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

VOLUME XV SEPTEMBER, 1949—SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI NUMBER 7

PRAYER AND THE KARMIC LAW

BY CLARA F. GASTON

Prayer is the heart's sincere desire
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.
Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.
—*James Montgomery*

Passing over the stony roads of mortality man often suffers so deeply that he feels the need of Divine aid to overcome his despair; yet is not his suffering, in most cases the result of his own action, performed in ignorance or for self indulgence or advantage, often in incarnations long past, and insofar as his action brought suffering to others will not the karmic law react upon him to right that action? The law, divinely ordained and framed, acts automatically and inexorably to restore the harmony of the manifested worlds and thereby teach man the vital lessons of controlling the lower self. Will that Supreme Wisdom, therefore, abrogate His own law, being moved to pity by the agonized petition of one who drew his own suffering by his own action?

What, beside a petition to Divine Omnipotence, is prayer; how does it operate, what is its nature?

In the first place let us recognize that prayer often is the last refuge of one whose own best efforts, moral, mental and physical, have failed to remove the cause of his suffering; then, as a last hope, he hears the voice of the Spirit, of the God within, hitherto overlaid and smothered to his consciousness by the frantic efforts of the personality.

But the home whence this Holy Spirit descended is the spiritual realm, which is also the true home of the soul, and its voice magnetically draws to him the forces of that realm. While it is true that the Karmic Law never fails in its action, it deals with material forcees to correct material results of false action and error, and *all* material forces are subject to the forces of the spiritual realm, which by its own nature dissolves and destroys them; the karmic law having been framed by the Holy Trinity, the highest spiritual law of the Cosmos, to rule and regulate its affairs.

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REAL PROBLEMS OF REINCARNATION

9. How could a great scientist like Edison have acquired his genius by similar work in many lives when there was no scientific achievement even remotely resembling his at any previous time in history?

Great scientists have evolved *pari passu* with their science. Details are comparatively unimportant in evolutionary history; principles are everything. Science started from scratch and so did scientists. Edison or some other outstanding modern genius may well have been the prehistoric genius who invented the wheel — a more significant invention at the time its principle was discovered than the invention of the internal combustion engine in our own times. Without the former the latter would have been impossible and the coming of the automobile age to us was of less importance than the coming of the wheel age to prehistoric man.

But we need not go back that far to justify the assertion that the great scientists of today were engaged in scientific pursuits that fitted them for their present tasks in many successive lives. Contrary to the view assiduously fostered by modern educators that our times alone are the enlightened ones scientifically — that the ancients had no science worthy of the name, only superstitions — occultism declares that *a hundred thousand or more years ago* our remote ancestors the Atlanteans possessed scientific knowledge that we have had to rediscover — and a good deal that we still have not rediscovered. These Atlanteans were ourselves. Our outstanding inventors, technical wizards, industrial giants, may even that long ago have been well versed in the principles which a thousand centuries later they applied to the "new" wonders of electronics, television, plastics and jet planes.

The Secret Doctrine credited the Atlanteans with full knowledge of atomic energy (Vol. II page 286, Adyar Edition). Hindu scriptures allude to their "flying machines." In referring to "the wonderful knowledge of the Egyptian Priests in every department of science," (V:264) Madame Blavatsky inquires whence they could have obtained it "unless they had it from a still more ancient source."

Is not the Theosophical teaching reasonable, that this knowledge, lost

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"AND THEN I FOUND THEOSOPHY"

BY CHARLES E. LUNTZ

The manuscript reproduced below came to light recently in sorting through a mass of old papers and letters. As nearly as can be determined from dated material in the same bundle it was written about 1922 — the same year the writer was first introduced to Theosophy. It is the start of a book on Psychology or Mental Science, to be entitled "The Golden Key," yet such are the quirks of human memory that the writer has no recollection whatever of having written it and to him it now reads like the work of a stranger.

Only the Prologue is intact, together with a few paragraphs headed "Chapter 1. A Simple Re-statement of an Ancient Truth" and a page numbered 15, evidently the close of this or a subsequent chapter. After reading it the Editor thought it might be of antiquarian interest to ANCIENT WISDOM readers who are kind enough to like his present-day material. It was the product of a good deal of reading, thinking, studying and attending lectures and classes on the subject.

The proposed book never got beyond the first chapter or two for in the Fall of 1922 the writer, apparently by complete accident, was induced to hear Mr. L. W. Rogers in a series of lectures and on March 7th 1923 he joined The Theosophical Society.

Fascinated absorption in the infinitely wider and grander philosophy must have called a halt to writing on lesser subjects, though here again no memory remains as to the circumstances in which the manuscript was discontinued.

The Prologue only is published here, the rest being too fragmentary as the middle pages are missing. It is pleasant to think that no statement in this 27-year old declaration of principles is at variance with the writer's views today, though we may perhaps be pardoned for saying that we believe we could express them today in somewhat better style. Following is the reproduction:

THE GOLDEN KEY

Prologue

In the Beginning God Created Heaven and Earth.

In the Present Man Can CREATE

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ANCIENT WISDOM
FOUNDED BY L. W. ROGERS
published monthly at
320 Merchants' Exchange Bldg.,
St. Louis 2, Mo.
CHARLES E. LUNTZ, *Editor*
ANCIENT WISDOM PRESS, *Publishers*
Entered as second-class matter Sept. 25, 1936, at the post office at St. Louis, Mo., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Subscriptions: 1 year $2.00; 6 months $1.20; Canada and abroad, 1 year $2.50.
Single Copies, 20 cents

JUMPING TO RELIGIOUS CONCLUSIONS

It is strange how those reared in some particular form of orthodox faith are often so perfectly convinced that theirs is the true, the only true, belief and all other of the thousands of religions which now exist or have existed in the past are partially or completely mistaken. Ask them how they can be so sure of that and you will receive the wholly illogical and unsatisfactory answer that their church teaches it. Ask how the church — whichever of the many it is — can be sure of it and if you are not annihilated with a look or incinerated by a burning flow of words you will be told that the authority of the church rests on passages in the Bible.

But the theology, dogmas and doctrines of the many churches are not alike. Each sect has its own specialized interpretation of the scriptural passages in question. Each seems to ignore, at least in practice, some of the passages on which others pounce, though paying lip service to every sentence and word in the sacred books as translated—errors and all—by King James I's scholars, the British or American Revisionists, or the Douai University.

Because the words in the Bible on which reliance is placed were uttered or written a long time ago they have acquired a sanctity and authority which inherently they may or may not possess. But their very age, the difference in idiom between ancient and modern tongues, the vast gulf existing between the teaching methodology of the East and of the West, tends to make baffling mysteries of many of the biblical pronouncements. Literal minded western theologians, without even the beginnings of a conception that oriental imagery is neither literal, historical nor statistical, have forced tortured meanings out of symbolic statements not even remotely concerned with them.

The Bible has been made to justify Freewill and to uphold Predestination — two mutually exclusive doctrines. The words of Jesus have been interpreted as implying that the wine and bread of Holy Communion are his physical blood and body and that they are merely a symbol of these — two opposed dogmas. Scriptural pronouncements have been cited as divine proof that one church was the final and only authority in all spiritual matters and scriptural pronouncements have been cited as divine proof that the Bible itself is the final and only authority in all spiritual matters.

Salvation is claimed by one denomination, on biblical authority, to be the product of faith alone, by another denomination on the same authority to be by works alone, by a third, on still the same authority to be the product of both faith and works, and by a fourth, also declaring their source to be biblical, as not resting on either faith or works but on God's decision made at each soul's creation.

Which of the myriad conflicting beliefs one follows, or if he follows none at all, may depend upon the belief of the family into which he was born or adopted or the orphan asylum in which he was brought up or the accident of environment or exposure to a particular religious teaching. Or it may, more rarely, depend on the cast of his mind — whether he be a deep, shallow or indifferent thinker. It may even depend on some particular book he happened across by chance or some lecture he may casually have attended. But whichever the belief he embraces, there are a hundred others to—at best —sorrowfully regard him as treading a doubtful path to salvation and at worst as having set his feet on the direct path to hell.

And this is not the viewpoint alone of the bigoted and intolerant members of the orthodox religions. A syndicated religious column, which sometimes shows flashes of breadth and enlightenment almost theosophical in scope, recently proclaimed that even the best of men only contrive to get to heaven by the skin of their teeth. We wonder how the writer of the article knows that. Has he explored the celestial fields or been taken into the divine confidence? Or is he, more likely, making the usual misinterpretation of the Christ's words: "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth into life and few there be that find it." The original Greek is *apagousa eis ten zoen* —leading into *the* life—and *the* life is the spiritual life, the *yoga* with the divine, and not at all heaven in the ordinary sense of a blissful dwelling place after death. To this latter abode we all go, even atheists, for a lengthy season if we have anything of the spiritual, unselfish and loving in our lives—as who has not? We don't get there "by the skin of our teeth." Devachan, the heaven world, is the heritage of almost every son of man.

It may be a strong statement to make, but nearly all doctrine must be error, because nearly all doctrine contradicts and conflicts with doctrines held by others. Only one such doctrine can be right. Which one? How is anybody to decide? And how awful if one should decide wrongly! No wonder so many deep thinkers refuse to go off the deep end by making a decision and wind up pronouncing "a plague on *all* your houses. I won't believe in any of you."

In a frenzied search for a true belief followers of one church have hopefully switched to another church, to a third or a fourth or more — only to find quite often that for them the difference is that between Tweedledee and Tweedledum. So discarding all churches they have become freethinkers, sometimes members of the Liberal beliefs demanding no creedal submission, and occasionally Theosophists. A happy few, discerning the truth enshrined within the bewildering doctrine, have learned what that truth is not by breaking away from their church but by becoming Theosophists as well. That way lies peace of mind but — perhaps because of disqualifying karma—it is rarely vouchsafed.

Where did these multifarious clashing beliefs, all claiming the same source, come from? They are all old, many bearing the marks of the most primitive thinking. How did the first "interpreter" reach his conclusions and how did he manage to have them incorporated into the religion? How did later interpreters contrive to have them thrown out and a new set substituted?

If you would know, read any good and unbiased—*and unbiased*—history of religion. Don't read such a history written by a sectarian writer unless you prefer fiction to fact. If you are unacquainted with the background of the evolution of creeds, dogmas and doctrines now regarded by many as divinely inspired, prepare for a heavy shock. You will be aghast at what you read.

You will find highly placed spiritual guides and teachers—or supposedly such — shrieking, shouting, cursing each other in the attempt to enforce their own warped conception of religious truth on everybody else. You will find trades, bargains and compromises in the final decisions arrived at as to what was or was not true belief. You will find members of one sect when in power persecuting, torturing and burning members of other sects and you will find some of the latter retaliating with interest when in their turn they gained the upper hand.

As to the doctrines themselves, they not seldom seem to represent the wild guesses of their formulators, buttressed by pride of opinion and enforced by brute strength. But time has mellowed them. Though a mere jump at conclusions based on fallacious reasoning from questionable premises, they have been taught and retaught, venerated, built up, contemplated and made articles of faith so that merely to question let alone repudiate them became gross

heresy.

Theosophists understand all this very well, which is why many of them *are* Theosophists, but we ourselves must be wary of following the same devious path. Being human our minds run in the same pattern as other human minds. We too may form conclusions on the basis of guess, prejudice, bias or half knowledge. We shouldn't but we may. And we too may try to formulate our bad guesses or those of others into doctrines, commandments, even creeds under another name. The egregious "Back to Blavatsky" movement, which we are quite sure Blavatsky herself would have been the first to repudiate, shows that Theosophists are not immune to the fallacy of infallibility.

It would be infinitely preferable if the 40,000 members of The Theosophical Society held 40,000 different beliefs about everything to the whole 40,000 of them holding only one belief. Let other philosophies, religions or cults seek for unanimity of thought on spiritual things. We seek, or at least encourage, the differences. And in this lies our strength for fresh, new, virile thought on the high matters with which we deal constantly comes to us for the use of all and without causing glares and frowns from those who direct the Society's destiny. And if it ever be not so—if we follow the dismal trail of those religions that forbid new thought to enter, whose votaries tend only the ashes of the past—then we shall become as spiritually moribund as they.

TIRESOME MORALIZINGS

We get very weary, and so we are sure do most people, of the heavy superiority which many writers, philosophic, religious, even on occasion theosophical, betray in the gratuitous advice they hand out to their readers. They assume to know just what is wrong with the world and with their public, and in massive wordage solemnly recommend this, that or the other course of action which will save society or the individual from the error of their ways. Often the advice is couched in language so vague or obscure that society or the individual would find it impossible to apply even if so minded. But the writer doubtless leans back after penning it, with an unspoken thanksgiving that he is not as other men and accepts an approving nod from his ego (lower) that he has done his duty by humankind in admonishing it as to the path in which it should walk.

Which is no function of any writer. Why should one assume because he happens to possess the means of publicizing his views that this gives him the privilege of looking down his nose at his fellow men and giving them unctuous advice as though he were in some way their spiritual or mental superior?

It has always been our idea that our readers and ourselves were fellow-students, fellow-seekers after truth — that the most we had any right to do was to offer suggestions, point out facts which might not have occurred to others, attempt new approaches to old teachings, and offer, humbly as might be, such enlightenment as long study and research on certain subjects might seem to put us in position to supply. But if, into all this, there entered any note of assumed superior wisdom it certainly was not intended and is hereby annulled, cancelled and made of no effect as of the past, present and future.

The writer's father possessed the somewhat embarrassing habit, when listening to a platitudinous sermon, of nodding his head solemnly and murmuring to himself, "We know it, Sir." And we not seldom find ourselves unconsciously repeating that asseveration as we wade through dismal reams of preachments which no doubt are on the order of those that bored us twenty-two incarnations ago.

We hope we can keep ANCIENT WISDOM free from the mildewed commonplaces that pass for omniscience in so much modern day literature. ANCIENT WISDOM has been accused of a lot of things but never of being dull. If ever we feel we are getting that way or relapsing into the banality we abhor, or if ever enough people whose opinions we value convince us we have fallen into that low estate, we shall give up writing.

A high resolve for any writer to make and one which, if universally followed, would greatly relieve the paper shortage.

"...AND READS SLOW..."

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

— *Psalms CIII:12*

The above passage is generally understood as meaning that God has taken away the sins of the faithful altogether. Adopting Kipling's supposed view that "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet," it is presumed that by removing transgressions as far as East is from West is to remove them entirely. Glib quoters of the Kipling line almost never finish the verse, which concludes,

"Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat."

Kipling, who learned his Theosophy in India from A. P. Sinnett, was too good an occultist to subscribe to the idea that East and West were forever unapproachable the one by the other. His "earth" and "sky" are figures of speech for the material and the spiritual. Kipling was well steeped in the symbology of the Orient, something that his admirers do not always take into account.

And the Psalmist, who was probably a greater esotericist than Kipling, would certainly have no intention of implying that our transgressions are by some magic totally obliterated without any effort or change of attitude of our own.

The real meaning of the declaration is readily perceivable by those who do not immediately jump to unwarranted conclusions upon r e a d i n g a scriptural pronouncement which is intended to be studied and meditated upon. It may be divined by giving thought to the Patience Worth definition of karma, one of the most profound, surely, that has ever been uttered:

"The Law, writ by each man.
He readeth his ain script, havin' writ it,
And reads slow... and learns."

The words significant to our present discussion are, "And reads slow." How slowly only karma itself may tell but the ages required for human spiritual evolution furnish a good clue. We may ask ourselves why this near-infinitude of sub-races, root-races, rounds and chains. There can only be one answer — because man reads so slowly, so very slowly, the script that he has written, reads slowly and learns slowly, spelling out each sentence, each word, each letter in his spiritually illiterate incarnations, and there are many of them.

Graduating after aeons of failures from evolutionary kindergarten, infant man faces the long grind through secondary grades. He is still "reading slow," learning slower. Incarnation succeeds incarnation and comes the day he passes on to spiritual high school. A little more proficient in his reading, his "script" becomes more complicated, involving the scripts of others. The transgressions that began in the East and that were removed to the West now appear on the far horizon. Eventually—sometimes at inconceivably long last—the karma, which means the education they call for, begins. It has been subordinated, perhaps, for lives to more urgently needed lessons but it is in the advanced curriculum and the karmic authorities never fail to get around to it when the time is propitious.

Even in one incarnation we "read slow." Look about you at the myriad superficially m i n d e d, out-for-a-good-time, philosophically unschooled personalities who cross our paths each day. Recall that each is the product of hundreds of lives and thousands of years of human evolution. And they are still spiritual lip readers of the karmic lessons. They figuratively spell out meaningless words to which their minds are blank and will stay blank for centuries or millenia to come.

Yet even in the lives of these egoic illiterates there sometimes manifest

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BE THOU MADE WHOLE

By Ella Welge

When we earnestly desire a spiritual healing we must first make it possible for God to heal us. His transforming Spirit has its source within the heart of our being and the cleansing waters of Eternal Life flow through us only when the channel is clear.

The channel is our state of consciousness and all adjustments have their beginning in consciousness. We must remove every obstruction before the healing forces can move easily and freely through our entire organism. These obstructions are the condemnations, resentments, fears and all other adverse conceptions that we repeatedly harbor and express throughout our lives. They must be uprooted and cast out and replaced with positive ideas of goodwill, understanding, faith and courage.

Though we may have a problem that seems impossible of solution or a disease that has been called incurable, we should not accept these conditions as final but know that we can rise above them mentally and spiritually and clear the channel for God to come through with His healing Life, Love and Purity.

We clear the way for divine healing by maintaining an attitude of prayer and by being receptive to the inner Light. When we open every faculty of our being to the influence of spirit we are raised in consciousness to the Truth that sets us free.

We have every reason to believe and to expect health as a natural condition in life. The healing power of the Most High permeates every cell and atom of mind and body with strength, renewal and restoration. "For I will restore health unto thee" (Jer. XXX:17).

We are inseparably unified with this healing principle and sustained in health and wholeness. The restorative powers are constantly at work and when our thoughts are in harmony with these powers they become intensely active and bring forth the very best results.

By faithful practice of the Silence and deep meditation upon the spiritual verities of life our whole consciousness is lifted. Instead of having faith in evil we have faith in the good. Instead of fearing sickness we have faith in health as a reality. Since everything in life is the result of our faith in that which is either destructive or constructive we can readily understand that our first and most important work is in building a spiritual consciousness within ourselves through which the healing energies can flow unreserved to restore our whole being to freedom and perfection.

"I shall be made whole."
(Matt. IX:21).

* * * * *

If you are in need of spiritual help the Healing Group of The Theosophical Society of St. Louis will be glad to give you their spiritual ministrations for the right adjustment of your problem. Write, giving full name and address to Mrs. Ella Welge in care of The Theosophical Society of St. Louis, 5108 Waterman Ave., St. Louis 8, Mo. You will receive immediate attention.

BODIES

By Charles E. Luntz

Air: "Comin' Through The Rye."

If a body drop a body
When it's time to die,
If he has five other bodies
Should a body cry?
Every laddie, every lassie
Bodies have to spare,
So if a body lose a body
Should a body care?

The body that we're using now is
Called the body dense;
A name most suitable for it has
Very little sense.
After death we transfer to our
Astral undercoat —
Then our walking days are over,
When we move we float.

Later on again we change to
Lighter body still.
Lives five hundred years or more
Without becoming ill.
This is called the mental body
And in heaven it dwells,
While the good that's to our credit
Slowly sets and jells.

Last of all the causal body
Claims whatever's left.
Clear, translucent, bright and shining,
Of all taint bereft.
Down the planes to hunt a body
Back again we go,
To live as Mr., Miss or maybe
Mrs. So-and-So.

Thus we travel picking bodies,
Shedding them when through.
Each one as it dies discarded
Like a worn-out shoe.
Bodies are our garments only,
Never you or I,
So if a body lose a body
Should a body cry?

Lecomte du Nouy in an otherwise enlightened book, "Human Destiny" denies dualism (that a soul inhabits the body). He makes a strong case for the existence of God on purely scientific grounds, but in denying man a soul he, of course, negatives the possibility of survival, in which he evidently disbelieves. Certainly he does not refer to it anywhere in the book, holding out only the grandeur of the concept of doing one's bit for the race and then perishing eternally. At the risk of being branded as selfish, unchristlike and unsolicitous of posterity, we suggest that this grand concept is not grand enough to make sense.

DO YOU KNOW? —

That Theosophists recognize the existence of exalted states of consciousness commonly referred to as "Mysticism"?

* * * * *

That while this term is used vaguely by non-Theosophists to describe anything from actual super-normal experience to pure hallucination, to the Theosophist it has a clear-cut meaning?

* * * * *

That in its complete scope it covers the ultimate *yoga* — union — with the highest Intelligence man can reach at his present level of spiritual development?

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That there are, however, many gradations of higher consciousness which are embodied in the term, from the upper astral to the lower buddhic?

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That above the latter we have the ultimate development of mysticism which only an Adept may permanently hold but flashes of which may occasionally be experienced by those of high spiritual aspiration?

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That the notion that all worldly ambitions must be put aside by the true mystic in order to attain to the highest spiritual consciousness is true, but that this truth is often grossly misinterpreted?

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That it has been used as an excuse for shiftlessness, laziness and refusal to face the responsibilities of life?

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That it has also been used to brand occult teachings and guidance as valueless and to justify a vacuous otherworldliness which robs the personality of all physical and mental productiveness?

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That the outcome of such pseudo-mysticism is often a stale and barren life, the aversion of others and a false-martyrdom complex?

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That the true mystic does not affect peculiarities, mannerisms or seraphic virtue but strives for simplicity, wholesomeness and conformity to accepted standards of conduct?

* * * * *

That he never advertises his mystical experiences or even speaks of them to those closest to him, except in rare instances where some definite benefit may be derived by an understanding listener?

* * * * *

That one of the tests of a true mystic is his silence on that very point even when questioned and given the opportunity for display, and the test of a pseudo-mystic is his garrulity and eagerness to talk about his alleged experiences even when no one wants to listen?

* * * * *

More on Mysticism next month.

OCCULTISM IN THE BIBLE

Budding Ego

By Charles E. Luntz

Before proceeding further with the miseries and exploits of young Joseph it may be well to cover the esoteric meaning of the story as far as it has progressed. That Joseph represents Sagittarius, ninth house sign in the horoscope and therefore also Jupiter, its ruler, there can be no possible doubt. The evidence is completely overwhelming.

Aside from the significant reference to archers and to Joseph's "bow," by his dying father in his final blessing (Gen. XLIX:23-24), every deed he is made to do, every small act, even almost his every word is loaded with Sagittarian symbolism. And Sagittarius, as every astrological student knows, is the sign of the higher mind — or as a Theosophist would term it, the Ego.

Consider the things that Sagittarius governs: dreams, long journeys, religion and philosophy, the higher wisdom (as against the lower concrete knowledge). It is a double bodied sign and tends to duality in the things it affects. Its ruler Jupiter signifies abundance, prosperity, success. It is a so-called *fruitful* planet.

Now look at the early career of Joseph — and we shall find that his later adventures bear out the symbolism to even greater degree. His ten brethren (the youngest, Benjamin, was still an infant) were bitterly antagonistic to him. They represented the various lower phases of the personality, as Joseph represented its highest phase, the budding Ego.

Some years ago we published in Ancient Wisdom an analysis of the celebrated "blessings", some of which were much more like curses, as given in Chapter XLIX of Genesis which, in spite of its being almost at the end of the book, some scholars declare is older than anything else in it. We pointed out that it is quite logical to assume that antiquity or seniority of age for it inasmuch as it is the astrological key to all of the preceding and subsequent acts, as recounted in the Pentateuch, of the alleged twelve tribes. Without repeating this analysis in detail we give below the zodiacal sign signified by each and refer those interested to *The Secret Doctrine* (Adyar Edition) Vol. II, Page 377 for further elucidation, as well as to the chapter mentioned. The tribes and their respective signs are as follows:

Reuben—Aquarius; Simeon and Levi —Gemini; Judah—Leo; Issacher—Taurus; Zebulon—Pisces; Gad—Aries; Asher—Libra; Dan—Scorpio; Napthali —Capricorn; Joseph—Sagittarius, Benjamin—Cancer. The only sign omitted (due to Simeon and Levi being bracketed together as Gemini) is Virgo, the maiden; which of course is Jacob's one daughter, Dinah.

That the personality in all eleven of its zodiacal departments does "gang up" against its twelfth fraction, the struggling representative of the Ego which we call the higher self, there can be no dispute. The defects of each sign in the earlier stages of evolution, these constituting the "brethren" who hated Joseph, may be thus summarized:

Aries, self-sufficiency; Taurus, love of money; Gemini, diffusiveness; Cancer (Omitted. The outcome of a matter as we shall see. But Cancer does rule excessive appetite, which also is illustrated esoterically in the latter part of the Joseph story); Leo, arrogance. Virgo (Also omitted. Governs lack of faith, skepticism); Libra, controversy; Scorpio, violence; Capricorn, worry; Aquarius, lower ambitions; Pisces, chaotic ideas.

The above, of course, are very sketchy descriptions of the negative side of each sign but may serve to demonstrate the close analogy between the behavior of his brethren to Joseph and the conduct of the personality in its many unlovely phases toward its own higher self—its "younger brother" in very fact for the negative qualities appear on the scene long before the first beginnings of a conscience are born.

Jacob, we know, is Manas, mind, both higher and lower but the higher, in the early stages of the Joseph narrative, has scarcely any existence outside of its own plane. To apprehend the esoteric significance we must understand that the story has to do with the spiritual evolution of man — any man and every man. It is your story and my story and the story of each member of the human race. Manas (Jacob or Israel) is the Egoic "father" of a twelvefold personality and he loves "the son of his old age," the highest self the personality has yet been able to develop (Joseph) the best. He makes for him "a coat of many colors," surely a most transparent symbol for the multi-hued aura, bright and shining, of the causal body — the Egoic vehicle which Joseph represents.

The latter helped his brothers to feed the flocks, an easily grasped analogy of the continuous experiences in all departments of life which constitutes the "food" of the incarnated personality. The "flocks" (Aries, the ram) are, throughout scripture, a common symbol for the personality, which is zodiacally ruled by the first house with which Aries is associated.

"And he brought unto his father their evil report." Which is exactly what the newly awakened conscience does. Crudely put, perhaps—"their *evil* report"—but impossible to misunderstand once one has the key.

And Joseph *dreams* — the budding Ego dreams. If additional proof is required of the accuracy of linking Joseph to Sagittarius, this is it for Sagittarius rules dreams.

His dreams are astrological — the Sun, Moon and eleven stars (signs) bow down before him. The Sun in esoteric astrology is the incarnated Egoic fragment or ray; the Moon the personality, generically regarded; the eleven signs, as shown, the elemental segments of the lower self. All these are one day to "bow down" before the initiated and liberated Ego. Even Jacob, Manas, the mind does not understand. But Sagittarius rules the intuition which is higher than all of Manas and which is faintly illuminating at this primitive stage the dreaming soul.

Here our space runs out but in the next installment the magnificently appropriate symbology of the pit, the sale to the slave traders, the exile to Egypt and the unjust accusation will be interpreted. It is one of the most instructive in all scripture.

(To Be Continued)

"OUR LANGUAGE"

A Simple Explanation of Theosophical Terms

Upanishads (Pronounced Oo-PAH-ni-shads): Secret Doctrine of the Hindus. The occult interpretation in mystical form of the Vedas (q. v.).

Vahan (Pronounced VAH-han): A vehicle, form, body or instrument for manifestation. Name of an early Theosophical publication.

Vaivasvata (Pronounced Vy-VAHS-va-ta): Usually signifies Vaivasvata Manu, progenitor and guide of the Fifth Root Race. Also a title or name used to designate other personages.

Vedas: Hindu scriptures and hymns. There are four of these (*Rig, Sama, Yajur, Atharva*) of which the Rig Veda is the oldest.

Vedanta: Philosophy founded on the Vedas.

Vidya: Knowledge or wisdom.

Ygdrasil: Scandinavion symbol for eternal manifestation. Literally, the tree which binds the highest and lowest aspects of the universe together.

Yoga: The divine *yoke* or union. Supreme aim of the occultist, mystic or devotee. The ascent in consciousness to the plane of the Ego, Monad or higher. The SELF in possession of the personality — SELF-realization.

Yuga: An age or cycle.

(The End)

THE ZODIAC IN THE CLASSICS

6. Virgo

Had I been present at the creation, I would have given some useful hints for the better ordering of the universe.

—*Alphonso The Wise*

"I FOUND THEOSOPHY"

(Continued from Page 49)

his own Heaven on Earth.

The creative power was and is inherent in God in supreme degree as regards all things.

The same creative power is inherent in Man in supreme degree as regards his own world.

God created and maintains and re-creates his Universe by His Thought.

Man creates, maintains and re-creates his universe by his thoughts.

God is a Living Spirit embracing All.

Man is a living spirit, the same in nature and essence as God — differing only in degree, as a dewdrop is the same in nature and essence as the mighty ocean, but in infinitely smaller degree.

God is Supreme in His Universe.

Man can be supreme in his world. The power is locked within him, awaiting only the turn of the golden key that shall unloose it to his command.

The power is locked within the souls of all mankind. The golden key is possessed inherently by none. It must be sought for, striven for, won.

The golden key is — KNOWLEDGE.

With this key man can unlock the treasure chest of his soul and grasping the forces stored therein make of his world a paradise.

To help you forge the golden key is the aim of this work. Every human being has the power if he has the will. The Law is unvarying, infallible.

You can be and you can have exactly what you will to be and to have.

There IS a secret of success and it is not the easy platitude of the self-made man nor is it found in the time worn adages of the copybook. These embrace but a tiny outer fragment of the great inner truth.

We shall take you over the ground step by step and shall try to flood the darkness which has enveloped the wonderful truth we have to impart with the clear, radiant light of lucid explanation.

We shall not talk in parables nor couch our meaning in language which veils more than it reveals. Truth is Fact. A Fact is always simple. A collection of facts is sometimes complicated, hard to understand.

But by piling simple fact on simple fact the brain can grasp truth that could never be conveyed by involving fact with fact as in some metaphysical works that torture even the mightiest human intellect to understand.

This book is for the plain man—to him we dedicate it, and may it bring to him — a potential god — the knowledge and use of his own transcendent powers.

For by these he can have all things.

And by these he can become possesed of the greatest of all things — the Peace of God which passeth all understanding.

PRAYER

(Continued from Page 49)

But a prime condition requires, as it does in religious worship, utter sincerity and devotion on the part of the petitioner, and the spiritual energy, and, in no small measure the faith with which the prayer is offered, determine its potency.

Thus prayer sincerely offered sends upward to the spiritual a golden cord of communication which, expanding, forms a channel down which these forces flow and reach not only the petitioner but also the person or persons who suffered by the original action, erasing not only in the petitioner the crushing sense of his guilt but also in the victim the anger and resentment caused by the wrong suffered; each in proportion to the sincerity and devotion *and* the spiritual energy or firm faith on the part of the petitioner.

It is too often true that prayers, habitually offered at stated times, often lack spiritual force and become mere lip service on the part of the petitioner, but they, at least, keep man from complete severance from his divine source and when disaster overtakes him often supply what in his daily life he overlooks — a conscious sense of that relationship strong enough to build the channel that will bring to him the help he prayed for. Its spiritual influence will not fade with time but, though it may seem slowly, will increase both in the offender and his one-time victim.

No! Divine Wisdom does not cancel the provisions of its own changeless law but the karmic law deals only with material results and *true* repentance on the part of the offender brings to bear that higher force by which *all* material forces are scattered and dissipated. The relief felt by the offender seems to him a proof of forgiveness as will the fading of anger and resentment on the part of the victim.

Thus man himself works out his own salvation t h r o u g h the law divine, though he himself does not know it. Thus by suffering is he made perfect as were the Divine Teachers through all the ages who came to show us the way.

It is always well when using a quotation to be sure how the rest of the quoted passage continues. The editor was led to this reflection on being introduced by the Chairman at a Shakespeare lecture in words applied (in the past tense) to Cardinal Wolsey in King Henry VIII:

> "He is a scholar and a ripe and good one;
> Exceeding wise, fair spoken and persuading."

Very complimentary, but unfortunately the "eulogy" concludes:

> "Lofty and sour to them that love him not;
> But to those men that seek him sweet as summer."

REAL PROBLEMS

(Continued from Page 49)

when Atlantis sank many thousands of years ago, was rediscovered bit by bit by the same Egos who were expert in it then as they reincarnated one by one in later times? Even the black middle ages had their quota of great inventors who paved the way for those who were to come later — perhaps themselves in new guise. Such benefactors of the human race as Caxton (printing), Leonardo da Vinci, Roger Bacon, Armatus (spectacles) Jergens (spinning wheel) and many others must have been reincarnations of old-time personalities whose Egos were on the scientific ray and whose minds, in each earth life, fastened themselves on the subconsciously remembered tasks of earlier days.

The "perfection" to which science has brought our own mode of living (which, by the way, our descendants of 2949 A.D. may regard as primitive crudeness) has been built on the painful toil of hundreds of lives of the Edisons, Fords, De Forests and Einsteins of the Twentieth Century. There was a time in the latest life of each when Einstein did not know the multiplication table, De Forest could not use a telephone, Ford had never heard of a carburetor nor Edison of Franklin's experiments with electricity. They had to learn it all and apply it all in one brief life.

But the real learning was done over the ages. The first steps were taken in the very night of time when perhaps some present day brilliant scientist whose work the world applauds was the first ingenious savage to discover how to make an earthenware pot. Another may have been the primitive disoverer of the way to sharpen a flint and a third the genius who originally conceived the use of the lever.

From these simple contrivances to the more complicated devices of later centuries and t h e n c e through still greater complications to the modern assembly line r e q u i r e d only time, repeated incarnations and (most important of all) the between life absorption and brooding of the Ego — his high meditation on what his personalities had done, what still was to be done, and the ways in which to bring it about.

Does this make sense to you? It does to us. And certainly it answers the not unreasonable question which heads this installment. Fascinating it is to dwell on the infinite series of small steps ranging over ages of time which have brought us to our present estate. More fascinating even to envision a future which shall carry us so inconceivably higher. This is the philosophy it is our privilege to learn and to teach. This is the philosophy which alone can explain the mystery of our being here at all. This . . . is Theosophy.

"MOS' DOUBTLESS!"

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air."

— I Cor. XIV: 8, 9.

These words should serve as a permanent text for every theosophical lecturer and writer. Our subject is not too easy in the first place and it can be made obscure enough to drive off a seeker for life when it is wrapped up in the fancy verbiage in which some of the lesser writers and speakers appear to delight.

We do not share the view we have seen expressed that Theosophy, explained in simple language, is too naive for a thinking person to accept. This implies that thinking persons prefer the obscure to the intelligible. We not only doubt that — we are quite sure that it is wrong. A real thinker is never impressed by high sounding phraseology which disguises little or no meaning. Child minds may be — the mature mind is not.

We are reminded of the illiterate colored man summoned as a witness in a civil suit to whom learned counsel propounded the following on cross-examination:

"I will put to you this hypothetical question and remember it is purely hypothetical. Had you been in the propinquity of the scene described on direct examination would you or would you not have been capable of determining veridically the accuracy or otherwise of the allegations on which this suit is based?"

The amazed darky rolled his eyes and flashed a golden smile around the courtroom. Then, flattered beyond measure at being addressed in such imposing language, he triumphantly and impressively replied, "Mos' doubtless!"

And that, in substance, is the reaction which articles, Theosophical or otherwise. couched in enigmatic language for no other reason than to convey an aura of mysteriousness, are like to arouse in the less intelligent reader. The more intelligent one will probably react by pitching the offending article in the waste basket after finding that his attempts to understand it are vain.

It is perfectly true that there are subjects which of necessity do not lend themselves to simple treatment. Our quarrel is with the writer or lecturer who, instead of doing his utmost to clarify them, does his utmost to make them still harder to comprehend.

The success ANCIENT WISDOM has enjoyed for so many years is, we believe, due in greatest measure to pursuing simplicity in presenting even the deepest subjects. We are sure our readers despise as much as we do the affectation of clothing one's thoughts or lack of them in high-flown wordiness which, like the trumpet referred to by Paul, merely gives an uncertain sound. "No one" observed the French philosopher Montaigne, "is exempt from talking nonsense: the misfortune is to do it solemnly." We quote a verse given by Patience Worth when asked for something on "The World Teacher." It might well be heeded by those apostles of unclarity who feel that they have a mission to enlighten the world by being cloudy:

"He who presenteth simplicity;
He who maketh his heart a pillow upon which man may lay his head;
He whose Wisdom is simple and unadorned of self;
He whose love is a footcloth for the trod of men;
In labor meting out the full light of the Word;
He whose foot followeth the narrowed Path,
A Path which fellows with all men;
He and only He is fit for to teach."

AMEN

"I would like to draw your attention to a curious phase that has been affecting many nations, especially of the West, during nearly forty years. This is the cult of ugliness which passes for beauty. Artists in the various divisions of their work are experimenting to find new modes of creation and self-expression, and they think they have a right to create what are fundamentally ugly and repellant works of so-called art, which have a most injurious effect on men and women and especially children. It was pointed out by Bishop Leadbeater a good many years ago that this cult of ugliness masquerading as art is definitely an attempt to obstruct the progress of humanity."

— C. Jinarajadasa

OLD SOULS

A reader asks us to state what constitutes the marks of an old soul. Perhaps only a Lord of karma or a Master could do full justice to such a definition but we believe we can give at least one certain mark of a *young* soul.

If his own troubles appear to him to be matters of greatest moment while the troubles of others are things for indifference and laughter — he is a young soul.

A Benediction For The Theosophical Society Of St. Louis

By Patience Worth

I would not leave my voice to say
Amen! Amen!
Rather would I say the word like questioning—
Amen? Amen?
And leave thee hope thereby.

MINSTRELSY

A Selection from the Poems of Patience Worth

Spiritual Evolution

The plunge of man's ego
Up from the mire,
That it become purified
And resurrected
Thereby making him
A fitting vessel
For the pouring of the holy wine.
Man hath within him
That wick of fire
Which be the atom of God,
Aye, and it shall lash him
And he shall feed it
With the holy oil of desire
Until his doubts be forgotten
And he is recreated
Through understanding.

A reader, objecting to the view expressed in our series "Unlikely Beliefs Regarding Reincarnation" that we do not reincarnate alternately as male and female, indignantly cancels his subscription. That is one way of registering a protest but if we are right and he is wrong nature will pay no heed to it. If he is right and we are wrong no protest is necessary; what is is. But should one always cancel subscriptions because there is something in the publication with which one does not agree? If we followed that rule our reading matter would be confined to the monthly bulletin of The Theosophical Society of St. Louis (most of which we write). We couldn't even read ANCIENT WISDOM as we often publish articles, in the interest of general enlightenment, with some or all of which we don't agree. And how can one learn anything new if he insists on reading only facts previously known to him or on which he has irrevocably made up his mind and which conform to his ideas?

Our atheistic brethren who are so insistent that all statements made by their opponents be buttressed with substantial evidence do not always seem to follow their own preachments. As for instance the assertion made in the Rationalist debate that Lincoln, Edison, Jefferson and Franklin were freethinkers — obviously in the sense that they had no belief in God. Certainly none of these followed the tenets of any orthodox religion but there is ample evidence from their own speeches and writings that all had profound belief in a Supreme Intelligence behind manifested nature. It must be curious to behold so many proofs of order, purpose and intelligence in natue and have to hold to the conviction that this is all due to some completely unintelligent nebulosity called natural law. The difficulties of the orthodox in reconciling the bible and science can hardly be exceeded by the difficulty of reconciling intelligence with unintelligence.

FUND DEFICIT REDUCED TO $460.00

★ ★ ★ ★

No announcement appeared on the last page of the August issue, and not much of a one in July. We were holding our breath, not knowing how long, if at all, we could keep on sending out the free subscriptions.

But, as always, our generous readers never failed us. A rain of donations, including one especially large one from a reader who has many times come to ANCIENT WISDOM'S rescue when the going has been rough, has brought the Fund deficit down from the astronomical heights to which it had soared, to somewhere within reason.

It has not been wiped out but at least its flushed and unhealthy red has been changed to a less feverish pink.

So the free subscriptions will continue. We are scheduling them to the end of the year and holding faith that January 1st may find the Fund in the black and a year of promise ahead.

For we would like to feel that — during our lifetime at least — there'll always be an ANCIENT WISDOM.

THE OCCULT INTERPRETATION OF OMAR KHAYYAM

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

XVI

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his Way.

A caravanserai was a sort of trailer park (Persian version). Actually it was a four-sided inn, the buildings enclosing a huge inner court where caravans could put up. Omar symbolizes the earth as one of these inns, in a bad state of repair — as it is and always has been. The analogy is an especially good one as the earth was regarded in ancient times as having four corners. The Bible refers to the four corners of the earth though Omar, a great astronomer, undoubtedly knew better but chose to use an accepted figure of speech.

The second line is a profoundly significant allusion, not to the commonplace physical night and day — Omar was never commonplace — but to the nights and days of incarnation, a frequent occult symbol.

In the Fifth Edition Fitzgerald changes "doorways" into "portals," which perhaps is a still more appropriate designation for our awesome entrances and exits to and from this battered old world, a portal being an *elaborate* doorway or gateway. But portal or doorway, one dark, one light, the symbology is perfect. The only thing Omar does not explain is which portal we come in and which go out of — the night or day doorway. Perhaps he wanted us to decide that point for ourselves — occult teachers are prone to leave some things to the intuitions of the pupil. Our guess is that we come here through the night entrance and we believe Omar would have given us a passing grade on that answer. However, the reader's decision is just as good as ours — there is no hint, but the esoteric writers were not in the habit of regarding this planet as a place of light.

There is more in this night and day symbolism than is apparent at first glance. The ancient instructors in the deeper truths of being did not necessarily confine their dead letter statements to the veiling of only one spiritual fact. Often it is possible to discern two or even more meanings hidden beneath one symbol. H.P.B. makes the definite assertion that the Bible text possesses seven keys or esoteric interpretations. It is possible that this also applies to the Rubai'yat but we have no intention at this stage of attempting to decode more than one, which itsef is no light task.

Yet a second interpretation suggests itself so readily in this sixteenth quatrain that it seems certain that it must constitute a second antitype of the night and day analogy.

The doorways of earth life do indeed open and shut on alternate night and day. We move from dark situations to bright ones; the trines and sextiles must succeed the squares and oppositions in the horoscope, and the latter, after a season, again cloud our path.

Who are the "Sultan after Sultan" and what is their pomp? These are our personalities with all their trivial little worldly possessions that seem so important while we abide our "hour or two" before wending our way. An endless parade of "Sultans"—kings for a day — have passed in and out of these portals. They were ourselves and our "pomp." Edition V reads "Abode his destined Hour, and went his Way," which is equally good or better. Fitzgerald may have changed words or passages from edition to edition but it is a great tribute to his intuitional genius that the change never did violence to the esoteric meaning.

Our 1949 model caravanserai is even more battered than Omar's of nine hundred years ago. The world has taken a terrible beating in those nine centuries and the most terrible one of all in the last nine years. The nights have been much longer than the days and we are still seemingly in the small hours of the latest one. But we shall come through it and into the light of day as we always have. Birth succeeds death, death succeeds birth, with nations as with individuals; and as we nearly always contrive to land back here a bit better off than we were before — a little more understanding, a trifle more moral, a shade more spiritual, an inch closer to perfection — so does the world emerge from each of its "nights" with some modicum of betterment.

Each "Sultan" is a slight improvement on the last, each "pomp" a degree less pompous. And if the nights in this "batter'd caravanserai" seem to be long, they cannot really be so for we abide here only "an hour or two" and then go on our way.

(To Be Continued)

"AND READS SLOW"

(Continued from Page 51)

flashes of self-sacrifice, unselfishness, heroism or other advanced soul qualities that speak eloquently of karmic scripts that have indeed been mastered—karmic lessons that no longer are to be learned. A single action may, after aeons, evidence proficiency in some great branch of human attainment that a hundred lives have been spent in acquiring.

The ill-thought-out question, "Why so many incarnations?" finds its answer here. For every quality most of us have developed in comparative fulness there are a score, a hundred more still to achieve. In the past we have "read" very slowly. And we are here now to catch up on our reading.