ANCIENT WISDOM

A monthly journal devoted to teaching theosophical and occult truths

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

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GEMS OF OCCULT THOUGHT

BY F. MILTON WILLIS

Let Us Be Reasonable Even in Religion

If a student and devotee finds the doctrines of his religious sect are not in accord with what he finally knows to be the truth, to which shall he adhere—the sectarian doctrines or the eternal truth? Can any religion be higher than truth? It is strange that these questions can be asked and elicit hesitation and dubious replies; but such is the lamentable fact.

I once attended a lecture on "Unsolved Problems in Astromony," at the close of which a prominent clergyman was asked to make some remarks. Among other things he said: "I am happy to state to you, my friends, that after hearing the admirable discourse of the evening, I am still able to say that my faith in a *personal* God is not shaken." Here was a well-known professor of religion who went to a lecture on science with his heart in his mouth lest his belief in a personal God be shaken by irrefutable arguments. Here was a minister of the Gospel of the Lord of Truth and Love who would, if he could, reject *truth,* or at least receive it unwillingly, if it conflicted with his own conception of the Deity. And this man was a spiritual teacher, numbering hundreds of persons within his influence.

See the menace of this to the intellectual and moral growth of his congregation, especially of the younger members who have not yet begun to think for themselves. If this teacher holds his own idea of divine things to be of greater significance than the truths of science, and if he believes that the Bible, as he undoubtedly does, supports him in this peculiarly narrow idea, what will not his admiring pupils believe? The same man was reported in the newspapers to have claimed in a certain sermon, as of course do many other clergymen claim, that every word of the Bible was inspired by God.

Now there is a sublime truth in the Bible, but to say that every word was inspired by God finds no ground whatsoever in reason, especially when we know that the Old Testament entirely lacks the unities of time, place and idea and is but a great miscellany of ancient writings, and that the New Testament is the result of compilation from upwards of a thousand different

(Continued on Page 47)

THE OCCULT INTERPRETATION OF OMAR KHAYYAM

"Let's Get Away From It All"

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

X (First Edition)

With me along some Strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultan scarce is known,
And pity Sultan Mahmud on his Throne.

The word "strown" is an archaic form of the past participle of "strew." Omar invites somebody—just who is for us to determine—to accompany him to the edge of the desert but not actually into the desert. We have to be very careful to get our symbology correct here. What is the desert? What is the strip of herbage and what is the civilization from which Omar is so anxious to get away that he even pities the Sultan who rules over it?

In a reference to the desert in *The Secret Doctrine,* Madame Blavatsky connects it with the "Illusion and Matter called Earth-Life" and terms it "the limitless desert." (Vol. V: Page 256 Adyar Edition). Omar is at the moment keeping away from that. Neither has he retired to the astral world for the "name of slave . . . scarce is known," and a *slave* often is used to express the astral plane, a symbol which has come down to us in the frequently heard phrase "a slave to his desires." Part of the "merchandise" of the wicked city of Babylon allegorically described by John the Seer in the 18th chapter of Revelation was "slaves." This description has wholly to do with astral evils of a symbolic city—really the astral body of any especially evil person. We are put on notice, therefore, that it is not the astral plane to which Omar has reference.

Neither is it the lower mental plane, as the "name of Sultan" also "scarce is known" and Omar "pities Sultan Mahmud on his throne." A king, sultan, emperor or other ruling prince is always represented in astrology by the Sun which also, esoterically, is the fragment of Ego in incarnation. The highest level this fragment may know at any period of the incarnational cycle is the mental plane in the bliss of devachan, equivalent to the Christian heaven. But occultists regard this heaven as illusory, ecstatic though its conditions may be as compared with the lower

(Continued on Page 47)

REAL PROBLEMS OF REINCARNATION

5. If the individualization of Egos was a continuing process before it ceased some millions of years ago, then there should be as many advanced Egos as immature ones. Why do the latter, therefore, seem to be so greatly in the majority?

At first glance this would seem to be a reasonable assumption but further examination of the question shows that it assumes too much. It does not take into account the fact that the immense periods of evolutionary time extending over billions of years and more allow for every conceivable type of soul history and soul age and that Egos may, as it were, be "processed" by series and not all at one continuing time.

In the great theosophical classic, *Man, Whence, How and Whither* (Besant and Leadbeater) a record of the clairvoyant investigation of man's spiritual origins and future, this is exactly what was found to be the case. In *The Secret Doctrine* and other of H.P.B.'s works it is constantly hinted at, without the information being so clearly given, as it would have been premature to dot the i's and cross the t's at that early stage of occult disclosure. The Masters' letters, carefully phrased as they are, also imply that this is the case. The Eastern Scriptures and our own Bible, properly understood, confirm the varying stages of evolution at which not merely single Egos but great bodies of them stand at any given time.

We are told (and it seems most logical) that Egos incarnate in groups, take a series of needed lessons extending over many lives, and then go on vacation, as it were, for hundreds of thousands of years and perhaps for periods extending into millions of years. There is no sense of passing time in these long *pralayas* (as they are called in the East). Time is an illusion of the consciousness and one who faints or goes into a trance, alike with a person who sleeps dreamlessly the night through, has no sense of duration.

As an example, the Egos comprising a majority of the most earnest workers in The Theosophical Society are said to have taken their first incarnations on this earth not more than 100,000 years ago in Atlantis. This is virtually yesterday compared with the millions of years man has existed here in his present form, besides the hundreds of millions he spent in forms composed of etheric material unaffected by the then molten

(Continued on Page 47)

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"GOD HATES EVIL!"?

"I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."
—*Isaiah XLV:7*

". . . shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"
—*Amos III:6*

Our brethren of the orthodox faiths are very strong on denouncing evil, though a little vague as to what it is. Our cousins of the Christian Science Church (though they might deny the consanguinity) declare that evil has no existence and therefore God knows nothing about it. As both schools of religious thought accept the Bible as inspired, the above passages must be embarrassingly difficult for them to explain. They are so very explicit.

In both the creation of evil is most definitely imputed to the Lord. There are no qualifying phrases. Whatever may be said in other parts of the Bible about man being responsible for evil in the good world God has made, here the entire responsibility is laid upon God. By implication indeed man is made to feel presumptuous in imagining that he has anything to do with the existence of evil. "I the Lord create evil," says Isaiah. "There can be no evil in a city unless the Lord has done it," declares Amos. And it is to Occultism, as always, we must look for light on these dark sayings.

The identification of God with the evils of the world as well as with the good is not confined to the Bible. In the Bhagavad Gita, Shri Krishna (speaking as God) exclaims, "I am the gambling of the cheat . . ." and shocking as the statements must seem to the pietistic, they are the only ones on the subject which can be considered possible by pantheistic Theosophy.

If God is everywhere, in all, through all, if in Him we live and move and have our being, then he cannot be divorced from any particle of matter, from any circumstance, from any word, deed or thought, whether these things be what the world calls good or whether they be what we call evil. The prophets must have been right. If evil exists God made it or it could not exist. If "evil is only a seeming" then God made the seeming, the shadow as well as the substance. And note that Isaiah makes the Lord proclaim that He forms **light** and *creates* darkness, although darkness, as we know if Isaiah did not, is only the absence of light and there therefore is nothing to create.

But perhaps Isaiah did know what he was talking about for *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. I, p. 137 Adyar Edition) quotes the ancient occult adage, "Light and Darkness are identical in themselves, being only divisible in the human mind." It also repeats the declaration of the great English mystic, Robert Fludd, "Darkness adopted illumination in order to make itself visible." And, writes H. P. B.:

"According to the tenets of Eastern Occultism, DARKNESS is the one true actuality, the basis and the root of Light, without which the latter could never manifest itself, nor even exist. Light is Matter, and DARKNESS pure Spirit. Darkness, and its radical, metaphysical basis, is subjective and absolute Light; while the latter in all its seeming effulgence and glory, is merely a mass of shadows, as it can never be eternal, and is simply an Illusion, or Maya."

So that darkness—the *real* darkness, not its counterpart on our plane—would seem to have at least as much right to be created as light—perhaps more so. And if we analyze the true meaning of the word "evil," going behind the superficial definitions of those who want evil to be what they think it ought to be, we shall find that it also is to be included in God's creations as is the darkness by which it is often symbolized.

Whatever evil is, it must be identified either with a thing, a condition or a person and these are most definitely creations of or emanations from God. Murder, stealing, cheating, lying, illicit or excessive sex indulgence—these things are agreed by the best thought of the world to be evil. They are condemned in the great scriptures of the world as evil. Without a second thought almost every normal person would agree that they are evil. (If he disbelieved in evil he might term them "error," but the inference would be the same).

Yet it is certain that in our long trek from primitive savage to civilized man there is no one of these "evils" with which every one of us has not had considerably more than a nodding acquaintance. They are, or should be, behind us now. Were they "necessary" at the earlier stages of our evolution? Evidently, as no one escapes them. And occult philosophy cannot listen to any theory which places things, events or individuals beyond the bounds of God's knowledge and God's love.

Can God, then, "hate evil?"

We do not believe God hates anything or anybody—not even a fiend like Hitler. We do not believe that Eternal Law, which is one with Eternal God, educates, corrects and instills wisdom by means, among many other things, of allowing man to make mistakes and suffer their inevitable unpleasant consequences. In this sense God "creates" evil. With His Eternal prescience how can He hate anything through which every human creature has to pass on his way to the heights.

In only one sense, a remote one, can the Theosophist concede a slight basis of fact beneath the divine hatred complex of the orthodox. When a person of normal, decent instincts does something he knows to be wrong (for him), something at which his better instincts revolt, there may be a feeling which for want of a better word may be described as "hatred" for what he has done. That is his inner God, who is his true Self, hating evil.

The real occultist, however, when he slips, as slip he sometimes may before he attains liberation, wastes no time in fruitless repining or in mentally calling out against what he has done. He takes stock of it, sees it for what it is and resolutely determines he will not make that particular mistake again. Then he puts it out of his mind. As for God's hate for what he has done, the inspired words of Whittier apply:

"I know not of His hate—I know
His goodness and his love."

If the Theosophist had a creed, this could be it.

TO UNDERSTAND KARMA WATCH ITS WORKINGS

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
—*Isaiah IV:8-9*

The old gibe that God created man in his own image and man has been returning the compliment ever since is a good deal more than merely a smart epigram. It is the key to the difficulty man experiences in getting the events of life to make sense. The wise old prophet whose words are quoted above summed up the situation in these two powerful declarations. Little man, who so often contrives to make a complete mess of his own affairs, endeavors to interpret God's affairs by what he would do if *he* had omnipotent power. He forgets that omnipotent power without omniscient wisdom would make for as much chaos on a cosmic scale as man has managed to produce on a minute scale.

We misinterpret God's thoughts, which are karma, because we try to measure them by the yardstick of our own petty devices. The theologians who seem to understand divine hate (which cannot possibly exist) so much better than Divine Love, unconsciously betray their own warped mentalities.

"If we were God," they proclaim in effect, "we'd fix 'em. We'd take care of those who had the audacity not to believe in us . . . and good." And by belief they, of course, mean the beliefs, tortured and impossible as they may be, which they have written around the Person of the Most High. It's all very pitiful, contemptible and disgraceful. But a large section of that division of the public which does not go in much for deep thinking accepts it at its face value, swallows, shivers and obeys. Which was the general idea.

The occultist, profoundly recognizing the abyss existing between Divine and human mentality, "as the heavens are higher than the earth," yet strives to comprehend, microscopically as may be, something of the workings of Divine Wisdom by approaching it through the avenue of the Divine ray within himself. He does not try to fit Divine thought into his own human thought but rather to raise the level of his own mentation to the highest he can conceive of Divine mentation. And while even at his highest level, a stupendous chasm must still exist between them he yet may, by this process, attain to an understanding denied to the thinker who p e r s i s t s in using the reverse method.

Knowing how far he must always be from the realm of prime causes, he tries to comprehend the workings of karma by closely observing their effects, how produced, and so far as he can gauge it, why produced. One's own life is the best starting place if conning over its incidents and their peculiar shaping and consummation does not lead to vain or morbid introspection. This can be avoided by viewing them as though they had happened to another person but with all their subtle effects on one's own personality and destiny fully recognized. There must be no regret for lost opportunities, no shame for past humiliations, no resentment for bygone wrongs. Neither should there be pride in achievement nor self-congratulation on triumphs or successes. The study must be strictly objective—the Ego putting the personality under a microscope, as it were. And because, in that attitude of mind, a link with Egoic consciousness will be very likely made, and the Ego probably had a hand in adjusting the karma of the incarnation, considerable understanding of its reasons and purposes may be reached.

This is a very profitable type of meditation and one which, if persisted in, will pay large intellectual and spiritual dividends. But a breast-beating accompanient, as one passes in review the follies of a former day, must by all means be avoided. That is the way of the "miserable worm" who sins against his maker merely by being alive, and we want no part of him. We leave him to the religious fanatics who manufactured him out a vicious collection of garbled, mistranslated, misunderstood and wrongfully inserted Bible texts.

If we perform the task aright we shall find a golden thread of purpose running through all the events of our life. Episodes will relate themselves to each other. We shall obtain at least a glimmering, and maybe much more, of precise understanding as to why our destiny shaped as it did—what was the particular end karma had in view in processing us as it did—what consummations still must come about in the years left to us if the incarnation is to be fully productive.

One thing we must remember if we are to read karma aright is that it skilfully uses the weapon of concealment. There are things which for our own good are hidden from us while other things on which they have a direct bearing, or which have a direct bearing on them, are taking place. It is difficult to view in proper perspective the events through we are passing, because of these undisclosed factors. Others are even at the m o m e n t taking action or planning a c t i o n w h i c h l a t e r will link itsef with our own chain of circumstance for better or worse. That this catena of o c c u r r e n c e s is all a matter of pure chance—that anyone may fortuitously do anything at any time that will affect for good or ill the destinies of others who also have their own specialized karma to work out—occultism will not for a moment concede. There is supervision, there is guidance. With superhuman adroitness far beyond our mentality to fathom, it is kept in the background. Even when those with eyes to see can detect its presence—and it is always present—so feather-like is its touch that there will aways be many more to deny that it exists at all. That is the nature of the thought of God which ensouls the karmic supervisors who dole out to us the destinies which we ourselves have fabricated.

To us it may seem a stupendous, an impossible labor to dovetail the millions of intricate human karmas with one another so that a just balance is struck for all and each receives the measure he meted out and the education for which his soul history calls. A lazy or irresponsible deity would undoubtedly not undertake it but would let his erratic creatures do whatever they pleased and chuckle over the resulting anarchy. But if there is one thing which the matchless order of nature demonstrates it is that the Deity is neither lazy nor irresponsible but that His Wisdom and Power are, in the expressive language of the Bible, "beyond searching."

A Wisdom and Power that can keep in their exact orbits electrons alike with suns and planets is not likely to find it too difficult to keep karmic orbits separate where they should be separate and to cross with one another those which are fated to be crossed.

The principles employed are not altogether unrecognized by the occultist: a thought instilled into a receptive mind; an impulse to action, seemingly unimportant but laden with far-reaching consequences; a turning to the right instead of to the left, or some other slight deviation from normal routine that changes the entire course of the life. These are some of the methods obviously used by karma to carry out its purposes, but others may be more subtle yet. Divine Intelligence does not lack for means for it has in its control all the material, time and circumstance that are.

Watch the workings of karma—in your own life, in the lives of those close to you, in the lives of the great figures of the world and in the lives of the small figures. For there is no great, no small to karma. The laws governing atoms and molecules are as precise and as stringently executed as the laws governing the heavenly bodies. It can be no different in the realm of human evolution. And as you watch the workings of karma you will grow in understanding, grow also more and more into the likeness of your Ego, who continually watches and *always* understands.

Those who wrote us ten years ago that we were all wrong about Hitler, that his intentions were beneficent and all he was trying to do was to protect his own country from outside attack, had to eat their words in silence and bitterness soon after. Almost identical letters are now being received, with a mere substitution of Russia's name for Hitler's. We are no more impressed by them than we were by those of the apologists for the Nazis. They sing the same sour tune and strike the same discordant notes. In our opinion the writers are self-deceived—either unfamiliar with the historical facts of life or shutting their eyes to them. We wanted to believe in Russia's good faith and will to cooperate. So did nearly all of the American people. We still want to. But we have reluctantly been forced to the conclusion that where the democracies are concerned Russia has no least intention of cooperating and that Winston Churchill in his Fulton, Mo., speech of two years ago was one-hundred percent right.

Reading the mellifluous praise bestowed upon the Presidential aspirants by speakers at the National Conventions one can only conclude that, if true, more perfected beings are available for the White House than we had supposed were in existence this side of the Himalayas.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE SIMPLY EXPLAINED

"One God, One Law, One Element . . ."

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

IV:I . . . Listen, ye Sons of the Earth to your Instructors—the Sons of the Fire.

Fire is an age-old occult symbol for Spirit—and more than a symbol for, as every astrologer knows, many planets in fiery signs in a natal horoscope are indicative of high spirituality and a deep religious sense. H.P.B. elaborates on this symbology of both Old and New Testaments, quoting Deuteronomy IV: 24, "The Lord . . . is a consuming fire"; Thessalonians I:7-8, "The Lord (Christos) shall be revealed . . . with his mighty angels, in flaming fire"; Acts II:3, The Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles as "cloven tongues like as of fire"; Revelation XIX 11 and 13, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him . . . and his name is called the Word of God," amid flaming fire.

The last quotation is especially interesting because the horse is a symbolic representation of the fiery sign Sagittarius.

Even our most orthodox friend Alexander Cruden, who 200 years ago compiled the valuable Concordance to the Bible, still in use, endorses this symbology. Says he (p.220, 1930 edition published by Winston), "Fire is often used as a symbol of God . . . It is said that Jesus will appear in the midst of fire at his second coming. The wrath of God is compared to fire. Our Saviour is compared to fire. The Holy Ghost is likewise compared to fire. The angels themselves as the ministers of God are compared to a burning fire."

There is a good deal more to this effect and for once occultists find their esoteric symbology somewhat in harmony with that of exoteric religion. The fact that, as H.P.B. remarks in a footnote ". . . the Lights of the whole Universe could be lit from one simple rushlight without diminishing the flame" is a key to one of the marvels of Manifestation and, on a lesser scale, of incarnation. The Logos who emanates worlds, the Ego who puts a fragment of himself into the personality, are in no way diminished thereby, any more than the flame is diminished by kindling a thousand lights. Here, too, is the analogy of the Ego, ensouling, perhaps, a hundred thought-forms of himself made by those in devachan who love him—maybe at the same time ensouling a personality on earth—yet no whit less himself in all his fulness.

The sons of earth are adjured to listen to their instructors, the Sons of Fire. Very difficult for the sons of earth to do. A native having most of his planets fiery, talking occultism to one having nearly all of his in earthy

(Continued on Page 48)

JUDGE NOT

By ELLA WELGE

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

—Matt. 7:12.

To fall into the habit of passing judgment on others, is taking a great responsibility upon o u r s e l v e s. Even though we may be honest and fair in all our dealings with people yet if we condemn another for injustice we subject ourselves to the law of "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

—Gal. 11:7

The Master's command to judge not that ye be not judged has reference to condemnation and adverse criticism and not to the using of wisdom, discrimination and good judgment in matters great or small. Everyone should acquire a clear understanding of what is just and right and be loyal to his own convictions. But man is prone to criticise and pass judgment on others without the slightest consideration of their motives, circumstances or stage of spiritual unfoldment and u n d e r standing. Man's judgments are often prejudiced and colored by his own personal opinions, his likes and dislikes and he therefore misjudges his fellowman quite unduly. He even goes so far as to determine the kind of punishment or disipline another deserves. And all the while he may be expressing his own ignorance in the matter and creating adverse forces that will react upon himself.

We should remember that everyone has a perfect right to his own opinions and way of life. He needs certain experiences to learn the lessons necessary for his inner growth and development. Our perspective of a thing may mislead another from following the path that is for his own highest good. It is only safe to express our opinions and give advice when they are sincerely asked for or when we definitely know that another is in real danger. It is our duty then to caution him on giving thought and meditation to the situation at hand before going ahead.

Condemnation in any form interferes with the normal functions of mind and body. Jealousy, anger, faultfinding, etc. are emotional upsets that cause disturbance in the physical organism, especially in the area of the liver. They also retard one's progress and success in many otherwise good undertakings. Self condemnation is equally detrimental to one's welfare and is often the unconscious reason for being critical of others. It is extremely necessary to include ourselves in seeking to establish freedom from the habit of passing unwise judgment.

To enjoy peace, justice, health and prosperity we should make every effort toward overcoming adverse habits of thought and emotion. When our thoughts, feelings and actions are harmonized and equalized in Truth, it will follow that our bodies and circumstances will adjust themselves accordingly.

We should remain calm and poised when someone disagrees with us for he may be giving us an excellent opportunity for self-improvement and for new good to come to us. Although our feelings may be somewhat crushed at first we can rise above this attitude of offense by daily meditation on the words of the Psalmist: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." (Ps. LI:10-XIX:14.)

An inner purification will take place in our consciousness and we will grow out of the habit of self condemnation of others. We shall rejoice in our new freedom and obedience to the command "J u d g e not, that ye be not judged."

Our lives will take on a new order as we press on to the high conscious realization a n d attainment of "My judgment is just because I seek not my own will but the will of the Father." (John V:30.)

Spiritual Healing. For spiritual aid of the Esoteric Healing Group of St. Louis Lodge, write, giving full name and address to Mrs. Ella Welge, c/o The Theosophical Society, 5108 Waterman Ave., St. Louis 8, Mo.

WE WISH WE KNEW WHO WAS RIGHT

Opinion of a reader who doesn't like ANCIENT WISDOM: "Mr. L u n t z ' s poetry just isn't poetry at all."

Opinion of a reader who does like ANCIENT WISDOM: "Your last poem about 'Original Sin' was superb. I am amazed at your fecundity in coming so often with really b r i l l i a n t verse." (Williamsburg, Va.)

Doesn't: "I d o n ' t like any of Mr. Luntz's writings."

Does: "I cannot b e g i n to tell you how much I have appreciated the wonderfully instructive a r t i c l e s by Mr. Rogers, yourself and the few o t h e r writers. They have all s h o w n such wisdom, real philosophical views and broadmindedness, so understandingly presented. May the good you are doing be continued." (Colorado)

The unfortunate choice presented to many a busy person is not what he shall do next but what he will have to neglect to do next.

PERSONAL OPINIONS

By L. W. Rogers

The Living and the Dead

The relationship between the living and the dead is not only a very interesting theme but also a study that can give rich returns for the time devoted to it. A Theosophist's desire is to be always helpful and there are few ways in which he can be more practically useful to others than in his mental and emotional attitude toward those who have recently passed on into the astral world.

Naturally all of us would do anything possible to smooth the way for our departing friends but what the average human being really does when death breaks the family circle is to injure, instead of assist, the friend or relative who is withdrawing, or recently has withdrawn, from the physical body. This unfortunate fact arises from a combination of factors—a keen sense of the loss involved, his lack of emotional control and his lack of definite information on the relationship between the physical and astral regions; for the average human being has little, if any, realization of the tremendous sensitiveness of life in the astral world. We do know that there can be great emotional suffering in this material life. In fact it is the keenest suffering we experience. What grief is greater than that caused by the death of one we deeply love? There is no purely physical pain that we cannot more easily bear.

It does not usually occur to us at the time that the friend or relative we are losing is also suffering far more keenly —not because he is losing us but because of our intense grief. He has no sense of loss whatever, no feeling of separation, for there really is none for him. Only those left behind feel a loss, an emptiness, an "aching void" for which there is no remedy. *He* passes on into a life so intensely joyous, an existence so thrillingly happy, that it would be bliss itself if it were not for the emotional storm of violent grief created by the mourners.

Of course we are thinking of the ordinary man of the world and not of the criminal, the degenerate, the glutton or the habitual drunkard. It would not, indeed, be true of them that they at once enter a joyous life in the astral world; but it is true of any person who has lived the decent way of the average individual, and especially of all who have been reasonably helpful to others. Of course there are degrees of happiness and life on the mental plane is unimaginably grander than that of the astral region. Nevertheless the astral world is heaven compared with the life we know here, for this physical existence (again for the average person) is the only hell he will ever know. It is only the vicious, the lawless, the self-righteous, the violent, the haters, the haughty, the depraved, who can be conscious on the lower level of the astral plane. True, we all pass through it after the death of the physical body but we cannot be conscious of it if we have lived decently here.

There is always a loss of consciousness at death. It may be only for a moment or it may be for a long period; but for the clean-living human it seems to be instantaneous translation into a heavenly life; yet it is emotionally closely linked with the physical and he is vividly aware of the emotional status of those he has left behind.

Let us try to get a clear understanding of the *degree* to which the emotional suffering of the mourner is conveyed to his friend in the astral life. Suppose, then, that you recall to mind the most despondent moment of your memory when perhaps you suffered a financial loss that suddenly changed your life from wealth to utter poverty, and poverty also brought a fatal disease. Then try to imagine your desperate situation multiplied by one-hundred—your fear of poverty and disease intensified a hundred times. That is the ratio between physical and astral emotion—1 to 100! It is by just that startling ratio that your emotional grief registers in the astral body of your friend who has passed on. That is enough to turn their suddenly acquired astral heaven into a hell.

It is the tendency of all of us to take on the moods of those who surround us. If the members of the family are all cheerful, we feel happy. If some of them have the "blues" we become a bit solemn and despondent. If we meet a person who is radiantly happy we at once are affected by his joyous mood. Thus emotion works on the material plane. Increase the effect by a hundred and you have the definite result in the next higher world. We can therefore, when death snatches away one we love, rob him of the joyous life he has earned in the astral world by thinking in grief of our loss instead of the fact that he is far more happy now than he has ever been in the life here. Our only sensible and *unselfish* course is to reflect upon his joy and not upon our own misery.

It is not enough to try to remain calm and serene when a friend passes on. We should send after him, just as we would if instead of dying he had sailed on a very long voyage to be gone for years, affectionate thoughts of good will and good cheer. A thing to always remember is that it, death, is merely a voyage into a very different world; that there is no such thing as extinction; that whatever is must eternally exist; that only the form changes, that consciousness lives forever because it is a literal part of the deity and cannot cease to be; that by virtue of the fact that we were closely associated with him here we made a tie that will bring us together again.

With these fundamentals firmly in mind we will gradually gain emotional control and thus be in a position to help with joyous thought and emotion instead of injure with the opposite kind. There is never a kindly thought of a friend we have lost by death that does not reach him and help him a hundred times more than the same sort of thought helped him while he was here. That unquestionable occult fact gives every one of us the opportunity to be enormously helpful to relatives and friends who are now in the astral life. If we spend a little time daily in thinking of those who have passed on and send them kindly thoughts and cheerful good wishes we shall not only definitely assist them and make them happier but incidentally we shall improve our own lot here, for under the occult law we *must* reap what we sow.

BIBLALIBI

By Charles E. Luntz

Bible readers are enjoined by the clergy of some faiths to remember that conflicts, contradictions, crudities and obscenities cannot be present in the Bible. If they appear to be, it isn't the Bible that is at fault but the reader's mind.

If you read in a scriptural story
The tale of some happening tribal,
Which does not redound to the glory
Of characters blessed by the Bible;
If you find there's a fact in Verse seven
Contradicted in Verse forty-two,
Just recall—or you'll ne'er go to heaven—
That it isn't the Bible—it's you.

Now this opens some vistas attractive
To those who are prone to excuses.
It can serve, for a nature inactive,
To cover all sorts of abuses.
If you teach, and the class doesn't get it,
And fails in the subject en masse,
When your conscience condemns, don't you let it;
It isn't your fault—it's the class.

If in merchandise shoddy you traffic,
And patrons complain, be defiant.
Insist, in words pungent and graphic,
That it isn't the goods—it's the client.
If you act on the stage or in pictures
And instead of applause people boo,
Pay no heed to their ignorant strictures,
They're too dumb to appreciate you.

If you fail on a Company mission
Because the exertion might tire you,
"The fault lies with your proposition,"
Is a telling retort when they fire you.
If as surgeon you sew up a tweezer
(Which the public will seldom condone)
In the insides of some poor old geezer,
Make it plain that the error's his own.

Though these instances, senseless and callow,
You may take with a spoonful of salt,
They're as sane as the effort to hallow
Bible bobbles by crying, "Your fault!"
They are seeds of truth, there for a reason—
The writers did well when they sowed them—
So why not gain wisdom in season
By learning just how to decode them?

OCCULTISM IN THE BIBLE

Happy Ending

By Charles E. Luntz

The reconciliation of Jacob with his brother Esau and the events which preceeded it must be decoded in the light of the known symbolism worked out in earlier installments. The estrangement in the earlier stages of our evolution of Manas, mind (Jacob) from the emotions (Esau), while undoubtedly foreseen and inevitable, is yet the cause of a large part of the ills from which humankind suffers. It is the price man pays for receiving the gift of reasoning mind before the emotions had been brought under control.

The name Jacob means "usurper," and every effort is made by the Bible writer to point that meaning esoterically. The new reader should refer to the November, 1947 article of this series, "Manas 'steals' from Buddhi", for full understanding of what follows.

A bitter conflict rages between reason and feeling at times, even in the hearts of those well along in evolution. The astral body is intended to be completely subservient to the dictates of the mind and that, in turn, to be ruled by inspiration from the Ego. For the time being we leave the latter out of it. His turn comes later (story of Joseph). Our concern is with that particular milestone in evolution which one day all must reach when mind and emotions work in perfect harmony, the feelings being held in complete check by the intellect. Observe this does not mean the *suppression* of the emotions by the mind. Far from it. These two instruments of the self are to act in unison and not independently of each other.

It is hardly necessary to stress the fact that this consummation is far away for a large section of humanity. The astral holds sway—Esau is in the saddle. The mental—Jacob—cringes and cowers before it. Each desires use the mind for their own purposes instead of *vice versa*. And the mind knuckles under as did Jacob, seeking to "appease" the wild astral. The gifts sent by Jacob to Esau are enormously significant: Goats (Capricorn), Rams (Aries), Camels (Scorpio), Bulls (Taurus), Asses (the animal half of Sagittarius). These are the signs perhaps the most prone to sacrifice mind to feeling. It will be noted that none of the airy signs that rule the mind are represented. It is also worthy of observation that in numbers (see May 1948 instalment) the Capricorn and Aries animals far exceed the others. Probably these two signs are considered the most likely to cater to the astral in the undeveloped stages. This may be a matter of opinion but astrologers familiar with the characteristics of all the signs might find it hard to dispute.

Esau brings 400 men to meet Jacob. The number is occult. The two zeros are a blind. Except in the case of the first 12 numbers and the numbers 22 and 40 each of which has a symbology of its own, Biblical numerology is identical, so far as computation is concerned, with the numerology of today. The digits are simply added together and their sum represents the number to be interpreted. It may be mentioned in passing, however, that as the Bible was not written in English the numerical value of the letters constituting a word or name differs materially from ours.

The 400 men therefore are to be construed as introducing the number 4, and as Biblical numerals are often decodable only by astrology, we recognize this as standing for the 4th house which rules the *outcome* or end of any matter. Esau could just as easily have been made by the Bible author to head 300 or 500 men, but such figures would have been without significance and the scriptural writers don't do things that way. No ordinary reader would think a second time about the 400 men. They would be just a lot of men that Esau brought along to fight Jacob and his party. But to the student with the key this figure would instantly signal, "End of an evolutionary cycle."

If this is considered far-fetched, it may be inquired why the Lord in Genesis XV:13, informed Abram that his descendants would be in a strange land (Egypt) 400 years, when according to the Usher chronology they were there only about 200. Acts VII:6, repeats this statement. The entire "Israel in Egypt" story is a remarkable allegory of the descent of the Ego into the depths of matter, his constant rebirths under all of the signs, his many tribulations and final deliverance. The "400" again indicates the end of an evolutionary episode.

The end of the Jacob-Esau cycle is reached when mind and emotions "make up" and forget their age-long quarrel. There is no longer any question of who rules whom. Both operate together for the good of their Lord who is the Ego.

We have to reach that stage before we are fit for very much in the Great Scheme.

(To Be Continued)

PLEASE DO NOT SEND IN BACK NUMBERS UNLESS REQUESTED

We appreciate very much the kindness of some readers in forwarding us copies of former issues which they have read. However, we print up liberal extra copies of all numbers and it happens only occasionally that we run out of some of the older ones. Where more recent issues are sent in they tax our limited storage space. When we are out of print of older numbers for which there is a demand, we occasionally insert ads requesting them. At present we can use as many copies of December, 1936 as readers may care to send us but this is the only number in considerable demand of which our current stock is exhausted.

DO YOU KNOW? —

That Theosophists are Pantheists, a word derived from two Greek roots meaning *All-God?*

* * * * *

That Pantheists hold the conviction that God is in everything, is everything, and that everything is God?

* * * * *

That this is in harmony with early Christianity and the best thought in modern Christianity?

* * * * *

That Paul's well-known "In him we live and move and have our being" is a pantheistic statement?

* * * * *

That the oft-repeated teaching of Jesus, "The kingdom of heaven is within you," and his constant allusion to the "Father" in heaven (within) is also Pantheism?

* * * * *

That the 139th Psalm ("Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?") is purely pantheistic?

* * * * *

That many of the greatest writers and philosophers of history were avowed Pantheists, including Spinoza, Goethe, Lessing, Hegel and Giordano Bruno?

* * * * *

That Pantheism existed as a philosophy in ancient Greece more than 2500 years ago?

* * * * *

That the Christian and Jewish Cabalists were Pantheists as were the Neoplatonists, Gnostics and the Sufis of Islam?

* * * * *

That to the mind capable of philosophical reasoning in depth, this is the only possible or logical concept of God who, to be Omnipresent, must be in all His works down to the lowliest particle and tiniest atom?

* * * * *

That He therefore must be in all circumstance, even in those happenings which are, to outer sight, vile and abominable?

* * * * *

That shocking as this may appear, there is a rational explanation, acceptable to the believer in the goodness of God and the innate trend of evolution toward good? (See next month's "Do You Know?" column).

The first printer's proof of our "Questions That Should Never Be Asked In The T. S." appeared as "Are you a vegetation?"

The answer to this, of course, would be "Not now; but I was, several billion years ago—and so were you."

GEMS OF OCCULT THOUGHT

(Continued from Page 41)

versions, most of them by utterly unknown writers who had the interests, not entirely of truth and religion, but of the Church, to serve.

The truths, the spiritual insights, of the New Testament, as well as the comparatively few to be found in the Old, are very enlightening when we appreciate their real meaning; but that real meaning is not elicited by those who can say and believe that every word of the Bible is inspired, for by so thinking they are but holding to the letter that killeth and ignoring the spirit that giveth life, they are but worshipping a book and beclouding reason, the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Let us be reasonable even in religion.

Further, let us take a stand and say to ourselves: "I will seek the truth, even though I know that when I find it, it may topple to the earth the proudest structures of theology or science or philosophy; I will seek the truth, come what may." And then let us go further still and say: "I will seek the truth, but I will accept nothing as truth" (in the words of Gautama Siddartha, the last incarnation of the Buddha, or Enlightened One) 'merely because it is said; nor will I believe in traditions because they have been handed down from antiquity; nor in rumors as such; nor in writings by sages, because sages wrote them; nor in fancies which I may suspect have been inspired in me by a god; nor in inferences drawn from some haphazard assumption I may have made; nor because of what seems an analogical necessity; nor on the mere authority of my teacher or masters; but I will believe when the writing, doctrine or saying is corroborated by my own reason and consciousness!' "

OCCULT INTERPRETATION

(Continued from Page 41)

planes. Omar's "strip of herbage," therefore is neither the astral nor the mental plane for neither slave nor sultan is known there.

We really have to look to the quatrain that follows for a key to Omar's whereabouts. This is the well-known "loaf of bread, book of verse and thou" stanza, known to every adolescent who discovers what he imagines to be the rollicking philosophy of the Persian poet and goes around spouting it. In that verse we are for the first time introduced to "thou," later addressed as "beloved," a transparent symbol (to the occult student) which instantly enables us to determine the plane upon which his consciousness is functioning. The "sown" which is divided from the "desert" by the band of vegetation on which he invites his companion to join him, can only be higher mental plane, abode of the Ego, which the personality just touches, usually without consciousness, as it yields up the last of its incarnational "spoils" to the higher Self which it has been working for centuries to enrich. But the "Beloved" is higher yet. More of that in the next installment.

The word "sown" is a most appropriate label for the plane one level above the higher mental, for that is the Buddhic, world of the Christ consciousness and only one remove from the Atmic where spiritual evolution begins for man. On that plane there is no separateness, either between man and God, man and other men or man and things. All are not merely recognized but identified with one another. The Monad on that plane knows and feels in fullest measure that his consciousness is God's consciousness. The Buddhic is the plane of love and wisdom, the two actually being one, and here there is still the recognition of unity, and perfect sympathy and understanding for all, but an imperceptible film of highest grade ethereal matter begins to veil Monad from Monad and here he becomes as it were a spiritual seed sown in the world of wisdom which must sprout deep roots into lower planes, from which must grow the Tree of Life into heaven itself and beyond, until it reaches the high world from which the seed was sown.

The "desert" in the sense Omar uses it thus embraces more than the earth-life given to it in the symbolism of *The Secret Doctrine*. It represents all three of the lower worlds through which the personality must struggle. It is not uncommon for esoteric writers to stretch a well-known symbol to cover more than its customary territory but when they do they always furnish hints in the shape of additional or supplementary symbols for the guidance of the student. In this case the "slave" and the "sultan" supply the required clues.

But Fitzgerald himself, whether by inspiration or sheer coincidence, furnishes still another one in his Fifth Edition. He seems to recognize that his original translation of the last line of the quatrain is inadequate and inserts a significant adjective. Instead of the First Edition's ". . . pity Sultan Mahmud on his throne," he makes it read "And Peace to Mahmud on his golden Throne!" Gold is ruled by the Sun and the Sun, as we have already seen, is the Egoic ray, reflection or fragment in incarnation.

(To Be Continued)

REAL PROBLEMS

(Continued from Page 41)

and gaseous state of the globe. They had completed earlier cycles of their human evolution on a planet which pre-dated the earth and the remains of which, lifeless and inert, now constitute our Moon.

"Fantastic!" some may say, on hearing such a statement for the first time (or maybe for the hundreth time). "How can anyone know such things?" We are not dogmatic about it. Perhaps no one can know such things. Mayhap Besant and Leadbeater invented them or were hallucinated when they thought they clairvoyantly observed them—or perhaps they were only seeing their own thought forms. Maybe they knew nothing about it; maybe Blavatsky didn't, nor yet the Masters. Maybe they didn't, or maybe they did. We have no proof either way, except this: The facts as given add up. They make sense. Naturally they make no sense to anyone who does not believe in reincarnation, clairvoyance or that there *is* any sense to the whole phantasmagoria of life on earth.

But they make sense to us who, having thought these things through with what reason we have evolved over the ages, have reached the conclusion that a good case has been made out for them—and we go on from there.

The "advanced" Egos, most of them at any rate, are in a super-devachanic condition awaiting the time when the rest of the population will have caught up with them. Then they, too, will incarnate and others will, for awhile, be withdrawn. Some, who may be known by their unusual brilliance, qualities of leadership, high spirituality and perhaps genius, are or have been recently in incarnation. (Recently, in this sense, means any time during the past 20,000 years). Others will reincarnate as generation succeeds generation—probably more and more coming into manifestation as the general level of world intelligence advances.

But most are still out of incarnation and likely to remain so for many millenia to come. We are simply not yet ready for them. They would make the world as a grade school with one-half of the pupils University graduates. Our present evolutionary cycle has nothing to teach them. They learned our lessons long ago. The few who are here are the leaders, the instructors, the shining stars of our generation. "Why don't they send more?" someone may ask. "We surely could use them." Right, but we can't get more of them than our collective karma permits and at present it doesn't seem to be too good. But still a Washington came along when he was needed—and a Lincoln and a Churchill and an Eisenhower. Still they sent us the great sculptors of Greece, the mighty artists of the Middle Ages, the superb composers of the Eighteenth Century. They let us have Shakespeare and Goethe, Tennyson and Longfellow. They gave us Jesus, The Buddha, Confucius and the Hebrew prophets, so we have not been denied our quotum of mature Egos to leaven and uplift us lesser ones of the earth. Too many such would be overpowering.

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They would bedazzle us and leave us blinded by their collective brilliancy. Wisely the karmic Powers hold them back until more of us shall have approached their evolutionary stature, when we can move among them as among our peers.

(To Be Continued)

THE ZODIAC IN PROVERBS

6. Leo

An *honest man*'s the noblest work of God. —*Pope.*

MINSTRELSY

A Selection from the Poems of Patience Worth

Sunset

Before the portals of the West
Great golden bars are flung,
Through which a golden sun leers redly;
And the greened clouds press down;
And the night—the great black bird—
Lifts its wings up from the earth's rim,
And the golden bars fling wide,
And the sun slips into the basin of the night,
And the black wings close, hoverfully brooding.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE SIMPLY EXPLAINED

(Continued from Page 44)

signs, might as well be talking Choctaw for all the impression he is likely to make.

The Sons of Fire are the Divine Instructors, from whatever level they speak to the lower man. At our stage they are usually our own Egos, though sometimes, in cases of supreme importance, the high communicator may be one outside of ourselves who chooses or is commissioned to guide or inspire us.

Learn, there is neither first nor last; for all is One Number, issued from No-Number.

No-Number is the Absolute, the Unmanifested. One Number is the One Manifested Universe that issues from it. Occultism will hearken to no other doctrine than that there is One Consciousness—ONE—that pervades all Creation. It knows, and wants to know, nothing of creature and Creator. There is complete identity of consciousness in both, though of necessity in an orderly Universe that consciousness is encased, blocked off, stepped down into a myriad of forms which seem to the consciousness within the forms to be separate and apart.

It is interesting and significant that when Patience Worth was asked to define "Soul," she promptly replied

"That borrowed thing,
That whit of Him,
Which man must keep
For aye and aye."

The instrument for reception of this message was Mrs. Pearl Curran, a communicant of the Episcopalian Church which, while many of its members and clergy are very broad, undoubtedly subscribes to the doctrine of creature and creator.

Says H.P.B. in her commentary: "... no manifested thing can be thought of except as part of a whole." And Alexander Pope in his Essay on Man, theosophical in every line, expresses the identical thought:

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

The world's troubles are entirely due to forgetting or ignoring that Eternal Truth.

(To Be Continued)

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