P.45 - Personal opinion.

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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OCCULTISM IN THE BIBLE

No! No! A Thousand Times No!

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

Came a day when the brothers were sent to far Shechem to feed their father's flock. Jacob apparently had prospered so greatly that he now had branches of his sheep-raising business. Shechem was a long way off. It was the locality from which the Jacob family had hurriedly departed after the Dinah episode, but there were still flocks there to be fed and evidently the brothers had been away for some time for Israel thought it necessary to send Joseph to see if all was well with them. "And with the flocks, too," added canny Jacob.

So Joseph came to Shechem—but no brethren. Wandering aimlessly about the pasture, a man found him and asked whom he was looking for. On learning that Joseph couldn't find his brothers the stranger informed him he had heard them planning to go to Dothan. We are not told why. Perhaps Jacob had another branch ranch there.

To Dothan hied our hero and the keen-eyed sons of Israel espied him from afar. "And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh."

What followed was most reprehensible. It is true young Joseph was an unpleasant little mischief maker; true also that he was too big for his breeches and with delusions of grandeur intolerable in a 17-year adolescent. But he was still their half-brother, idolized son of their aged father. It would seem that the exigencies of the case would have been suitably met if each brother took turns at giving Joseph a not too severe paddling to teach him a much needed lesson. That should have taken him down a peg, though undoubtedly he would have gone running to Father with new stories of his brothers' malevolence.

But the latter had other plans. "Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams."

Reuben, Aquarius the humane, however, pleaded for his brother's life. "Let us not kill him. Shed no blood but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand on him." And the Bible makes it clear that Reuben's motive was good: "That he might rid him out of their hands,

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MAN'S ORIGIN AND ENDING

By CLARA F. GASTON

The great differences between men even of the same general class are apparent to the eye of every observer, not to speak of the wide differences between classes and the sharper differences between nations and tribes. Each has its own ancient traditions which it holds dear, each its own rules of life and social habits and customs, its national characteristics, though all may have reached a similar mental level; each has its own spiritual conceptions and ideals, differing so widely as to be almost contradictory.

Thus the question again arises, if *all* are children of the same Divine Perfection they cannot all be right; how choose between them? And how account for these great differences—and what happens to those who are wrong?

Taking a quick survey of the process of evolution we see the first evidences of the Life of The Holy Spirit—the Third Logos—in the first observable step of the upward striving of the Monad, in the mineral kingdom. Even in this *lowest*, its *first* upward step, we see wide differences in the mineral forms ensouled by the Divine Spark. When it has completed its course in this kingdom and enters the next, the vegetable, it again manifests in many different forms from the humblest weed to the mightest monarch of the forest, until the Divine Spark is ready for its next upward step and enters the animal kingdom, here again ensouling many different forms until it has exhausted the possibilities of further growth in that sphere and, the spiritual impulse awakening in the Monad, it begins to reach upward for its last step and as that impulse strengthens draws down to itself the last outpouring, from the First Logos—God The Father—and the human soul is born, a self conscious entity, able to recognize the Law and consciously choose to follow it.

It will be seen that in each kingdom the *entire* kingdom does not reach and step upward at the same time. A certain number are ready and these advance. So it is with the birth of the human soul, but, as in all previous steps, the *entire* animal kingdom is not ready at the same time; a number having exhausted all possibilities of further growth in the current state receive the final impulse and enter birth into the human family.

But, we have been taught, there are

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LECTURE SUGGESTIONS

By GEOFFREY HODSON

In preparing this article I have collected the best methods which have been used in my own case. I recognize that many of them are not practicable for many Lodges, but nevertheless present them in hope that some of them will prove useful.

Before the lecturer's arrival, write-ups and preliminary notices should appear in the local papers, the arrival itself being noted in the news column with photographs, followed when possible by an illustrated interview.

Well worded advertisements of all lectures should appear regularly on well placed posters, including show cards in buses, street-cars, hotels, clubs and waiting rooms and such other institutions as will display them. A large board at least six feet high with notices of lectures in bold letters should be displayed outside the lecture hall throughout the lecturer's visit, care being taken to keep the notifications up-to-date, clean and prominently placed. Banners — bold black and red letters on white calico — on the backs of member's cars constitute a very valuable and cheap method of advertising. They are seen wherever the cars are driven and parked.

Continual personal propaganda should be tactfully carried on by members among their friends and acquaintances. The prospectus with a photograph should give relevant information about the lecturer and full particulars of the lectures, with a synopsis of each. This should be sent to a large mailing list, the compilation and continued correction of which is an exceedingly valuable and important Lodge activity.

Special notification of subjects should be made to those most likely to be interested in them, such as teachers, schools, colleges, when on education, to doctors when on disease, to church officials when on religion. Whenever possible arrangements should be made for the lecturer when willing to speak to Rotary Clubs, Luncheon and Womens' Clubs, Schools and Colleges, and to Boy and Girl Scouts, as much as possible, as also to preach in churches.

Reports of lectures prepared by the Lodges should appear in the leading papers regularly, the lecturer helping in this. Cross correspondence may be started in newspapers by members

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MISUNDERSTANDINGS REGARDING KARMA

ANCIENT WISDOM contains a great many articles on Karma, striving as well as may be to probe its myriad intricacies and arrive at some slight measure of understanding of its working. This is so because it seems to us that there cannot be a more important subject for study in the entire range of Theosophical teaching. Karma is all about us, it never leaves us for a working moment, it is the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

We say *friend* advisedly for Karma is that. It is never an enemy. Even when it uses us most roughly it has no aim in view but our own progress. To understand Karma even partially, which is all the most spiritually discerning may hope to do at this stage, means to acquire a modicum of understanding of life, of ourselves, of others —and why people and circumstances act in the strange way they often seem to do.

The first step toward gaining comprehension of the ways of Karma is to divorce consideration of it from our own personalities. This is by no means easy. The theologians, who are quite sure God disapproves of what they disapprove and judges righteousness by theological standards, are not much more in error than Theosophists, if there be such, who are quite sure that Karma metes out its prizes or demerits according to their own particular ideas of what is or is not Theosophical. Just as everyone is acquainted with the ultra-religious who profess, probably with truth, complete belief in every doctrine of their faith and are mean as mischief in their contacts with others, so Theosophists are not altogether unknown who cry out with pity at the butchery of animals for human food but whose brotherhood seems to halt at the animal kingdom, little trace of it (other than protestations) being discernible in the human.

The workings of Karma require something more than the reasoning powers of the concrete mind to apprehend. What they do require was set forth in a striking (and completely misinterpreted) declaration of Jesus: "For the Father judgeth no man but has committed all judgment to the Son." (John V:22). It is elementary Theosophy that the Father aspect of God is the Atma or Spiritual will (Omnipotence) and the Son aspect the Buddhi or Intuition (Omniscience). And the "judgment" is Karma which works unerringly because Omnisciently. That which is operated from the Intuitional world must be gasped, if at all, by the intuition. This reduces to a nullity the attempts of the concrete mind to judge the deserts of anyone. "What has *he* done to deserve all that money?" "Why should *she* ride around in a Cadillac while I can't even afford a Model T?" And so on *ad lib*. Karma knows the answers but Karma isn't telling. And it really isn't any of our business anyway. Our own Karma is our business — and quite enough to keep us busy for many lifetimes.

We cannot look into people's hearts and to judge that the apparently self-satisfied are really satisfied either with themselves, their lives or their achievements is beyond our ability. How could a non-Theosophist either of orthodox or materialistic persuasion comprehend the satisfaction of even the poorest (in worldly goods) Theosophist with his philosophy of life? To the former, the preoccupation of the Theosophist with his concepts of the meaning of life would seem the veriest folly. To the latter the complete lack of such concepts would—and far more rightly—appear as a near-tragedy.

Yet while the business of Karma with anyone other than ourselves is Karma's business and their business alone, we may none-the-less impersonally try to grasp the *principles* that are behind the karmic workings which often seem so chaotic but are always so orderly. Patience Worth, whose inspiration, we profoundly believe, did come direct from the Intuitional Plane, gave several definitions of Karma, showing remarkable insight. In one of them she declared insistently that Karma was "not a meting o' justice but a just balance." To those with ears to hear this is an important clue to the nature of Karma. Its aim is always to restore a disturbed balance. The scale may tip heavily toward the side which impedes the individual's progress. Events must then occur to him which suitably counterbalance the disturbance. They may appear as retributions, unpleasantness, suffering, loss. That is their concrete form. Abstractly they are *adjustment*, and nothing more—and by such adjustments we evolve to a point where we are always in balance with life which means, to use Ralph Waldo Trine's graphic phrase, "in tune with the Infinite."

But the scale, too, may be weighted on the good side by worthy acts of the personality. That too calls for adjustment, but of a pleasant kind, appearing crudely as a reward for merit. Again it is an adjustment, considered from high levels, and no more that that. An adept, always doing the right thing as a matter of course, generates no Karma for he himself works from the Buddhic plane or higher and, being perfect, disturbs no balance but functions according to his own nature. It is we lesser ones who push the balance out of kilter, whether we do right or wrong. This is because the adept, having transcended all desires for self, works only for others, his own Karma being always in balance.

Study Karma, primarily as it works out in your own life, in the history of nations, in the lives of those close to you. Avoid superficial dogmatizing about it but try to absorb its underlying truths. For Karma is truly the voice of God. It is God in action and by its manifestations we may in some small degree begin to follow the mighty workings of the Universal Mind.

THIS WE HAVE TO SEE

An illustrated article appearing in *Everybody's Weekly* for April 17th by no less a personage than a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society relates that an expedition is preparing to set out to look for—of all things—Noah's Ark.

Evidence exists, declares the writer of the article, that the Ark rests, as the Bible account states, on the top of Mount Ararat, that it has been preserved in ice for 5000 years and that the ice had been shaken away some 65 years ago by earth tremors. It is said to have been observed by two Russian airmen flying over the mountain in 1915, and measurements, sketches and photographs made of it by Russian soldiers dispatched by the then Czar for the purpose. In it, we are told, were found hundreds of compartments, some very large—doubtless for the larger animals—others with high ceilings, perhaps for giraffes or camels, and still others with built-in cages.

Amazing indeed, but alas, the photographs and other material were all destroyed when the Bolshevik revolution took place, quite naturally by people afraid they might prove a Bible story to be true.

The Turkish Government, however, is said to have sent a later expedition which located the vessel, finding its measurements to correspond approximately with the Biblical dimensions: length 300 cubits (540 feet), breadth 50 cubits (90 feet), height 30 cubits (54 feet). Also, believe it or not, it was made of gopher wood (cypress) just as stated in the Bible.

A reader sent us the clipping and asks us to comment, which we are glad to do. The evidence at first sight appears impressive even though the conclusion drawn from it seems incredible. Our reader asks if the Ark story is not an allegory? It certainly is but biblical

allegories are often built upon a substratum of fact. Some of the biblical characters may have existed, some of the events have taken place, but seldom or never as described in the Bible. The author of the story, like Kipling's Homer, took "what he thought he might require." And with this starting material he embellished, embroidered, added to, subtracted from, altered, and enriched to his heart's content. If he needed miracle he inserted it. If the promptings of inner intelligence to a course of action could better be presented as the voice of the Lord, God Himself *in propria persona* was duly introduced. Yet this was all done in a sincere and reverent spirit as part of the accepted best method of imparting spiritual and esoteric instruction.

So that we are not prepared at this stage to say definitely that there is no Noah's Ark or rather some strange craft that inspired the story, on the top of Mount Ararat. Occultists are agreed that the "Flood" narrative does have a basis of fact in the submergence of Atlantis, though the allegorical meaning (given some years ago in ANCIENT WISDOM) is far more important than the historical accuracy or otherwise of the narrative.

There is another explanation also which might have given rise to the Genesis account and that is the known habit of Eastern writers of weaving a circumstantial yarn around some existing phenomena the origin of which is not known. A tomb that looks as though it might be that of Rachel is dubbed "Rachel's Tomb," and the why and how of it embodied in a pseudo-historical narration such as that of Genesis. Places named ages ago are said to have been the scenes of this, that or the other episode which their names seem to fit. "Therefore the name of that place was called such and such." But the "therefore" has no business there. The place was named for quite other reasons long since forgotten. The Ark may or may not have been built by a man named Noah in the circumstances set forth by Genesis. Its appearance, if it did appear before the ice blocked it in, was probably a source of mystery and conjecture to the natives of the region though it may have been constructed for an entirely different purpose than that assigned by the Genesis author.

Legends may have grown up about it coupling it with the Atlantean deluge, traditions of which are found everywhere throughout the world. These legends may or may not have had a factual basis but they would serve the purpose of the Bible writer very well and it would be quite natural for him to build his story around them and the mysterious Ark.

We do not say this is in fact the explanation, but it could be. We have no desire to discredit the Bible story though we are quite sure that parts of it are fiction. Noah certainly did not and could not take into the Ark specimens of every living creature. A great many were not indigenous to his part of the world and we may dismiss the naive tradition that on the word of command they came flocking from the "four corners of the earth," which has no corners, and obediently marched "squads right" into the ark. We may also discount the divine mnemonic of the rainbow, which was certainly not produced for the first time after the Flood subsided, nor for the purpose of "reminding" Omniscient Deity not to forget himself and let it rain so hard again. These and other highly colored events are imaginative but inserted for definite and commendable purposes. We refer the curious reader to our Occult Bible Series.

We shall await with interest the report of the Ararat expedition. Four possible outcomes are in our opinion likely and we list them in order of probability, with the most improbable last.

(1) The expedition will not set out at all.

(2) It will not find the Ark and no more will be heard of it.

(3) It will find *something* but discover that the so-called evidence has been greaty exaggerated and a wrong construction put upon it.

(4) It will really come across a vessel that fits in with the reports and that might conceivably be the basis of the Noah Story.

The Royal Geographical man quite rightly concludes that this would be the most notable event of its kind since discovery of the *Codex Sinaiticus*, the earliest known copy of the New Testament, in 1884. At the beginning of his article he refers to the quest as the greatest since men searched for the Holy Grail, the platter from which Jesus is supposed to have eaten at the Last Supper, or possibly the cup from which he drank.

We don't wish to discourage the expedition but would like to point out that a physical Holy Grail has never been found.

"UNEASILY AMAZED"

In concluding his review of a recent compilation of "The Complete Prophecies of Nostradamus," a reviewer in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch declares, "It is possible to pick up this book scoffingly and read in it long enough to be uneasily amazed."

Amazed yes, but why uneasily? Nostradamus unquestionably was a clairvoyant possessing great powers of prevision, but what of Blavatsky, who hurled challenges at the mechanistic science of her day and had she survived to the 20th Century would have lived to see her scorned pronouncements embodied in elementary textbooks as commonplaces of scientific thought?

What of Leadbeater, who clearly foresaw modern talking pictures and in three dimensions at that—something not yet here but which surely will be here by the 26th Century to which he was directing his clairvoyant observation? And this was in 1895 when the crude "cinematograph" gave no hint of the film marvels to come. (See ANCIENT WISDOM Vol. I, Page 1).

The public, which rejects occult explanations and demonstrations as somehow not possible no matter how convincing they appear to be, always becomes uneasy if the evidence is so overwhelming that there is literally no means left of explaining it away. But the Theosophist is neither amazed nor uneasy — only amused by the frantic efforts of the would-be skeptic to run away from the truth, and happy that he himself, through some happy karma, has received enlightenment regarding matters which to others are a closed book.

"Uneasily amazed!"

The world is due for a good deal more of the same in the years to come as ever more discoveries are made in line with the revelations embodied in *The Secret Doctrine* and other occult works of two generations ago. Modern thinkers often speculate upon the trend of scientific, religious and philosophic thought in the years to come. It would be very helpful to their thinking if they would familiarize themselves with the above writings. The few who have been unprejudiced enough to do so, as Alfred Russell Wallace, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Sir William Crookes and others, accomplished wonders in their chosen fields. And none of them was "uneasily amazed."

WELL, IS IT?

It's clever, but is it art?

— *Kipling*

The modernists are busily explaining away another "masterpiece" submitted by the father of a 6-year old, who "painted" it by daubing colors at random on a canvass. A valuable assist was furnished by the child's pet kitten who considerately sat on the picture before it was dry. The little boy's father labeled this *piece de resistance* "Figure Eight Skegness," and with tongue in cheek sent it to an English art exhibit.

British "experts" of the modernist school reacted precisely as those of our own when the famous "nail polish" painting was sent in some time ago to an exhibit in Los Angeles. It was amazing, they declared (as it truly was); worthy of the attention of the Royal Academy; it reproduces, declared one, not what the artist saw but the emotion generated by what he saw.

Came the dawn, the mortifying truth and the usual explanatory double talk that explains nothing except that there

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THE ASTROLOGICAL BASIS OF SHAKESPEARE

Julius Caesar: Leo (Cont'd.)

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

Wily Cassius, who never passed up even the slightest opportunity to further his aims, was not likely to miss the excellent one Brutus had just given him. Brutus was all of a dither after interpreting the shouts of acclaim coming from down the street as indicating a popular clamor that Caesar should accept the crown. "Ay, do you fear it?" said Cassius,

"Then must I think you would not have it so."

It was a good opening play, forcing Brutus to go on record, which somewhat gingerly he did.

"I would not, Cassius; yet I love him well.—"

Then, with all of Leo's dislike for obscurities and concealments,

"But wherefore do you hold me here so long?
What is it that you would impart to me?"

He finishes the query by assuring Cassius in heroic style (very Leo) that if what the latter wants is for the general good he, Brutus, is quite willing to risk death for honor.

Very noble of Brutus, and in the best Roman tradition, but to our more restrained modern minds a bit on the windy side.

Cassius was even windier, and after inhaling his next speech we definitely decide that we don't like him. This speech is a very famous one. Some decades ago it was a favorite subject for memorizing in the English high schools. The present writer, who had to memorize it, dates the beginning of his dislike for Cassius from that time.

"I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,
As well as I do know your outward favour.
Well, honour is the subject of my story.—
I cannot tell what you and other men
Think of this life; but, for my single self,
I had as lief not live as live to be
In awe of such a thing as I myself."

Cassius may have had something there. He was, be it remembered, a thin and wispy Capricorn than which no sign, unless heavily blended with others, is less likely to inspire awe. Cassius was not a blend. His character and appearance shows that he was Capricorn through and through. But his comparison was not apt. Caesar was an Aries-Leo and not "such a thing" as Cassius himself. There was no doubt of *his* ability to command both awe and deference. Which is probably one of the reasons Cassius hated him.

Having completed his opening remarks, Cassius really warms to the subject. "I was born free as Caesar," he declaims, "so were you:

We both have fed as well; and we can both
Endure the winter's cold as well as he."

Which was incompetent, irrevelent and immaterial, as Julius did not get where he was by adventures in good eating or by his ability to function well in low temperatures. Cassius, however, thinks he has a point and intends to labor it even at the expense of truth. We frankly don't believe the yarn that follows and if Brutus did he must have been very gullible.

"For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,
Caesar said to me, *Dar'st thou, Cassius now*
Leap in with me into this angry flood,
And swim to yonder point?—Upon the word
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in,
And bade him follow: so indeed he did.
The torrent roar'd; and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy:
But ere we could arrive the point propos'd,
Caesar cried, *Help me Cassius or I sink!*"

A likely story! Caesar who later in the scene shows the most intense distrust and contempt for that same Cassius, challenging him to a swimming contest and not only coming out second best but almost getting drowned.

Cassius, however, having done a good job of embroidering something that never happened, decides to make it even better, undue modesty not being one of his more noticeable failings.

"I, as Aeneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
Did I the tired Caesar."

We can picture the scene. Little Cassius—all 115 lbs. of him—striding up the beach with tall, imperious, 200 lb. Caesar thrown carelessly over his back. But Cassius took small chance. Brutus was hardly likely to inquire of the mighty Julius himself whether he had been worsted in a swimming match and then rescued from the river by obnoxious Cassius. The latter, having convinced himself he is a hero, now goes into his peroration.

"... and this man
Is now become a god; and Cassius is
A wretched creature, and must bend his body
If Caesar carelessly but nod on him."

Insensate envy and jealousy glowers through every word. Low type Capricorns—and Cassius was a *very* low type even though a noble Roman—cannot endure greatness in others which they have failed to achieve themselves. Brutus says nothing, encouraging Cassius to follow Plaintiff's Exhibit A with Plaintiff's Exhibit B.

"He had a fever when he was in Spain,
And when the fit was on him, I did mark
How he did shake: 'tis true this god did shake:
His coward lips did from their colour fly.
And that same eye, whose bend doth awe the world,
Did lose his lustre: I did hear him groan:
Ay, and that tongue of his, that bade the Romans
Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,
Alas! it cried, *Give me some drink, Titinus,*
As a sick girl."

This is all remarkably unfair. To blame a man, however great, for the ague that accompanies a fever is a loathsome piece of business. To detail his symptoms in the attempt to prove that somehow they indicate weakness of character is the rankest kind of speciousness; while to condemn a sick man, burning up with thirst, because he calls for something to drink, is to betray oneself as being what our Nineteenth-Century ancestors would have termed a cad and a bounder.

Cassius was all of that. He may have reincarnated as a Showboat type villain who foreclosed on the widow's mortgage to force her daughter into an unwelcome marriage. A malodorous person, Cassius!

He pursues his unpalatable theme to the bitter end:

"Ye gods, it doth amaze me,
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world,
And bear the palm alone."

Brutus looks uncomfortable. He does not approve of this hitting below the belt but he does not wish to offend his friend Cassius. He has nothing against Caesar except that he is afraid that Caesar wants to be king. He hardly knows what to say to all these malicious remarks, the injustice of which he fully recognizes. Fortunately the tension is broken by the sound of applauding voices from Caesar's direction accompanied by a flourish of trumpets. It gives Brutus a good opportunity to change the subject. Anxiously he exclaims,

"Another general shout!
I do believe that these applauses are
For some new honours that are heap'd on Caesar."

Which, however, only furnishes a new opportunity for Cassius to get back into his routine.

(To Be Continued)

WELL, IS IT?

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exist no standards whatever for judging modernist productions. If a tot's paint splashings plus the impress of part of a kitten's anatomy can fool the experts into a belief that the resultant product is a magnificent example of modern art, how may the uninitiated layman be sure that the paintings of those hailed as masters of the modernistic craft may not possess just about as much merit? Think of what "Figure Eight Skegness" might have become had the kitten walked through it instead of sitting down in it—Figure Forty-Two, perhaps.

We hold to our oft-expressed opinion that until modernistic art can develop the kind of soul and spirit which radiate through such paintings as the Berlin masterpieces, for example—all conservative—it has no claim to serious consideration from lovers of real art. The intricate designs, weird shapes, anatomical monstrosities and blending together of unlikely objects distorted out of recognition undoubtedly require a certain ingenuity. As Kipling made one of his characters remark — it's clever ... but is it art?

THE ZODIAC IN THE CLASSICS

5. Leo

Nobility is the one only virtue.
—*Juvenal*

PERSONAL OPINIONS

By L. W. Rogers

Small Things Important

We all have a certain amount of energy, determined by the karma of the previous incarnations plus what we have made so far in this one. It is a vitally important part of our equipment in all our undertakings for it sets the limit of our achievements. The mentality knows no limitations but the physical body can carry out the planning of the mind only so far as its daily supply of energy goes. In youth and early maturity the average human being usually has abundant, overflowing energy. But as old age approaches it slowly subsides and the power of achievement proportionately diminishes. To make the incarnation count for the most possible in both mental and moral progress it is necessary to carefully conserve our fund of energy; and yet most people unthinkingly waste it in unsuspected ways.

Energy leaks may be so trivial that they escape attention. At one of the Theosophical Conventions Dr. Arundale was speaking of some of the things that one who aspires to become a pupil of a Master should not do. They were small things, some of them so trifling that an auditor interjected, "How about humming a tune?" "You should not do that," was the reply. The speaker made no further comment upon the matter and afterward a little group of those present were oveheard asking each other what could be wrong with a habit so trifling and apparently so harmless. They could see no reason why anybody should give such a matter a second thought. Yet there are excellent reasons. One is that it is one of the unnoticed energy leaks and the aspirant should have none. Another is that it interferes with concentration upon whatever the mind is dealing with. That it is automatic is not a valid excuse. It is still an interference where there should be none. Another reason is that it sets up a persistent rate of vibration that is foreign to the type of thought that should be in the mind. Still another is that the aspirant should always be in a listening attitude, alert for any signal coming from the Master. The most favorable environment for him is perfect silence. If he cannot have that the next best thing is the nearest approximation to it.

There are also reasons which are not directly related to occult life. Humming or whistling may be very annoying to others. Many of us have suffered acutely from the whistling of some person who is not conscious of what he is doing, particularly when his offense is a tuneless whistle. One who has that unfortunate habit is making some very unpleasant karma in addition to wasting his own time and energy. He sometimes excuses himself by saying that other people should not be so easily annoyed, and that they should have their nerves under better control. Possibly so, but we have to take the world as it is instead of as we would like to have it; and the law of karma works as impersonally as the law of gravity. We reap what we sow and none the less definitely because it may have been sown thoughtlessly.

One of the little, but neverless important, things we all must learn is to be constantly fully awake and alert as we go about the duties of the day. What we call "day dreaming" should be confined to an arm chair in a safe corner. The would-be disciple of a Master must develop alertness. He must not walk away without his change nor leave a book or paper behind him when he finishes a bit of business and departs. He must not stand reading or conversing while unconsciously obstructing the passage of others. He must be always conscious of where he is and what he is doing. It is not enough to usefully active. We must also be harmlessly passive.

It must be that to that all-embracing Consciousness that we call God there are no little things for they are one with the big things—a necessary part of the whole and just as important as the big things, which they constitute. I once heard a person criticize Dr. Annie Besant for beginning her lecture while probably fifty people were making their way to their seats. "She might waited a minute," he said. It seemed not to occur to him that those people might have been on time! Had she waited there would have been more stragglers to wait for. To some minds it seems of no particular impotance whether one is on time or a little late. What do a couple of minutes matter, he reasons. It matters much with an aspirant in occultism and it matters more than he thinks to the average individual. He is little by little accumulating karmic responsibility that will some day react on him to his sorrow. He is also tolerating a bad habit that is an annoyance to others, which likewise has its karmic reaction.

It would be interesting to know just how much time such a habit costs in a year. Let us suppose that through negligence a public speaker keeps an audience of a thousand people waiting ten minutes. That would total more than two working days of eight hours each. But the lost time is but one phase of the picture. There are other elements, including the emotional. How many in that audience are thinking resentfully about the lecturer's tardiness? How many are worrying because they have but an hour until their train leaves and fear they may miss it? How many commuters do miss it because they took a chance and stayed a few minutes too long? What sort of composite thought form will that audience generate during that period of enforced waiting in impatience irritation and some anger?

Little things lead to great things in a chain of events and only a superhuman being can assess accurately the importance of what we think to be a trifle. It recalls the old story which traces the downfall of a nation to a nail — because a nail was lacking a horseshoe was lost. Because the horseshoe was lost the dipatch rider arrived late. Because of that a battle was lost.

A HUNDRED YEARS BACK — AND FORWARD

By Charles E. Luntz

On one thing both the pious and the atheist agree:
That a hundred years ago there was no you, no I, no he;
Whether plain Josephus Doakes or the Viscount Thomas Noddy,
That we came into existence with formation of the body.

The pious all will tell us that a new soul was created
And infused into the embryonic child while mother waited.
The atheist is certain that the flesh is all the man—
That there never have been souls since evolution first began.

So if one of these opposing schools of rigid thought is right,
You and I in Eighteen-forty-nine were zero-zero, quite.
We had no "star of life" (in the language of the poet);
We were just completely "ain't"—we were dead and didn't know it.

Well if that were really so—though we're sure it isn't true—
We like the atheist's belief the better of the two,
For, if our past the story of our future chance to tell,
At least there'll be no danger of our going down to hell.

To be a nothing constantly—all ties with life to sever—
Is nothing much, but nicer than to oven-bake for ever.
Yet both these empty concepts leave us mighty, mighty weary;
They're so illogical and dull and colorless and dreary.

And just as void of likelihood is everlasting heaven.
There's not a chance until we've finished Grand Chain Number Seven.
From perfect souls in bliss, there might be serious objections
To pickled personalities with all their imperfections.

But we're convinced that as in Eighteen-hundred-forty-nine,
We'll be around, some place or other, getting on just fine
In Twenty-forty-nine; and though our bodies are cremated,
We'll still be living zestful lives with interest unabated.

THE OCCULT INTERPRETATION OF OMAR KHAYYAM

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

XV

And those who husbanded the Golden Grain,
And those who flung it to the Winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, men want dug up again.

This somewhat ironic pronouncement is, of course, presumed by everyone (except the occultist) to refer to those who hoarded money (the golden grain) or those who wasted it. Neither group, when they die, can take their "golden grain" with them and neither turn to such aureate (golden) earth that men want to dig them up. Very true and very trite — which is why it is not what the very untrite Omar meant.

In the most elementary study of Eastern scriptural symbology—and the Rubaiyat is a scripture — the student is taught to take nothing in its literal meaning. Eastern scriptures were not written that way, our good theologians to the contrary notwithstanding.

Deceptively simple statements are even more likely than complicated and obscure ones to hide exactly the reverse meaning to what appears on the surface. We have given the reasons so many times that it is hardly fair to our older readers to take the space to do so again. We refer those unfamiliar with the science of occult symbology to earlier articles of both the Omar Khayyam and the Biblical Interpretation series where the subject is covered in great detail.

We do not expect Omar to go literal on us all of a sudden. It would be out of character. Having been deeply esoteric for fourteen stanzas it is highly improbable that in the fifteenth he would recite a little rhyme emphasizing the obvious fact that you can't take it with you. And, to paraphrase Hamlet, it needs no long deceased Khayyam to impress us with the fact the miser and the squanderer are both very ungolden after they have been dead a little while.

Readers familiar with the esoteric symbols will not have to think twice to determine what the golden grain really is. That gold has always to do with the higher self, whether as soul or spirit, has, we believe, been exhaustively proved. What then is the golden grain? Obviously that spiritual treasure which man comes here to amass. It is exactly the reverse of the literal physical lucre which our uninformed Omar fans persist in terming it.

Another reversal is that those who harvest it (the prudent), who doubtless would be considered wiser than those who "scatter it abroad like rain," are exactly the opposite as considered occultly. The golden grain is the spiritual wisdom we contrive to garner from our earth experiences. If we hoard it up we are by no means fulfilling the dharma it carries with it. If we scatter it abroad we are giving other people the chance to profit by it, which is exactly what we are supposed to do.

What then is the meaning of the two closing lines of the quatrain? Do they imply what the literal words should indicate?

Their meaning goes much deeper. As everyone who has a nodding acquaintance with astrology is aware, earthy signs (often referred to briefly as "earth") represent everything worldly, materialistic and anti-spiritual. An overabundance of "earth" (too many planets and angles in earthy signs) indicates coldness, skepticism and hard materiality. The fiery signs in the horoscope indicate everything symbolized by gold in the scriptures. The Sun, most fiery object in the zodiac, rules gold and also rules esoterically the incarnating egoic fragment.

In esoteric symbology, therefore, gold and earth (Omar combines a scriptural with an astrological symbol, which is often done) are the absolute antitheses of each other. It would be impossible to find a more striking pair of opposites — spirit and matter, day and night, faith and skepticism. Golden —or as Fitzgerald more poetically puts it in his translation—aureate earth is esoterically an impossible combination. Masefield, in his well known poem "My Creed" may refer to "this earth, this clinging mold" as one remote day being "smithied o'er to kingly gold," but when that day arrives there will no longer be any "earth" but only the gold.

And this is Omar's way of pointing out to the initiated that an incarnation, once closed, is of no further use to the Ego — there is no aureate earth — and no further use to the world. The physical body is "buried once." Seemingly Omar was also expressing disbelief in any physical resurrection of the remains, as taught in some of the religions. He knew as we know that the resurrection teaching is only a transparent symbol for reincarnation. But the golden grain scattered abroad may still take root and grow long after the earthy casing has mouldered.

That is the esoteric meaning of the apparently simple Fifteenth Quatrain. But the Omar Khayyam clubs will no doubt continue to dishonor the memory of the great Persian philosopher in imagining that he would insult our intelligence by declaring that men do not want cadavers disinterred.

Or again to quote Hamlet—this time as originally written—

"There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this."

(To Be Continued)

DO YOU KNOW? —

That many misconceptions exist, even among Theosophists, as to the role each of us plays in relation to the Karma of others?

* * * * *

That Karma is not something anyone can "defeat" or "interfere with," and the use of such terms betrays a complete misunderstanding of the subject?

* * * * *

That to justify refusal to help one in need because "it must be his Karma" is heartless and cruel — and also certain to bring unpleasant Karma to the one taking such a view?

* * * * *

That, similarly, to excuse the brutal regimes of the totalitarian nations on the ground that they are needful for the education and discipline of immature egos is likewise to ignore the versatility of Karma, which is quite capable of providing necessary training conditions without reference to anything furnished by human beings?

* * * * *

That this is the obvious meaning of the Biblical pronouncement, "It needs must be that offences come, but woe to him by whom the offence cometh"?

* * * * *

That neither individuals nor nations can therefore palliate their inhumanity by claiming that somehow the ill-treatment and suffering they mete out is for the benefit of those they persecute?

* * * * *

That undoubtedly the latter do benefit in unfathomed ways by everything that happens to them, including even the barbarities others may wreak upon them, but this does not extenuate in the least degree the viciousness of those responsible?

* * * * *

That this is borne out by the analogy of animal individualization which may come through so-called right ways or wrong ways?

* * * * *

That the right ways are by affection of human beings, education of the intellect along humane lines or in the natural course of evolution which carries all animal consciousness after many aeons into the human kingdom?

* * * * *

That the wrong ways are by extreme cruelty or training of the animal to hunt, retrieve or kill?

* * * * *

That the parallel is obviously that there are "right" and "wrong" ways for human egos to obtain their evolutionary experience?

* * * * *

That the wrong ways must be those which make evil Karma for others while there are countless right ways which involve no such unhappy consequences?

"OUR LANGUAGE"

A Simple Explanation of Theosophical Terms

Serpent: Symbol of the higher Wisdom, and most certainly not of the devil as in orthodoxy. This completely changes the meaning of the Adam and Eve legend, making of the serpent a beneficent and necessary agent in mna's spiritual evolution. The Theosophical emblem, showing the serpent with tail in mouth is symbolic of the Divine Wisdom never ceasing from Eternity, through Eternity, to Eternity.

Shakti: Divine creative energy.

Shell: A disused subtle body or double, usually astral or etheric, impressed with certain automatic characteristics of its former owner and capable under appropriate conditions of playing his part in a limited way at seances.

Siddhis: Occult powers. Some of these are: Microscopic ability even to the extent of magnifying atoms to the point where they can be examined. Levitation or ability to lift heavy objects by the will. Attractiveness, meaning the power to bring into the life whatever one desires. Suppression, or the quality of being able to remove from the life what is not desired. Invisibility — the power to become invisible. Transparency, to render the body incapable of casting a shadow. Immunity to fire. Power to travel in the astral body. There are others but it should be understood that to arouse them means many lives of denial, sacrifice and rigid training. In the East they are called the *lesser* Siddhis, as contrasted with the *greater* Siddhis, consisting of living the occult life. The masters possess them. Some of their advanced pupils have them in part. H.P.B. demonstrated several of them to her great sorrow and to the detriment of the T.S., as they were branded as trickery and conjuring by the world at large although attested to as genuine by her highly discriminating coworkers. The Society will now have nothing to do with their public demonstration.

Skandhas: Attributes of the personality; viz., form, perception, consciousness, action, knowledge.

Srotapanna (Pronounced **Srot-AH-panna**): The First Initiation. The acquirement of freedom from the grosser vices and an extension of consciousness, knowledge and power. The first great spiritual goal set for the race in the present major cycle of evolution. If not achieved by the time set (millions of years hence) the Ego is not permitted to take further incarnations until the appropriate period in a new major cycle. He slumbers in a sort of super-devachan, suffering no discomfort but great loss of time. This is the "aeonian suspension," quite wrongly translated "eternal damnation," referred to by the Christ.

Sufi: A Mohammedan esotericist or mystic. Omar Khayyam was a Sufi.

Sufism: The ancient Theosophy of Islam.

Tanha: The thirst for sentient existence felt by the Ego after the experiences of the prior earth cycle have been completely absorbed. It is the motive-force in causing the Ego to seek to reincarnate anew.

Tathagata (Pronounced **Ta-THAH-gata**): The Buddha.

Tetragrammaton (Pronounced **Tet-ra-GRAM-maton**): A Greek word meaning "Four Letters" and referring to the four lettered Hebrew word for the Supreme Being, *yod, he, vav, he,* YHVH commonly pronounced Jehovah. Ancient Hebrew possessed no vowels but it is certain that this pronunciation is inaccurate and more probably should be *Yahveh,* which modern Biblical scholars usually employ. Psalm LXIII: 4 reads "Extol him by his name Jah (pronounced Yah), an obvious abbreviation for Yahveh and convincing evidence of the true pronunciation.

Theosophy: The Divine Wisdom.

Torah: Hebrew word for the Pentateuch or five books attributed to Moses but undoubtedly compiled centuries after Moses is supposed to have lived.

Trimurti: The Hindu Trinity.

Upadhi (Pronounced **oo-PAH-dhi**): A body. Our English word *body* may originally be derived from this word.

(To Be Continued)

MINSTRELSY

A Selection from the Poems of Patience Worth

Poise

It be the weapon o' wisdom:
The keen blade, fashioned out of well turned steel, egad!
The fool hath it in his folly,
And the wise man in his wisdom.
Strange, is it not, how near akin the twain be?

We have been taken to task for our paragraph in the March issue (page 5) stating that present Russian tactics "appear to duplicate with minute exactitude those used before World War II by Hitler." The white paper published by the State Department March 19th, over a week after March ANCIENT WISDOM was mailed, states, as reported in the press: "That the present 'precarious world security situation' is little different from the Nazi-produced tension of the late 1930s. It suggested that Nazi German's dream of world conquest is now Russia's." We think the State Department of the United States Government is in better position to judge than our critic.

If there is no God, no survival, no plan, no purpose, living appears to be an almost complete waste of time.

MAN'S ORIGIN AND ENDING

(Continued from Page 41)

seven animal strains through which the Monad can enter the human family: (1) The Anthropoid Ape. (2) The Elephant. (3) The Equine. (4) The Canine. (5) The Feline. (6) The Eagle* (7) The Dove*. Almost any observing thinker believes he can detect traces of the line through which it entered humanity. Of course, in its passage through the animal kingdom it steps with each incarnation into a higher form until it reaches the class through which it can enter humanity, and in this last has a number of incarnations before it is quite fitted to go higher, the final ones being in domestic animals or animals in touch with humans.

Thus it will be seen that from their very beginnings men possess wide differences and we can understand that even in similar general classes there may be deep differences, even strong antagonisms.

There is no reason to believe that man will emerge from the great School of Becoming all cut after one pattern. They will, of course, have cast off and overcome all human faults and weaknesses, each class in accordance with its own spiritual ideals, where they will realize their goal of a perfect hereafter.

Then, will not all men share in *one* happy Paradise — one Eden alike for all? No! Each form of Faith will occupy its Paradise in perfect happiness and all will be ready for such activities as Divine Wisdom finds them fitted for. What those activities will be, man cannot know.

Studying the above sketch of the evolutionary process we can also understand why the Divine Teacher or holy prophet appearing from time to time to the different nations must be one who has had a number of incarnations in that race or nation for only such a one can speak to them in the speech they can understand, can know their views and habits of thought and honor their ancient traditions—thus be understood by them and followed, as He ends his journey through mortality by his birth into Godhood.

***Editor's Note: These two avenues into the human kingdom via bird families are new to us though the well-informed author no doubt is drawing on some source of information with which we are unfamiliar. The occult teaching, as we have it, is that the 6th and 7th avenues are not definitely known though possibly No. 6 is the Bovine and No. 7 the Camel. It is also our understanding that the stream of life passing through the bird kingdom is destined to progress into the angelic rather than the human. These details, while interesting, are not of primary importance in connection with the subject under consideration and we append this note merely to answer in advance the inquiries which we would otherwise almost certainly receive regarding this variation from the customary theosophical exposition. No last word has been given in such matters and clairvoyant research into animal evolution and its goals has barely touched the fringe of a gigantic field for exploration.**

People worry far more over things that don't matter than over things that do matter.

LECTURE SUGGESTIONS

(Continued from Page 41)

arguing the subject matter of the lectures, the lecturer occasionally contributing. The lecturer's books should be, if possible, placed on sale in the leading book shop of the town with photograph and announcement of lectures.

At every meeting the Chairman should know, preferably from memory and give the title of the lecture of the evening, and clearly and enthusiastically announce the forthcoming meetings, making the public feel heartily welcome to them all, to the Lodge Library and to whatever service it has to offer. The Chairman's enthusiasm or its absence, his or her manner, personality and even dress, greatly influence the audience.

(The End)

OCCULTISM IN THE BIBLE

(Continued from Page 41)

to deliver him to his father again."

Very white of Reuben, particularly as he risked summary vengeance himself at the hands of his enraged brethren when they discovered the trick.

Reuben was the eldest and they listened to him. When Joseph caught up with them he was seized, stripped of his many-colored coat and cast into the dry pit. Then the brothers sat down to eat their lunch. As they were eating, a company of Ishmaelites, Egyptian importers, passed by. Their wares at the moment were spicery, balm and myrrh but they had no objection to trading in human flesh if the opportunity afforded. Their presence gave Judah, who seems to have possessed the rudiments of a conscience as well as a good business brain, a different idea. "What profit is it," said he, "if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come let us sell him to the Ishmaelites for he is our brother and our flesh." The notion appealed to the others. Get rid of hated Joseph and turn an honest shekel besides. Why not?"

But a group of Midianites, merchantmen, beat them to it. Observing Joseph as they passed the pit or hearing his cries for help, they drew him up, made a hasty bargain with the Ishmaelites and sold the frightened youngster for twenty pieces of silver. Not a high price but a quick turn, they doubtless reasoned, on hi-jacked goods.

We cannot feel sorry for the brothers, nor can we feel very sorry for Joseph. He talked too much.

Reuben, returning to the pit to deliver his brother, found him gone and was greatly upset. The rest, however, took it in stride. They were sons of the wealthiest sheik in the area and the two pieces of silver each would have received was hardly mandrake money. Calmly they proceeded with the second part of their nefarious plan —killing a kid (an animal), and dipping the torn coat of unhappy little Joseph, now bound and bound for Egypt, in the blood. To their agitated father they took it and Israel knew all too well what it meant. Joseph had suffered a horrible death at the hands or claws of a wild beast. "And Jacob rent his clothes and put sackcloth upon his loins and mourned for his son many days." Karma, karma! It had caught up with him at last. His own conduct toward his father had created this karma through and by his sons. We can sympathize with the old gentleman in his poignant grief while recognizing the lesson it was intended to teach him. As for his deceitful sons, their own karma was in the making.

Meanwhile the Ishmaelites, having reached Egypt sold their slave to Potiphar, an officer of the Pharaoh or ruler of Egypt, and captain of his guard. The Bible says the *Midianites* sold him to Potiphar, the author having evidently forgotten that he said the Midianites had sold him to the Ishmaelites. We are not supposed to notice these discrepancies but we would love to have someone tell us how, if the Bible is completely inerrant, a careless mistake like this could creep in. To try our faith, doubtless. It does.

Then in Chapter XXXIX the error is corrected and the account says Potiphar bought him from the Ishmaelites. The author evidently had recovered his bearings but forgot to change the word Midianites back to Ishmaelites, or maybe it was too much trouble, writing a word being the labor it was in those days. We dislike to be so pernickety but there is considerable value to the student in pointing out things like this as existing in a work every word and letter of which is believed by the pious to be the handiwork of God himself. We submit that if it were, God would not have written, or caused to be written, the word Midianites when he meant Ishmaelites. Be that as it may, Joseph struck it lucky. His master, well impressed with the genteel bearing and high intelligence of his new slave, soon made him overseer of his household. "And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man," observes the Bible writer admiringly. Rags to riches, that was Joseph. Everything he touched went well. "The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake," says the account, and it adds significantly, "and Joseph was a goodly person and well-favoured."

Alas for well-favoured Joseph. His handsome and winning personality were to be his ruin. There was a *Mrs.* Potiphar and she distinctly liked the looks of the personable slave. Without recording all the revolting details which, as the Bible recounts them, leave nothing at all to the imagination, we may diffidently hint that the lady made unladylike advances to the slave, accompanied by remarks that left no doubt whatever as to her strictly dishonorable intentions. "No! A thousand times No!" shrieked horrified Joseph. But La Potiphar was not one to accept a rebuff gracefully. She persisted. Joseph retreated. This went on day after day, no advantage being gained by either side. We know that Joseph was "well favoured." We are not informed as to the Lady Potiphar. Joseph may have been given more credit for 3500 years than he is entitled to. The Bible, which invariably stresses feminine beauty when present, is suspiciously silent on the subject of Lady Potiphar's pulchritude. Beautiful or not she was a determined woman and one day, finding Joseph alone and in his usual unyielding mood, she "caught him by his garment," whereat the cornered young Hebrew "left his garment in her hand and fled."

What followed was what might have been expected. "Hell hath no fury etc." Accusing Joseph of her own moral turpitude the frustrated female went running to her husband with loud screams of outraged virtue. Why Joseph was not instantly fed to the crocodiles we shall never know. Perhaps Potiphar, looking at his raging, aging wife and then at youthful Joseph, murmured, "No. It's impossible. I don't believe it." Anyway all the young slave received was a prison sentenced without hard labor.

Poor Joseph. *His* karma, too, seemed to be working out. The greater the pride, the greater the humiliation, and he had been a proud lad with a proud name, son of a proud and wealthy father.

Now he was a number.

(To Be Continued)

There are about 6 million people born every hundred years, 60 billion for each thousand years. Assuming that the world is only the 6000 years old which orthodoxy postulates, we still have some 360 billions who have lived and died since Adam. Make it only a hundred billions if you like as perhaps the population has increased in recent centuries, and that is still a lot of souls to dispose of permanently. Even heaven must be getting a little overcrowded, while as for hell—imagination reels at the thought of the colossal number of incinerators that must be needed to keep the place going. If, as scientists state, man has been here at least 50,000 years (Theosophists say 18 million in physical form) multiply the hundred billion by 10. One trillion souls, most of them suffering agonizing torture every second! Do you like this testimony to the mercy and lovingkindness of an ever-loving God? Do you believe it? Neither do we.