey? We all know that our minds are superior to our bodies, infinitely greater than our bodies, in significance: why not decide at once to adhere to the things of the mind? No one will honestly say that the concerns of the senses are of more importance than those of the mind. Therefore why not try to be strong enough to rise above the demands of the body and seek to feed the mind and so increase its vitality that it will overshadow the physical desires and by its refinement and responsivenes become able to convey to the brain the energies of *its* superior, the Soul, our true Self?

By a little thought you will see that there *is* a higher Self in each of us, that uses the body and also the mind as instruments. We are not our minds; we are superior to our minds; we use them; they do as we wish when we have them under control. Surely the instrument and that which uses it are not the same. No; our minds and bodies are but lower expressions of ourselves, are but instruments which we may use for our development, and it depends upon ourselves whether or not these instruments are so used. Instinctively we know what we *should* do; the reason why we fail at times is that we have not yet acquired control of our servants, so long used to acting as they please.

By study of the higher things, and the acquisition in this way of truer knowledge, the more intelligently can we deal with these restless and desireful servants. Shall we any longer permit ourselves to be led by these menials; or shall the God within us step forth in majesty and power, and guide the courses of our lives?

* * * *

The Holy Fig-Tree

There is an ancient simile which designates the manifested Universe the Holy Fig-Tree, whose roots are above and whose branches are below. By "above" should be understood "within," both words being intended to signify that the roots of the Tree are in the "higher," nearer the Source of Life,

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REAL PROBLEMS OF REINCARNATION

Some years ago we ran a series entitled ANTI-REINCARNATION OBJECTIONS ANSWERED. It was based on questions actually asked by the public at lectures or in study classes over a period of many years. Twenty-one of these questions were selected for the series and the attempt was made to answer them exhaustively and without the slightest evasion.

The series was extremely popular, bringing many favorable comments and requests for back issues containing the instalments. We still receive such requests even now and most of the issues are for the time being available. However, these questions were devised by non-Theosophists, some of whom were hearing of reincarnation for the first time, and all of them were more or less amateurish. Not one really went into the subject deeply. From the standpoint of advanced occultism the questions were not higher than about Fourth Grade, if that. They were of the type which the questioner could almost answer for himself if he took the trouble to familiarize himself with the real theosophical teaching regarding rebirth instead of being content with the travesties which pass for it in the popular mind.

In the present series we propose to go further and deal with problems connected with multiple births that really *are* problems and not kindergarten objections without substance. The childish "It isn't in the Bible" (when it is), "It makes people lazy" (when it actually makes them work harder), "It takes away heaven" (when it doesn't) and the rest of the tedious list, have to be answered, of course. But the nature of most of the objections to this and other theosophical teachings tends to make one understand, if not approve, the insistence of early T. S. leader A. P. Sinnett, that Theosophy should be reserved for the *intelligentsia*.

The questions which will now be dealt with are in an altogether different category. Some of them were asked at members' meetings by Theosophists. A few were propounded by thinking—by *thinking* — non-Theosophists. Others pose themselves naturally to anyone who has lived with reincarnation for many years and takes it as a normal fact of life—which it is.

Many more people believe in reincarnation than belong to the Theosophi-

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THE EGO SPEAKS IN DREAMS

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

(Continued from Last Month)

The first step in determining whether the Ego has chosen to favor us with a symbolic dream communication is to eliminate those dream impressions which obviously are of a different type. What we recollect is likely to be only a small fraction of our actual dream. This may have extended over hours of slumber yet we recall incidents occupying only a few minutes.

The recommendation is sometimes made that paper and pencil be placed on a little table by the bedside and that immediately on awakening all the recollected events of the dream be written down. For our present purpose this is of no value, in fact a drawback, because a great amount of irrelevant matter is likely to be recorded while the few essentials constituting the egoic message, if there be such, may be completely lost. The pencil-paper method is, however, of value in preserving true astral experiences, with which we are not now concerned.

A huge majority of all dreams doubtless contain no symbolic communication from the Ego at all. It is to be presumed that most people go through life without even once hearing while asleep from their own higher self. This is a fair presumption because most people have no belief in the possibility of intelligence being conveyed from the soul to the brain, and on higher planes nonbelief is an effective bar to results. The Ego rarely thrusts himself on a skeptical personality though there are cases of egoic intervention to save life, avoid danger or give warnings even though the person in question was of a completely material type. Such cases are, however, very definite exceptions. The occult law is that non-physical aid is not volunteered by any of the higher agencies. It has to be requested.

There may be, however, a *continuing* request, so to speak, which the Ego would heed even though no specific appeal for enlightenment is made at a given time. Such permanent invitation would be in the nature of definite belief in the possibility of egoic inspiration, or at least in the existence of some high non-physical agency able to impart needed information to the personality. The very constitution of the Ego, living in a world of abstract thought, is

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ENIGMATIC KARMA

"When fortune means to men most good she looks upon them with a threatening eye."

—*King John III*:4

Karma is adept at keeping its secrets. Seldom does it tip its hand. This applies almost always in great events, and not seldom in small things too. "God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." Even the astrologer cannot outguess karma. For all his foreknowledge of planetary influences he cannot relate them to events that have not yet happened. He may only try to deduce from what already has happened or is happening what is likely to be.

As to clairvoyant prediction, so frequently cited as evidence that the future is predetermined, sometimes it foresees accurately and sometimes it does not. Occultists explain that situations which inevitably will occur if no opposing force is introduced to divert their course, may be stopped in their tracks and other circumstances brought about, if sufficiently powerful action be taken by the person or group concerned. Dickens, in his *Christmas Carol* brings this out clearly in the episode of Scrooge and the Spirit of the Future. Scrooge *might* be buried in an obscure, neglected grave, unmourned by any, his miserly belongings stolen by the hirelings who dispose of his remains. These things *could* happen, *would* happen if he did not choose to change his ways. He chose to change them and the flow of the future also changed for him.

This *must* be so if man has freewill, and the occultist will not hearken for a moment to any system that says he has not. That the major course of events is mapped out for the world, he concedes. But even nations have freedom of choice and if one people refuses to fulfill its dharma thre is always another to carry it on. As to individuals, the destiny, hidden from the personality, may be well known to an advanced Ego. Always it is known to the Monad. But karma often uses great ingenuity in working it out.

Seldom can we foresee the way in which events will shape themselves to a conclusion. The late war is an example. The writer of this article repeatedly forecast in ANCIENT WISDOM and from the lecture platform that the outcome would be the downfall of the Axis, the ruin of Hitler and the complete triumph of the Allies. There was no hedging at any time in this prediction. It was clean-cut and with no "escape clause." There was nothing mystical about the method employed. It was based entirely on the astrological factors involved, but even with these the nearest estimate of the time involved that could be given was "Not less than five years nor more than ten—probably nearer five than ten." Actually the war lasted six years.

When it came to precise definition of the manner in which the war would end, certainly no one (including the writer) made any prophecy of an atomic bomb, for the very good reason that as this was not in existence no one would have known what particular aspect, set of aspects or planetary positions would govern it. But the writer did make this public statement long before any hint of an atom bomb had reached the public: That no matter how the war ended it would be in some remarkable fashion of which no one then had the slightest inkling. This, too, was not hard to determine in view of the great prominence of Uranus (governs strange, remarkable, unforeseen happenings, new inventions and surprises) in everything connected with the war. And it was through the agency of the atom bomb, of which Uranium (ruled by Uranus) was the base, that the war was brought to a conclusion.

In the individual life karma is similarly uncommunicative. Apparent misfortunes sometimes become stepping stones to progress and achievement never dreamed of. Looking back it can be seen that if the nice easy routine which some of us do so want to maintain forever had not been cut short by what seemed at the time a dire calamity, our greatest successes would not have come about. It is an astrological truism that good fortune is incubated under adverse aspects, hatched under favoring ones. Doubtless Shakespeare, the astrologer, had this in mind when he penned the lines that appear at the head of this article.

Karma scorns appearances. Almost contemptuously it brings the prognostications of the wise and shrewd to nothing. Insurance actuaries do marvellously accurate work in determining with almost uncanny precision the number of deaths, automobile accidents, fires and other calamities which will occur over a given period. They are not concerned with the identity of the individuals to whom they will happen —only with the estimated mass liability. It is karma's job to determine the persons involved, and karma is unable to err. Unfailingly it will direct those who have by their acts created a destiny for themselves that calls for the harsh lessons of physical violence, to the locale of cataclysm and disaster. And those who are due the sweets of prosperity with its subtler and more difficult karmic curriculum will be led, perhaps by devious ways, to that also.

For karma is never embarrased by existing circumstances, unlikely though they appear to eventuate in the situations karma intends to bring about. It has its own methods, ingenious beyond belief, and no obstacle can prevent the fulfillment of its ordained purpose. But the purpose may be changed by our own introduction of new factors which indicate to karma that the lesson that was to be taught has been learned. That and that only is the way out of "unpleasant karma." No time is wasted by nature in flogging a willing horse.

Next time you look about you to find yourself seemingly hemmed in on all sides by barriers of invincible circumstances, recall that karma is never daunted by barriers or by circumstance; that all through your life, somehow, some way, you have surmounted circumstances; that karma does this daily in everyone's life and it will not change its mode of operation in *your* life at this late date in karmic history.

IF THERE IS NO SIN

". . . there seems to be a very good chance that the mistakes of trial-and-error humanity, misnamed sin, foreseen as they must have been, are an integral part of the process of evolution itself."

—*ANCIENT WISDOM Editorial February,* 1947

A reader, evidently disagreeing with the above, writes as follows:

"It is interesting to contrast your mild optimisim with regard to the existence of sin (only weakness or ignorance—a mere negative lack) with your vigorous condemnation of Hitler and his fellow Nazi leaders for their diabolic wickedness. One is reminded of that sufferer from acute toothache who said that, altho Christian Scientists maintain pain does not exist, it *feels* just as if it does exist."

This is a fair challenge and it raises a question on which certainly the Theosophist should have a clear understanding. If there is no "sin" in the sense that the term be understood by the old-line religions, then why should we berate such monsters as Hitler and his crew for their "wickedness." After all is not wickedness sin? Are not murder, theft, rapine, sin? Can it be said that these men are not sinners?

We shall not evade this pointed question nor try to talk around it but, like the statement that the Masters were atheists because they stated they could

find no trace of "God" anywhere in the Cosmos, it all depends on what one means by "sin."

It has been demonstrated repeatedly in this journal that when the Masters referred to God they were referring to the conception of Deity prevailing 60 to 70 years ago, and we are quite sure that the Cosmos could be searched throughout its infinite area without discovering the kind of being popularly associated in those days with that term.

Similarly we must, before we can determine whether we are justified in our view that there is no sin, decide whether our challenging reader has the same concept of the significance of the term as that about which we were writing. Misunderstandings on metaphysical matters are frequently the result of mutual misunderstanding of terms, and nothing more. The logical French often start a debate with the words, *definons nos termes,* (let us define our terms) to head off this very difficulty.

In our dictionary sin is defined as "transgression, a transgression against divine law or principles of morality." At the risk of offending someone else we must point out that the definition of divine law, to say nothing of the principles of morality, is as vague as the definition of sin. If one is a Catholic it is what the Church says it is. If a Protestant, what the Bible says it is, according to the interpretation placed upon the Bible by the particular sect to which one belongs. On this definition an atheist cannot sin because, disbelieving in the divine, he obviously cannot recognize a divine law. Likewise the agnostic—he who knows not and is sure he cannot know whether God exists or otherwise. As to the Theosophist, he is the keeper of nobody's conscience but his own. He has no business concerning himself with the private beliefs of anyone, least of all condemning what he considers wrong beliefs as sin. Neither do the private lives of others concern him unless he is placed in charge of them in some capacity. But the doings of others which affect the public most certainly do concern him, as they concern everybody, and there most certainly he may speak out against what he considers to be wrong.

Which brings us back to Hitler and our reader's complaint. Do we really have a lenient view of what constitutes "sin"?—mere weakness or lack. And how is this consistent with our abhorrence of the wickedness of the Nazis?

The words we used were that "there is no such thing as sin, that error is not an entity but mere absence of the opposite good, that there is no inherent evil but only temporary manifestation of something that appears to be such."

That is a statement of the high metaphysical point of view and it is demonstrably true. As God is good and God is Omnipresent, it is quite impossible for evil as such to be anywhere. And from that standpoint even the villainy wrought by the Axis would be an unreal, an insubstantial thing. But at our stage we cannot order our lives in every particular from the standpoint of the highest metaphysics. Obviously we are not meant to—it cannot be our dharma—though some day when we are far more highly evolved it will be. We can however, with immense helpfulness, formulate a philosophy based on these high concepts. Thus, knowing that the Nazi scheme was wholly evil, we also knew it could only be a temporary manifestation and was bound ultimately to fall—as it did. Even such diabolical creatures as Hitler, Goering and Goebbels, with all the heavy load of wickedness they bear, were trial-and-error experimenters. They thought they had found the way to success and happiness. They know now how utterly wrong they were and the lesson will be drilled in by the infallible technique of karma in many a life to come.

We speak out against these criminals because their "sins" meant suffering for others on a vast and unparalleled scale. Had Hitler's "sin" been merely unbelief in God, violation of the accepted rules of morality insofar as they concerned himself, or anything else which did not involve others, we would have had no right whatever to pass judgment on him, though we might question the logic of his ideas.

ANCIENT WISDOM is not read by the Hitlers of the world and probably not by any except those earnestly trying to practice the right as they see it; making numerous errors, of course, as we do, but needing no "bawling out" from us. Indeed it would be an impertinence from us to attempt it. It is not denouncement, hard words and rebukes that they need or we need, but compassionate understanding, a knowledge of why fallible humanity errs and a minimizing rather than an exaggeration of the consequences of the errors. Most of us are prone to condemn our own mistakes in language far more harsh than the harshest the world would use toward us, and we verily believe far harsher than God would use toward us, for, like Jesus, would he not say "Neither do I condemn thee"? Karma will take care of the educational process by its own most effective methods. And that goes even for Hitler.

There is no spiritual percentage in enlarging on individual "sin." And there is no inconsistency between this opinion and the round and wholesale condemnation of action which obviously goes counter to the upward trend of evolution. Hitler "sinned" and gloried in it. Is this likely to be true of any ANCIENT WISDOM reader?

So with thanks to our correspondent for raising the question, we will keep our views on this matter as being those most likely to help people (includin us) to that understanding and peace o mind which are needed for highest a chievement. There are always the re ligious magazines and the radio preach ers if one wishes to be plunged into th remorse and despair of the convention al beliefs. And we are quite sure tha in holding to these views we are ex pressing the desires and beliefs of a almost unanimous majority of ou readers.

NO "STANDARD EQUIPMENT" IN THEOSOPHY

It is a human tendency to want to or ganize and the religions—most of them —are no exception. Each sect pro ceeds to organize not only heaven an hell but also God. The fact that Go may not choose to go along, either doe not occur to the organizers or does no worry them. He is endowed by them with this attribute or that, made to re act to human conduct and behavior i this way or that, and his so-called crea tures are closely instructed as to how they must act in order to call forth spe cific divine reactions. The code of ce lestial and human deportment so for mulated is termed Theology and it leading tenets are embodied in a Creed

Such Theology and such Creeds d not spring into existence full-blown They are an evolution. Many mind and often many fights contribute t them. Over the centuries they chang slowly, usually becoming somewha more liberal, but grudgingly, oh s grudgingly! But liberal or illiberal broad or narrow, the adherent must ac cept the Theology and the Creed whic the high authorities of his church body declare are the true ones—or at leas pay them lip service. The fact that h may not, probably does not, understand them makes no difference. His not t reason why; he is only to bow submis sively or languish eternally for disbe lief.

All of this is completly unrealistic even to the theologians themselves The involvements and complications o religious hair-splitting actually have n more meaning than the answer to a cross-word puzzle, in their bearing o the higher life. One will search in vain throughout the gospels for one syllable of interest in theology in any of the words of Jesus — except a hearty con tempt for it. Yet about his person and his utterences has grown up a structur — many structures, and all competing with each other—that is beyond belief

We want none such in Theosophy — no theology, no creed, no "standard equipment." No extra accessories, either. We have a body of teaching not one word of which, whether purporting to come from the Masters, from Blavat

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THE OCCULT INTERPRETATION OF OMAR KHAYYAM

Old Diary Leaves

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

VIII

Whether at Naishapur or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

The above stanza does not appear in Edition I, but is inserted in all subsequent editions. Fitzgerald by no means used all of the hundreds of quatrains of the original but as few as seventy-five in the First Edition and as many as a hundred and seven in the Second. Editions III and IV contained ninety-eight each and Edition V, one hundred and one. The translator obviously tried to exercise discrimination in the material he selected but it is understandable that in the light of more mature thought he included verses omitted earlier. It is also comprehensible that upon reflection he may have decided to omit others formerly included, as not being of sufficient interest, originality or impressiveness.

The inclusion of the quatrain that heads this instalment was not only a happy thought but a significant one. In it Omar gives the lie to the poor foolish so naive as to imagine that the wine about which he sings is purchasable by the quart. For the first time he refers to it as the wine *of life*. This is due notice for those with eyes to see and ears to hear that any similarity between Omar's wine and the stuff sold over the bars is not merely coincidental but nonexistent.

The very first line of the verse gives the clue to the occult nature of the statements made. This quatrain is not the simple declaration of a mournful fact, cried over by philosophers from time immemorial—that the years are slipping by fast and soon there will be none left. That is what it appears to be on the surface, but Omar was not writing on the surface.

One of the earliest recollections of the writer is of an elderly worman, slightly addled in mind and with a strong aura of beer, who used to parade the streets of his home town talking for the most part unintelligibly to herself. Her reflections must have concerned the futility of existence for they invariably ended up with the remark, delivered in a very maudlin tone of voice: 'Life! Life! So many years!"

The quatrain we are considering would mean no more than this tipsy declaration of a deranged female if understood literally, regardless of the beauty of language. Actually every line of it is a testimony to the truth of reincarnation.

"Whether at Naishapur or Babylon" says Omar and in these begining words of the stanza we find the key to the rest. Why bracket two such unlike places? Omar was writing in the 12th Century A.D. The last degenerate remnants of Babylon had disappeared in the 3rd Century B.C. Naishapur was Omar's birthplace. To him it represented modernity. Babylon was the ancient, the vanished . . . and therefore figuratively at least, the scene of his past incarnations as Naishapur was the locale of his present one.

"Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run . . ." There is the "Cup" again, so completely tied in with the wine and the life.

"The Wine of Life is oozing drop by drop . . ." A perfect symbol of the way in which the Ego distills the "wine," be it sweet, be it bitter and from it builds up his spiritual substance. A slow process! In the earlier lives perhaps a single droplet of faculty or quality may be all the personality has to render up to the soul. "Drop by drop" this "wine" oozes, as it were, whether now (at Naishapur) or in long past incarnations (at Babylon).

"The Leaves of Life are falling one by one." But these are not the leaves of a single life. Each leaf is an incarnation in itself with all its triumphs and failures, its bitter and sweet, its record of successes and of mistakes. Each leaf is a diary leaf written by the personality for the edification of its Ego. It falls, but not until the Ego has used all the information of value that it contains. And this quatrain is a Confession of Faith by the astronomer-poet of Persia in the reality of the great esoteric verity of reincarnation. It is not a mere pretty pretty jingle about the trite fact that life is short and will soon be gone. Omar was never trite and always original. But Omar's hard-drinking admirers may, if they prefer, continue to lap up the champagne and shed bibulous tears over the sad philosophy of their patron saint.

(To be Continued)

All authority in religion is usurped. There is not and never has been any such authority outside of a person's own highest concepts and ideals. Others may present facts, may suggest, may advise. They may not command or threaten. If they do, disregard them. They have no longer, thank God, any power to enforce their threats here—they never did have the power to enforce them hereafter.

One of the poorest excuses for refusing to listen to the grand concept of reincarnation is the favorite "One life at a time is enough for me." Nature evidently doesn't think so or she would not have provided us with so many.

DO YOU KNOW?—

That your infant son or daughter may be a very much older soul than you are—or very much younger—or about the same soul age?

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That souls are of all ages—ancient, middle-aged or juvenile, depending upon their first manifestation in time?

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That the conventional religious notion that a new soul is created whenever a new baby is born is entirely rejected by the occultist?

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That as sudden creations are never observed in physical nature, the occultist has the best of the argument when he insists that they are, by analogy, at least unlikely in non-physical nature?

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That although soul ages differ so greatly, even the youngest soul now functioning in a physical body was individualized from the animal state millions of years ago?

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That soul age cannot be determined from the natal horoscope without knowing something of the background of the subject?

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That the reason for this is that a young Ego and an older one may have almost identical horoscopes?

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That the young soul would not respond to the good aspects of the three occult planets, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto (though he would to their bad ones), but the old Ego *would* be responsive to them?

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That the principal mark of a very young soul is extreme selfishness, with no care for any interests but his own?

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That the badge of an advanced Ego is solicitude for the welfare of others even to the subordination of his own interests?

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That in between are all manner of gradations and complications so that it is difficult or impossible for a non-clairvoyant to hazard an opinion as to approximate soul age?

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That, notwithstanding this, there have been a few choice lives which have stood out as obviously being of Egos in the vanguard of evolution?

THE ZODIAC IN "AT THE FEET OF THE MASTER"

5. Leo

"Never wish to shine, or to appear clever; have no desire to speak."

—*II*

PERSONAL OPINIONS

By L. W. Rogers

The Masters (Cont'd)

The person who worries cannot change in the slightest degree the situation that distresses him. He can only make himself and perhaps others uncomfortable. He will probably tell you that he cannot help worrying. In that he is mistaken. Worrying is a habit, and a very bad habit. Like all other habits it can be gradually overcome. Habit is merely the result of persisting in a certain line of thought or action. The remedy is to change the thought to another line and persist in that. Reflect upon the constitution of the solar system—that it is a stupendous demonstration of immutable natural law; that it is administered by Divine Wisdom; that it is designed to evolve human consciousness from the savage to the superman; that it is arranged automatically to throw each individual into precisely the environment and associations needed to help him onward and upward; that it is wholly benevolent and eternally helpful and that it is constantly bringing to every human being precisely the experience most needed for his enlightenment and success in this life as in that which is to come.

If you were about to pass away from this life and leave behind a son five years old whom you loved very much, you would be delighted if you could appoint as his guardian a friend of great wisdom and unlimited wealth who would give him every possible opportunity. You could not possibly worry about that boy's future. Well, that only faintly indicates the favorable situation of each of us here in the watchful care of the Logos of the solar system. He is the embodiment of all wisdom, power and *love* and is employing all the resources of the system in the way that will give to every individual that which is best for him. What possible basis is there for worry?

If any reader thinks that too much emphasis is being placed on harmony, if he feels that an ordinary thing is being exaggerated into a major role, let him remember that in the last human incarnation for any of us, the incarnation in which we take the fifth great initiation and become a Master, we will be born in a perfect environment. Long before that we will have had several incarnations in which our parents and environment will be selected by the Master whose pupil we are. In the final one the parents will be people who are far along in evolution and the environment and associations as near perfection as can be found.

It is only because of the general lack of information about not only the Masters and Their work but also of the in-

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NO STANDARD EQUIPMENT

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sky, from Besant, Leadbeater, Arundale, Jinarajadasa or anyone else, is binding upon the faith or conscience of any Theosophist, be he old or new in the movement.

"But surely the teaching of the Masters . . ." someone may say.

No, not even that, because as they themselves have pointed out again and again, their teaching was often given through *chelas,* pupils, who may not have succeeded in properly conveying it. Or they may. The sole judge and arbiter is the Theosophist himself, after he has meditated profundly on the information given, perhaps taken the views of others in whom he has confidence, read all he can on the subject both for and against, and used his own painfully evolved reason and his God-given intuition. Then it is for him either to accept, reject or continue to keep an open mind until still further thought or additional information may enable him to decide.

Alone among all forms of belief (Unitarianism and Agnosticism excepted) is this "privilege" granted to the Theosophist. But it is not a privilege — not within the power of anyone to grant or to withhold. No man, or set of men, no organized or unorganized body, no authority, temporal or spiritual, no one has the right to impose beliefs on any other. Millions of men have bled and died to uphold that greatest of natural Truths. A few centuries ago a writer or speaker would probably have died for daring publicly to express it. A couple of years ago in Axis countries, the firing squad, gas chamber or concentration camp awaited anyone who might be presumed even to think it.

In The Theosophical Society (Adyar), with the exception of a few incorrigible "Back to Blavatskies," we have maintained a grand freedom of thought which has left each individual member completely unfettered as to what he shall or shall not accept or believe. Only a faith in Universal Brotherhood is binding upon him, and even on that he may place his own interpretation. Others may struggle about in a miasma of unintelligible doctrinalism, canonics, theologism and dogma. These things are not for us. They clog spiritual understanding but never a whit do they contribute to it. Happy are we that Theosophy has none of them. If it should ever acquire them it will no longer be Theosophy.

It is amusing to the Theosophist how those who argue against reincarnation invariably bring out some ancient, oft-exploded objection with the triumphant air of having produced a brilliant new truth.

OCCULTISM IN THE BIBLE

By Charles E. Luntz

Everything Jake

After Laban's fruitless search for his missing gods, Jacob decided it was his turn for an inning and, as usual, he made the most of it. Laban was at a disadvantage. He had turned his nephew's travelling quarters upside down trying to find those miserable gods. He had virtually accused everyone in sight of being a thief. And he had not made good. Now Jacob intended to give his annoying uncle a strong dressing down. And he did.

"What is my trespass?" he demanded. "What is my sin that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren that they may judge betwixt us both." Jacob had the old man there. Laban was silent and his nephew was quick to follow up his advantage.

"This twenty years," he declared vehemently, "have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee, I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night."

A hard taskmaster must Laban have been, docking his hired hand for all missing inventory without even allowing him a few chops for personal consumption.

"Thus I was," continued Jacob, working up a fine fury of indignation. "In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes." True enough, but, as every shepherd knew, these were inconveniences incident to the occupation. No one had forced Jacob to seek employment with his uncle.

"Thus have I been twenty years in thy house," he continued, madder every minute as he dwelt upon his wrongs. "I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle; and thou hast changed my wages ten times." A slight exaggeration, this last statement, but Jacob was very wrought up.

Then came the effective peroration. "Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight." And no doubt, Jacob sank down in his seat amid the admiring applause of his wives, maidservants, menservants, sons, and maybe a camel or two.

Laban was not fooled. He, too, could assume wronged innocence just as effectively as his bright young nephew.

(Continued on Page 48)

PERSONAL PROBLEMS THEOSOPHICALLY SOLVED

Ill-Health (Continued)

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

In medieval times in England, where the persons of members of the royal house were considered sacred, corporal punishment might not be inflicted on a young prince who misbehaved, no matter how heinous might be his offense. Instead, an unfortunate youth termed a whipping-boy was soundly flogged in the presence of the naughty princeling. The former lad was about the same age, had grown up with the scion of royalty, been his constant companion and even been educated with him. Observing his young friend being punished for something which he, the prince, had done, was supposed by the fat witted educators of the time to put contrition into the heart of the offender, make him feel like a young heel, that the blows were raining on the wrong back. And so he would not again misbehave.

That was the theory, and if the prince of the blood royal happened to be a fairly decent specimen, as sometimes he was, no doubt it worked out that way, although the injustice of larruping an innocent youngster is apparent. But some of the heirs apparent to the British throne must have been anything but decent specimens, if they are to be judged by their actions as kings. Those gentle sovereigns Richard III, John, William Rufus, Edward II or even our portly friend Henry VIII seem to have been types who might actually have enjoyed the spectacle of some terrified lad receiving the strokes which, had they not been royal, would have descended upon them. In time the vicarious atonement of the whipping boy was abolished—perhaps because it too often produced exactly the opposite effect to what was intended.

A close analogy (minus the doubtful result) may be drawn between this system and what takes place in nature. The personality is, in very truth, the Ego's whipping boy. The Ego on his own high plane cannot suffer. He may experience lacks but neither physical, emotional nor mental pain is possible for him. His personality can and does sustain all of the three. And from the personality's suffering the Ego greatly profits. The qualities of patience, endurance, will-power, faith, understanding, sympathy—the whole gamut which the Ego must at last possess in their fulness—can be developed in no other way than by hard experiences of the crucified personality on the physical plane.

Beginners in Theosophy who have not yet grasped the relationship between Ego and personality sometimes show indignation when this arrangement is explained to them. "Why should I suffer so that the Ego may benefit? Why should I bear the burden and heat of the day down here while he sits aloft acquiring qualities at the expense of my miseries?"

It seems like a fair question but actually it betrays a complete misapprehension of the real situation. You are the Ego—you and no one else. You are all of him and he is all of you in the ultimate, though on these lower planes he only puts out a particle of his consciousness, as it were, the rest remaining in his own lofty world. But the entire consciousness is yours because you and he are one and indivisible. Difficult this is for the neophyte in occultism to apprehend, yet many analogies might be drawn. Suppose you dip your finger in a bowl of hot water to determine the temperature. Only the finger experiences the sensation of heat, but you as a complete body know all about it. The nerves convey the sensation almost instantaneously to the brain. Only your finger was present in the hot water, yet you directed it, you received the impression, you were the actor in the incident.

Or take as an example the maintenance of the bodily functions. Do you consciously know how to digest a meal? You would not know where to begin. You know how to eat your dinner, but once it is swallowed some subconscious part of you takes over and does everything that is necessary to assimulate it. But this subconscious is YOU. It isn't somebody or something outside of you. Yet you consciously know no more of it than you do of your superconscious, which is the Ego. You could not do without it and it certainly would have nothing to do without you. And likewise with the Ego. Without him you never would have existed but he needs you also for a very important part of his evolution. Perhaps you are in a sense to him what your subconscious mind (the physical elemental) is to you. You cannot absorb physical nutriment and build it into the tissues of your body without the expert aid of your subconscious. And neither can the Ego absorb that part of his spiritual nutriment which can only come out of the physical experiences with which you, at second hand, provide him.

Your subconscious is you, your conscious mind is you, your superconscious is you. You are a unit, not a man in three parts shut up each in its own sealed compartment. True, these parts are not the real you but only temporary manifestations. Even the Ego is a vehicle used by something higher: the Monad. And the Monad himself is part of God, the only Reality. But these high metaphysics are out of place here. We are concerned at our stage only with our relationship to the Ego, who is the loftiest representative of the Supreme with whom we can have contact while passing through our, as yet, lowly phases of evolution.

If we have cleared up the facts of this relationship we may not find it too hard to grasp why ill-health may not always be the direct karma of some misdoing of ours in this or a past life. Sometimes it may, but it goes deeper than this simple *quid pro quo*. It will take another instalment, however, to unravel the mystery completely.

(To Be Continued)

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GEMS OF OCCULT THOUGHT

(Continued from Page 41)

whereas the branches are farthest away, are "below" or "without."

Even so may a human being be typified. Our rootage is in the Higher, in God Himself, for the Self of man and the Self of the Universe are one and the same. The Self of man is but the tiniest sprouting which is to become the Great Tree! for in the Self of man are all the potentialities of even God Himself wrapped up, to be unfolded in the long course of evolution. This unfoldment is accomplished by the forces of the external world, the Divine Body—natural and physical forces—playing upon the physical and superphysical bodies of man and calling out responses from within, drawing the Divine sap to the surface, expanding the Form, enlarging the channels through which runs the Life from the Divine Rootage.

Thus do we evolve. Thus in the course of long ages and hundreds of Earth-lives is the God within us brought into manifestation by the Divine Life without, embodied in all that surrounds us, the high and the low, the good and the evil. God is in the lowest as well as in the highest, leading with infinite patience, little by little, all things upward. His sole object, we are fain to believe, in coming into manifestation in His Universe, being to create self-conscious individualities (ourselves and other, but invisible, beings who are sharing this world with us) upon whom He might lavish His Love, and upon whom, later, when the true Atonement —the sublime At-one-ment or Unity with Him—has been accomplished, He might pour forth his ineffable Bliss.

REAL PROBLEMS OF REINCARNATION

(Continued from Page 41)

cal Society. Twenty years ago it was said that reincarnationists numbered over a million in this country alone, and more in England, where the idea is more readily received. It is probable that two or more likely three times that number now accept it in view of the work done by The Theosophical Society and other organizations of whose philosophy it is an integral part. While the T. S. may claim to have performed the lion's share of the task, some fine contributions to its validity have come from others. What could be more pointed and unanswerable than the epigram of Voltaire, a fallen-away Catholic: "It is not more surprising to be born twice than to be born once?" Henry Ford did yeoman work (at the expense of a good deal of ridicule) in giving world-wide publicity to his avowed belief in rebirth. Unlike his friend Edison (from whom he probably learned it) he never joined the Society.

The shallow thinker will never get beyond his superficial objections, caught out of the air, which he usually imagines no one ever thought of but he. If he *is* a shallow thinker no answer, no matter how convincing, will satisfy him because he has too much pride in the objection—a characteristic of superficial thinkers—to allow himself to be convinced. He is proud of having thought it up and it hurts his pride to be made to feel that it doesn't amount to anything. Therefore he remains, or professes to remain, unconvinced.

The deep thinker may ask the simple-simon question also, although he has already answered it in his own mind, but for the very sound reason of obtaining the confirmation of someone else for his own view. But, having disposed of the elementary problems, he will not rest content but will go on to the deeper phases of the matter that really give him material on which to exercise his reasoning power and his intuitions.

It is for this type of thinker, including, we believe, most of the readers of this journal that the present series is being prepared. Twenty-one questions, the same number as in the elementary series, will be propounded and all of them will appear in the next instalment. One will be taken and dealt with in each instalment thereafter (or in more than one instalment if necessary) until all have been discussed. It is hoped that the most difficult problems, some of which may never before have been the subject of examination in print, will be adequately handled and light thrown on many dark places.

(To be Continued)

THE EGO SPEAKS IN DREAMS

(Continued from Page 41)

such that the form in which a request to him is cast is of no consequence whatever. The idea ensouled by the form is the only thing to which he pays attention. This applies to all transactions with intelligences on the higher planes (above the lower mental) and consequently to prayer, meditation, contemplation and the like. The form is immaterial. The earnestness and sincerity of the intent and purity of motive is the essential factor. That is why set forms of prayer or affirmation have value only as they are kept from becoming mere automatic reiteration. Or, in the words of Jesus, "Pray not like the heathen with vain repetitions, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking." Set forms are good if they truly enshrine the life, otherwise they are of no more spiritual value than the playing of a phonograph record.

A receptive attitude is a request although if guidance or foreknowledge is desired on any particular matter an express appeal, after detailed and exhaustive thought on the subject, may be necessary. It would be an exaggeration to state that such an appeal always brings a response. In the early stages, when the technique is experimental and conscious or unconscious doubts exist, nothing whatever may come through for days, weeks or months. If the lack of immediate success be ignored and the firm thought held persistently that a message is on the way, sooner or later it is sure to come.

But it may not necessarily manifest in a dream. Nor, if in a dream, does it have to be by symbol. The Ego is versatile. He is not bound to communicate in the particular fashion desired by the personality. ("The Spirit bloweth withersoever it listeth"). Often a "flash" answer, not couched in words but in a sort of "whole" idea, conveying all the desired information, may illuminate the mind soon after awakening, perhaps while bathing or dressing. In our present study we are, however, not so much concerned with this type of communication, valuable though it is, as with the true dream answer in which decodable symbols are used.

To determine by a process of elimination which particular dream episode is the authentic voice of the Ego and which are mere "static" will be the task of the next instalment.

(To be Continued)

PERSONAL OPINIONS

(Continued from Page 45)

ner government of the world by a vast Spiritual Hierarchy that such things seem strange. More thinking about it will convince the mind that it would seem far stranger if the earth and its multitudinous activities could exist without that inner government. It seems unreal only because we do not see it. The outer government of the world would also seem unreal if we did not constantly read about it and sometimes catch a glimpse of some part of it in action. Suppose it were possible to have a physical plane visitor from some planet who knew nothing of our kind of life. He might travel across the nation without suspecting that we have national and state governments. He would not see them and would not think of them as being necessary to explain the existence of our farms and cities, of our railways and highways, our commerce and business activities. The vast panorama of civilization would seem to be automatic and self-sufficient. It would apparently need no supervision or control. Yet without it there would be immediate anarchy and chaos.

(To Be Continued)

"You are terribly outspoken" writes a correspondent. True, but the readers love it.

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OCCULTISM IN THE BIBLE

(Continued from Page 45)

It is hard to choose between this precious pair. Neither had any discernible moral scruples but at the moment Laban was, as Jacob had formerly been, on the receiving end of an unquestionably raw deal.

But Laban knew the answers. With voice as loud and indignation as high as his wily nephew's, he proceeded to give them.

"These daughters are my daughters and these children are my children and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine."

Jacob, then, was entitled to nothing. The years he served should merely have been peonage for him if his uncle spoke the truth. But the latter merely wanted to get it off his chest and having done so relapsed into a more conciliatory mood. After all, the Lord had warned him not to start anything and he had a healthy respect for Jacob's God who had sided against him all the way through. Better not take chances, thought Laban. "Let us make a covenant, I and thou," he proposed to Jacob, being careful to put the first person where he felt it belonged—first. "And let it be for a witness between me and thee."

In the customary manner of the East, after a large scale quarrel which both parties wished to forget, they set up a stone pillar, gathered a heap of stones, made a heap of them and "did eat upon the heap."

"And Laban called it Jegarshadutha," which the translators inform us in the margin means "The heap of witness." But, says the Bible, Jacob called it Galeed. Which, says the margin, means "The heap of witness."

The only thing, so far as can be determined, that Laban and his nephew ever agreed upon.

(To Be Continued)

IF THIS BE MADNESS . . .

By Charles E. Luntz

"There is a pleasure sure
In being mad which none but madmen know."
—*Dryden*

There are people who think us a little bit mad
Because we believe in rebirth.
They are sure that an encore is not to be had
Once they've taken their leave of the earth.
For themselves they look forward to being a blank
Or something that's equally hazy;
So if they are the sane — to be perfectly frank —
We're contented to be classed with the crazy.

If it's mental derangement to hold that we're born
Many times on this colorful planet,
That we sought opportunity back in time's morn
To progress, and that's why we began it . . .
If it's lucid and normal alone to subscribe
To beliefs that are stilted and formal,
With the hope of salvation held out as a bribe,
Sakes alive! Are we glad we're abnormal?

Are we slightly unhinged when we seek to explain
That God has a purpose and plan
In sending us down here again and again
To take incarnations as man?
Is it wiser to think that there's nothing but chance
Or with some sterile creed rest contented?
If beliefs such as these will our saneness enhance,
Then we're happy to say we're demented.

It would be very interesting to hear a couple of Egos exchanging views respecting their current personalities. Egos are said to express complete systems of ideas in one colossal thought-form which they hurl at each other. So that the opinions regarding their personalities if reduced to language would probably read

1st Ego: "POOF!"
2nd Ego: "PHOOEY"

We do not understand why some Theosophists are so secretive about their affiliations, fearing it may hurt them in business or socially. The editor has never made the least effort to disguise his T. S. connection. A large board in front of the local Society often shows his name as lecturing on theosophical or astrological subjects, which are also frequently advertised in the newspapers. He has never traced the slightest harm to this publicity.