



A Fleeting Effect for a Fleeting Cause

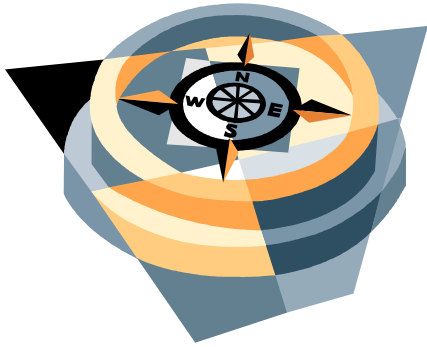
[From HPB Commentary on *Pistis Sophia*, PS-238]

(1) We have here the original of the rite of Extreme Unction as practised in the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches. The commendatory prayer, recited at the moment of death to protect the soul of the deceased as it traverses the “middle passage,” also transmits the same hereditary germ. As usual, the older churches have preserved the occult tradition with greater fidelity than their iconoclastic and more ignorant younger sister. Occult science teaches that the frame of mind in which a man dies, is of the utmost importance owing to the abnormal and psychic state in which he then is. The last thought of a dying person does much to influence his immediate future. The arrow is ready to fly from the bow; the bow-string is abreast of the ear, and the aim will decide the immediate fate of the arrow. Happy is he for whom “Om is the bow, the Self is the arrow, the Brahman — its aim!” (*Mundaka-Upanishad* II, ii, 4). At such a sacred moment, strong spiritual aspirations, whether natural or induced by the earnest exhortation of either one who has a true conviction, or better still, of one possessed of the divine Gnosis, will protect the Soul of him who is leaving life. This is not meant, however, to endorse the superstition of a “death-bed repentance,” for the immutable justice and harmony of the Karmic Law can only return a fleeting effect for a fleeting cause; and the rest of the Karmic debt must be paid in future earth-lives. “Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge,

and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. AMEN I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.” (Matt., v, 25, 26). That is to say, according to the Gnostic and esoteric interpretation, work while it is yet day, so that good Karmic action may balance the evil causes previously set in motion by the personality. Otherwise, at death we shall be judged by our own Higher Self, and under the conduct of the agents of the Karmic Law (the Demiourgos collectively), will have to reincarnate again into the prison of the body, until the past evil Karma has been exhausted. For until the last farthing of the Karmic debt is exhausted, we can never be untied from the wheel of “Samsāra.” (HPB commentary on *Pistis Sophia*, Collected Works, Vol. xiii. p. 74-75)

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POINT OUT THE WAY

XLIV

Chapter X

I. — Environment, Intelligence and Blind Tom

Question: — Just what, from a Theosophical basis, would constitute true humility?

Answer: — Humility is one of the requisites, Krishna says, for the man who would acquire wisdom. The root of this word actually means earth. We are all from earth; our nature is not clay — it's "mud," everyone's. Our bodies were all born in the same way, subject to the same contingencies. There is no distinction of race, condition, creed, sex or organization in genesis, that is, in birth or conception. All these distinctions come afterwards; and at death, too, there is no distinction. Death comes to all alike, just as birth does.

On that basis, true humility is the recognition of the fundamental identity, the fundamental equality and the fundamental possibilities of all souls. Take the worst man who ever lived: he may be bad today, yet there was a time when we were just as bad as he. If we know better now than to think as he thinks, to feel as he feels, to speak as he speaks, to act as he acts, it ought to give us charity, and the greatest breeder of charity in the world is the reflection that there is no

difference fundamentally between one man and another.

For a thousand years in Europe they believed that a different kind of blood flowed in the veins of a nobleman from that which flowed in the veins of an ordinary human being. We know better now, but we are still afflicted with the idea that one man is superior to another, or inferior to another; that one man is favored by God and another is being punished by God. When we get these ideas out of our heads, then we can understand what humility means. Krishna says, "He, O Arjuna, who by the similitude found in himself, seeth but one essence in all things, whether they be evil or good, is considered to be the most excellent devotee."

Question: — Very often one says that he is in a condition or a situation where he does not really belong and that he is called upon to do that which is not his duty. How could such a condition arise in a just and honest universe where each receives exactly what he has sown?

Answer: — The factors that make any of us what we are at this moment are more than one and, until all the factors are taken into account, we find contradictions. Take a fish out of water — the fish is so seriously out of place, out of relation, that if it does not get back into the water, it dies. But, if we examine the matter, we find that the fish had its share in getting out of the water. He performed actions the result of which was to "land" him.

So with us. An incompetent man seeks a position where competency is required; he gets the position, and then gets fired. Is there anything but the clear operation of law there?

When the untrustworthy man is in a position of trust, he is out of place, as

viewed from that pair of opposites. But when it is found that the one who trusted him represents one-half of another equation, and that he who sought the trust is the other half, then we can understand that the foolish man, who trusted where he shouldn't have, reaps what he has sowed when he is betrayed; and the untrustworthy man, who obtained the confidence of another and betrayed it, reaps what he sowed.

When we come to examine both sides of any question, then we can begin to see the question clearly. All our problems come from taking one side or the other of a Question.

Question: — The analogy of sleep and dreams is often put forward in support of the doctrine of reincarnation. To what extent is this a valid argument? After all, during sleep there is still a connection between the Ego and his body, and could not dreams be attributed purely to brain action instead of to what science considers a far-fetched theory — that is, to the action of the Ego independent of the body?

Answer: — In the first place, the analogy of sleep and dreams is never put forward in support of the doctrine of reincarnation. Analogy is a means by which we can see one thing when expressed in terms of another. When we say, Smith has a “hard heart,” we are actually putting forward an analogy. Everybody knows what the word “hard” means physically; everybody knows that the heart is a physical organ. But when we say that Smith has a *hard* heart, or Smith has a *tender* heart, manifestly we are saying something that the man has to “see” in another language than that which the words imply; he has to use his imaginative power.

So, when the analogy of sleep and dreams is put forward, it is suggestive

only. It is not an argument for reincarnation, but it does give a man something to think about. If he wanted to go into the subject, he would say to himself: What is my understanding of the phenomenon known as dream and the everyday phenomenon known as deep sleep? Does my understanding explain, or my theory cover, all the facts? Are there any objections to my theory? If he did this, he would find that his theory was shot full of objections.

Then, when it is suggested to him that perhaps the phenomena of sleep, of dreaming, of waking, are each due to the mixture of three independent elements, one or the other of which predominates at a given time, and that the mixture is partly separated or precipitated at other times, he has a basis from which — if he cares to follow it up in his own thought — he will see for himself the road to the understanding of waking, dreaming and sleep.

When he has gone thus far, then it may be suggested to him that identically the same analogy holds good with regard to birth and death, that birth is the bringing together into a given combination of certain elements which before had existed separately, each having its own independent existence, and that the period of that combination lasts for 50, 60, 70 years. At the end of that time, the combination wears out, and the original elements return to that state of independent existence in which they had been before the original combination — called birth — took place. So, the man has the same analogy to apply to birth and death that he has to sleeping and waking, and he will begin to see for himself.

The great trouble with the materialist is not in his thinking but in his *basis* and that never occurs to him. If, for example, we believe that the matter of our objective consciousness is the reality, how are we

going to explain mind, thought, feeling, memory, desire? We can only call them attributes of matter. If we believe that waking consciousness is the reality, then how can we do otherwise than call deep sleep and dreaming attributes of the waking consciousness?

What every man needs to do is not so much to examine his reasoning and his inferences as to examine the *basis* from which he acts. If a man is a materialist, let him see if his theory of life will explain Nature. It would be difficult to find a single writer on a materialistic basis who isn't a pessimist, a despairing man, who gives up the whole of Nature as an insoluble riddle, or who has not an "explanation" that is a confession of failure. Bertrand Russell, perhaps the greatest materialistic philosopher living, says that at least we can die as heroes.

Similarly with the religious man, the trouble is with his basis of dealing with Life. From his standpoint, everything is *as he thinks* — not as it *is*, but as he *thinks it is*. But if he begins to examine his *basis* he will find that his basis does not explain Nature, does not explain himself does not explain anything that goes on. Let it be suggested to him that God, in the language of Pythagoras, is the universal intelligence disseminated throughout the whole of Nature; and that intelligence, no matter how formed or informed, is *one*, just as matter is one, no matter how many forms there may be const of matter or how these forms may differ among themselves. Matter is one, intelligence is one. Given these propositions as a suggestion to explain why it is that, in spite of disorder, there is order in Nature, he can then go to work and think for himself, and thinking for oneself on the Theosophical basis means turning the power of sight inward, instead of outward.

The teaching is that, whenever the power of sight, of thinking — thinking

sight — is turned inward, then the conjunction or reunion between Manas and Buddhi takes place *while one is awake and alive* — the conjunction which, in the ordinary man, takes only during deep sleep or at death. The moment there is a conjunction between Manas in the body and Buddhi outside of the body or beyond the body, that moment there is direct perception, and then the man sees and knows for himself.

Question: — On p. 90 (2nd Indian ed.) (p. 85 Am. Ed.) it speaks of "these lower egos" in connection with savagery and the fall and rise of nations. One would infer from this that there was a *difference* in Egos. In addition to the acquirements of Manasic action, is there a fundamental difference between Egos?

Answer: — On the plane of Spirit there are no distinctions at all. If there were distinctions, it would not be the plane of unity; rather, there are distinctions without differences. Now the question of lower Egos and higher Egos, when we come to look at it, is not really a consideration of *Egos* — it is a consideration of *environments*. We find certain Egos in ideal environments, whether physically, mentally, morally, or spiritually. Then we find other egos in the worst of environments, physically, socially, financially, mentally, morally and what not. Those who are in the worst environments we speak of as "lower" Egos; those who are in the finer environments we speak of as "higher" Egos; but we can all see that this is only an analogical way of speaking and that the terms are purely relative.

The Aphorisms on Karma warn us against passing judgment on the status or occult nature of any Ego because of the environment in which we see him placed. If there had been those to see Abraham Lincoln when he was 19 years old trying

to get a log-raft down the river in Illinois, they would have regarded him as a lower — grade Ego; but if they had seen that same man 25 years afterwards, they would have seen the saviour of his country. If there had been those to see Jesus of Nazareth learning to drive a copper nail and to split a board with an adze — there were no saws in those days — they might have thought he was a low-grade carpenter; but, in fact, he was the Christian Saviour.

So the Aphorisms tell us we cannot judge from externalities, that is, from the environment; that Egos of the loftiest character, we may say, incarnate in the very worst of environments for the sake of the good they can do in that environment, or for the sake of soul discipline, to undo some ancient wrong which they perceive is still undone, to adjust some Karmic relation.

When we speak of lower- and higher-grade Egos, don't you think we ought to carry- in our minds the idea of *character*? An Adept is said to be a lower-grade Ego than a Mahatma, and a Mahatma of this Manvantara is a lower-grade Ego than the Mahatma of the next great Manvantara, but this is a relative use of terms and largely analogical. Practically always, low-grade and high-grade refer to *the intelligence the Ego is able to bring to bear here*.

How often have we heard it said that every man — and that includes the low-grade Ego as well as the high-grade one — is in fact a god; that is, a purely spiritual being, and, in fact, *spirit*! Every man is a god who has descended into matter, and while in matter he experiences the qualities, good, bad and indifferent, that proceed from his contact with it — until what? Until he is able to understand the nature of matter and to deal with it according to its nature; that is intelligence.

If we consider it from that standpoint, all of us can see how enormously intelligence varies amongst men. But, lest we err too much in the idea of conditions, we have but to consider any given man — Lincoln, for example. Look at him in the cradle; look at him when 10 years old; look at him when he is 50. It seems like three different beings, one of them apparently a helpless congenital idiot — the child in the cradle; another, a very low-grade Ego indeed — the child of 10; and the last, perhaps a Christ — Lincoln at 50. Yet it is the same Ego all the way through; in the earlier phases he has not yet come into proper relation with the environment. If you heard Paganini tuning his violin you would think he was trying to produce discord; but after he gets the strings tightened, and gets the resin on them, then and then only — *after he has tuned up* — can we tell whether it is Paganini or the next-door neighbour's son!

Question: — It is said that the Red Indians are in incarnation again. Are we to assume that the pioneers of that time are also in incarnation?

Answer: — Probably there are some. Remember that the Indian's idea of heaven wasn't very wide; how could it be? Handicapped as he was by his body and with his brain, his intellectual range was small, and upon the instrument in use depends the range of a man's intelligence. So, although his heaven might be a vivid one while it lasted, it wouldn't last very long. We shouldn't think of the Indians' having a 1,500 — year Devachan, for instance. There are two classes of beings who have very-short Devachans: the first includes not merely people like savages and materialists but also the wicked the second are the wise. The wickeder a man is, the more quickly he reincarnates; and the wiser a man is, the more quickly he reincarnates.

Question: — How about white people reincarnating in Indian bodies?

Answer: — That has often happened and happens today. But if you want to look for reincarnating former white folk, look for them in Negro bodies; there are plenty of them.

Question: — Although the piano is practically a new instrument as time goes, here is Blind Tom (pp. 91—2) (p. 86 Am. Ed.), a boy of 10, who has the mechanical agility and skill to play on those keys. This takes a lot of technique and skill. Where did he get that?

Answer: — Well, it happens that I can tell a little story about Blind Tom. In my boyhood I knew a Virginia lawyer, then a man of 50 or more, who was very highly educated. He had a wonderful voice for singing and was himself an expert on the piano. As a boy he had been brought up next to the family that owned Blind Tom, and he was present at luncheon that day when Blind Tom first played the piano. This man said that no genius that he had ever heard — and he had heard all of the great pianists — could hold a candle to Blind Tom. Now, whether he spoke truly or not — we must use our own judgment to believe or to reject — what this gentleman said corresponds with all the known facts in regard to Blind Tom.

On pp. 241-2 in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. discusses the threefold nature of man. There is, first, the Spiritual Monad or duad — *Atma-Buddhi*. Then there is the purely animal Monad, the three lower principles. But unless there is the connecting link of the two middle principles — *Manas* and *Kama* — there is no contact between the Spiritual Ego (Atma-Buddhi) and the physical or animal Ego (the so-called mindless man). Trying to drive that home to us, that it is the union of these three

selves — the Spiritual Self, the intellectual self, and the animal self — that makes the man, H.P.B. uses almost this identical language: graft the Spiritual Monad of a Newton (now, we have to remember that when she wrote that, Newton was dead, so she means graft the *discarnate* Spiritual Monad of a Newton) on the Monad of the greatest saint on earth, and without these two middle principles, you have nothing but a soulless, conscienceless idiot.

Remember that Blind Tom was just a little boy when his genius was first noticed. We may infer that he had had no prior education whatever, either in this or in former incarnations as a musician (obviously, he did not have the technical experience required to play complicated piano scores, because the piano at that time had been hardly 50 years in the world — there were no pianos before about the beginning of the 19th century). Might not this boy, looking at it from above downward, be an Ego just the same as Newton or the greatest saint on earth, or you or I; or, looking at it from below upward, he might have been nearly a mindless man, that is, lacking Higher Manas — as nearly a mindless man as we can conceive. Now, suppose that he had an enormous, an overmastering, an overwhelming love for harmony, for music, for happiness, for peace: the more he was oppressed by his surroundings, would he not the more turn within himself for the harmony and the sounds? We have all heard the story about mice coming out of their holes to listen to a violin, and how certain Hindu yogis can charm the cobras and the wild beasts by the magic of sound — establishing some kind of rapport.

Curiously enough, at the time the famous “discovery of Blind Tom was made, Jenny Lind was in this country — the greatest singer the world knew anything about — and, accompanying her, one of the greatest performers on the

piano. Everybody was thinking about them, talking about them; here was an atmosphere, a stage setting. Why might not the love of this little boy for music have put him en rapport with the consciousness of this very musician who played with Jenny Lind, or some other great composer or musician, so that by purely psychic sympathy he became nothing but an instrumentality — the same as the piano itself — for a form of the action of consciousness that we are altogether unfamiliar with?

Think of *our* situation, whether we are a wise person or a dull person, an old person or a child, when someone whom we greatly love, in whom we have found bliss, happiness, has left this plane. Is it outside the realm of Theosophy that our love for that person can be so great that in the hours of sleep — which only means in those hours when we are not disturbed by the lower principles — we catch the thought, the feeling, the will of that one whom we love, no matter how great a being he might be, so that for the time being we *become* that person, and his powers are our powers? That is a form of psychic consciousness, but it is the *higher* psychism.

H.P.B. speaks of this same thing herself, although not in relation to Blind Tom. She wrote an article originally published in *Lucifer* and republished in the Magazine *Theosophy*. It is entitled “Genius,” and she goes ahead to take the pride out of what are commonly called geniuses, as well as taking the vanity out of Blind Tom, we may think. She said that every Spiritual Ego is identical with every other Spiritual Ego; there are no “high” Spiritual Egos and no “low” Spiritual Egos. That is something for us to think about. She says that the whole story, then, of the differences between Egos as we meet them and see them does not lie in the Ego at all — it lies in the instrument acquired. Now in *Theosophy*

(Vol. XXXI p.56) is this commentary that has just barely been scratched. If you would like to follow up the subject, there are two other articles in the Magazine *Theosophy* one, written by H.P.B, called “Premature and Phenomenal Growths,” which applies in a far wider range than mere words. You will find that in Vol. V, p. 325. Some years ago, another article was published in *Theosophy* called “Child Prodigies,” and it gave quite at length some illustrations of things that are inexplicable from the standpoint of our human knowledge. That article is in Vol. XXI, p. 258.

We can all do some more thinking on the subject. For example, think, if we could get in that kind of *rapport* with the Masters of Wisdom that Blind Tom had with the musical sphere, what couldn't we do? Just through his love of music, of the magic of sounds, he was able to bless himself, to make a heaven for himself — poor little slave boy that he was — that his owners knew nothing of. And he was able to make a heaven for others.

Suppose our love for humanity, for our fellow beings, was as intense as little Blind Tom's love of music. Wouldn't the intensity of that love of ours for our fellow men — who are the object of the devotion of the Masters of Wisdom — wouldn't that bring us into such a synchronism of thought, will and feeling (call it “soul vibration,” if you want to) that the very harmony, the very knowledge, the very power, the very nature of those Masters of Wisdom, would enter into us just as the power of music entered into this poor boy?

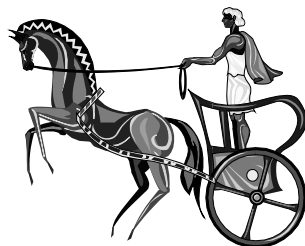
These are the things — not merely the phenomenal aspects of “genius” — that such a subject as this could lead us to think about.

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(Blind Tom) Bethune, Thomas, a musical freak born about the middle of the 19th century; d. Hoboken, N. J., 13 June 1908. He was a Negro slave in Georgia and was born blind and with very weak mental development. He showed remarkable aptitude for music and after hearing a piece played once could reproduce it accurately on the piano. He also performed other musical wonders, and for several years was exhibited in various cities. After playing he would generally spring up and applaud himself. He reappeared on the stage in 1905 but being difficult to manage he was soon withdrawn. His lack of intellect developed into almost brutal idiocy. (From The Encyclopedia Americana)

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[TO BE CONTINUED]



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DNYANESHVARI

XLIII

[The *Dnyaneshvari* is mentioned many times by Madame Blavatsky, always in glowing terms. The following rendition is extracted from Manu Subedar’s translation. The great Sage, Dnaneshwara Maharaj sang this work to his people when he was quite young. He did it in their native language, Marathi, about 700 years ago. It is his commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*.]

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Arjuna says to Shri Krishna: I will now tell the characteristics of ‘purity.’ He who has purity appears to be white and transparent inside and outside like camphor, or translucent like a gem within and without, or like the sun full of light inside and outside. He has purified himself by appropriate actions outside and by the light of wisdom inside. One uses the intelligence to remove the dust from a mirror. The washerman gives clean wash to all the clothes given to him. So the man

of wisdom keeps his body clean and lights up the inside by means of wisdom. If the inside is not purified, there are difficulties in outer actions. If a dead body was decorated with ornaments or a donkey was given a bath in a holy place, or if molasses were put on a bitter pumpkin, if an empty house was decorated or food was tied over the body of a hungry person, the result would be the same as apparently pure actions by a man with an impure mind. The domes of a temple are only hollow globes shining outside. An imitation fruit has color outside but cow dung inside. The outward action has no value. A sealed bottle full of spirits, if immersed in the Ganges, would still remain a bottle of spirits. **Therefore, there should be knowledge from within, and once this is attained outside purity will come of itself.** The difference between conduct and convictions can only pass away with an effort when there is a uniform cleanliness both inside and outside. Good thoughts within shine outside just as light comes out of a glass window. Just as the sky is undisturbed by the color of the clouds, so is the man of purity untouched by things that create doubt or that shake faith, or that are calculated to generate evil deeds. On seeing any of these objects of enjoyment or hearing about them, no effect is produced on his mind. Though he allows his senses to function, his mind is untouched and these acts do not create bond for him. Just as the mind of a well bred man has no feelings, when he passes on the street either a chaste woman or a lewd woman, so does the man of purity live in this world, untouched. Just as a woman embraces both the husband and the son, when embracing the son, no desires of any kind cross her mind. So is the mind of the man of knowledge pure, recognizing in advance good and bad things and, therefore, having neither doubts nor hopes with regard to them. Just as a diamond

cannot be melted, nor sand be cooked by water, so his mentality is unaffected by any wrong thoughts. This is the characteristic of the state of purity. Where you witness this, recognize the existence of knowledge (Dnyana).

I will now tell you the characteristics of 'stability' (Dhairya). He, in whose heart there is stability, has complete mental equanimity in spite of the body going out of its natural functions. Just as the cow always thinks of the calf and the miser of his hoard, so is the man of stability constant in his goal. He is like the sky, which is stable, though the clouds are moving about, or the polestar, which remains in its place while the firmament moves. He is like the road that remains in its place while travelers and vehicles move on. He is like the tree that does not shift its position once it has grown. Therefore, though the body is functioning, his mind is not overcome by any attraction of the senses. Neither poverty nor trouble cause any worry to him. Neither fear nor sorrow makes him tremble. He is not afraid even when faced with death. His mind does not wander even when caught in the coils of desire and hope or the weakness of age and illness. Insult, punishment, the prowess of desire and greed do not affect his mind. If the sky were to fall, if the earth were to melt away, the tendency of his mind would still be the same. Harsh words are to him a matter of such indifference as the beating by means of flowers would be to an elephant. Just as the storm in the sea does not make the mountain quiver, nor does the fire of the forest burn down the sky, so the waves of passion, as they pass and repass, cause no excitement to him. Even if the world were coming to an end, his stability could not be shaken. Where you find this quality in this form, know that wisdom of Brahman resides.

I will now tell you the characteristics of 'self control' (Atma- Nigraha). The man who has self control prevents his mind from waiting outside the doors of the senses and is always watchful of it, in the same manner as a ghost haunts a house, or the warrior holds on to his weapons and the miser thinks of his hoard, or a mother devotes herself to her child, or the bee seeks honey. He is very watchful, lest this conquest of his should be heard of by the demon passion or by the witch of hope. He keeps his senses back from activities of enjoyment in the same manner as a powerful husband prevents his erring wife from going outside. All through life, he controls the senses and lives as if he were disinterested. He establishes two guards night and day on the temple of Pratyahara at the gate of the mind. He keeps the intelligence firmly in Sushumna between Ida and Pingala after firmly closing the three, that is Mula, Oddian and Jalandhar. He assiduously tries to have his intelligence merge in the Oversoul (Chaitanya) by tying up meditation to the bed of Samadhi. Such a condition of the mind is called self-control. The victory of wisdom (Dnyana) is in this place. Every command of the man of wisdom (Dnyana) is implicitly obeyed by the heart.

The feeling of renunciation towards the senses is constant in the man of wisdom. He does not even like to talk about objects of senses and his senses do not turn to these objects in the same manner, as the tongue would not be attracted towards vomited food, a man would not seek to embrace a dead body, no one would like to eat poison or to enter a house on fire or to live in a tiger's den, or to jump in the furnace of iron, or to use a coiled-up serpent as a pillar. The mind may be dull and the heart may be weakened, but his heart would control his senses. He is always devoted to ascetic

austerities and avoids entering populous places. The practice of Yoga is his constant occupation. He seeks deserted areas and cannot bear a crowd. Worldly enjoyments appear to him like a bed of arrows or like rolling in putrid matter. Even the enjoyment of heaven appears to him like the bone of a dead dog. Such turning away from the senses is an index of the attainment of knowledge, which secures the bliss of Brahman. Where you find a man shunning enjoyments either of this or of the other world, know him to be a storehouse of Dnyana (wisdom).

Now hear something about 'humility' (Anahankar). While performing sacrifices and all meritorious actions, the man of wisdom does not allow any pride for this performance to enter his body. He does not miss any duty appropriate to his station or his daily prayers, but he never thinks in his mind that he has done a particular thing or succeeded in a particular direction. He moves without pride in the same manner as the wind blows or the sun rises. His actions are natural like the directions of the Shastras or like the flow of the Ganges. His attitude is always without desire of fruits, like trees that bare fruits at the appropriate moment but are not conscious of them. Pride from his mind, his actions, and his speech goes out on the withdrawal of egoism, just as jewels drop out when the thread is withdrawn. Actions in him are like the clouds in the sky, unrelated to the sky. Humility is that in which there is not even the consciousness of self, just as a besotted person forgets his clothes, a painted picture cannot wield weapons or the bullock is unconscious of the learning in the books in which he is carrying. Where you find these characteristics, wisdom may be inside.

The man of wisdom never forgets the troubles of rebirth such as birth, death, old age, illness and other misery. He anticipates them while they are yet at a distance (in the next birth), just as the witch doctor with evil spirits or the seeker after Yoga deals with the sources of disturbance, or a mason marks out the distances by means of implements. Just as a snake cannot cease to be poisonous, so he never forgets the sins of birth and death in order to avoid them in the future. He dwells on the troubles of life constantly just as one cannot forget the speck of dust that has entered the eye, or the bit of steel that has remained inside the wound. He remembers the travails of birth and of early life and wants to avoid being born. In the same manner as a gambler who seeks his revenge uses precaution, or a son watches out for a chance to punish his father, with the same zeal he pursues activities that will eliminate rebirth. The shame of rebirth he regards with the same annoyance as a genteel person regards an affront. He realizes that death is a certainty and is ahead of him. Just as the swimmer holds on to the body he carries for crossing the river, however deep it may be, or a warrior dons his armour for entering battle, or a traveller watches out for trouble when passing through dangerous territory, or a man seeks medicine before illness kills, the man of wisdom never abandons the pursuit that eliminates rebirth, being watchful of death.

It is not possible to dig a well when the house has taken fire. The stone on being thrown into the pool must sink to the bottom, even though it will make a splash and noise in doing so. A man who has quarreled with authority must remain fully armed night and day. The bride is decorated for being given away. So the sage contemplates his death before it actually comes. He wards off rebirth in

this very birth. He overcomes death by dying and by retaining nothing but the Self. When the pain of death has been eliminated, the gates of all knowledge have been opened. He knows youth to be evanescent. He knows that hands and feet will come down like enterprises of the unfortunate and his strength will be as futile as of a king who has no councilors. He knows that his nose will be a useless as the knee of the camel. His head will be in old age like the decayed hoof of an ox, or like an overripe vegetable. His eyes will be without luster, however attractive they may be now. The eyebrows will overhang like the dry pieces of bark of trees and the flow of tears will cover up the chest. Saliva will come out in the mouth uncontrolled in the same manner as the Aksheya trees are covered up with gum by the chameleons. The same miserable condition will be of the nostrils. As for the lips, which are dyed red by the betel leaves and which display the teeth and emit fine speeches, they will be covered up by phlegm and the teeth will be destroyed. As agriculture is destroyed by indebtedness and cattle cannot move in heavy rains, so will the tongue be unable to function. Like straw being blown hither and thither by the wind, the beard will get into the mouth. The body may be covered up by holes. Speech will be paralyzed, ears deafened and one would have the appearance of an old monkey. Like a scarecrow trembling in the wind, the body would shake through palsy. Cramps might take hold of the feet. Arms might twist in spasms and all movements will appear like antics. One would become an object of contempt from people all round. The delay of death might occur. His relatives might be disgusted with him. Women might be angry with him and the children will ridicule him. He would be an object of loathing. His illness would be a source of trouble to people all round. The man of

wisdom foresees all these things in his youth and never forgets them. The constant memory makes him realize that enjoyments must disappear, leaving behind them nothing. Eyes, ears, hands and feet should, therefore, be used for attaining what is worth attaining before they become useless. Let the tongue utter true things before it ceases to function. Let the hands help others before they are paralyzed. Let the mind, before it loses its balance, concentrate on the pure knowledge of Self.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



IAMBlichus: A TREATISE ON THE MYSTERIES.

TRANSLATION, BY PROFESSOR
ALEXANDER WILDER, F.T.S.

PART IV

[Continued from Vol. IV, #9 Supplement.]



CHAPTER V

THE SUPERIOR RACES AND THEIR MANIFESTATIONS

DEMONS AND HALF-GODS DIVERSE IN ESSENCE

This it now becomes necessary to describe to thee: “in what a demon differs from a hero or half-god and a soul, whether in, essence, in power, or in energy.”

I say accordingly, that demons are produced by the generative and creative powers of the gods, in the furthest

extreme of emanation and the last divisions: but that the heroes or half-gods have their origin by the forces of life in the gods; and that the superior and highest in rank of the souls are brought to completeness and distinguished from these forces.

The nature of the demons and half-gods being thus derived from different sources, their essence is of necessity different. Thus that of the demons is effective of purposes, bringing to maturity the natures about the world, and exercising guardianship individually over those coming into existence.¹ That of the heroes is life-sustaining, promotive of the reasoning faculty, and directive of souls.

The powers likewise may be defined accordingly. Those of the demons pertain to coming into existence and also to the oversight of the souls and of the connection of the souls with the bodies. It is also proper to assign to the heroes powers life-impacting, directive of human beings, and setting free from the nativity.²

THE ENERGIES

¹ PLATO — *Republic*, X, Ch. 15. "This is the beginning of another period for men of mortal race. The demon will not receive you as having been allotted to him, but you will choose the demon; the cause is in him who makes the choice."

² "Setting free from the nativity" — an important statement as indicating that portion of Manas not ruled by the stars. In the words of *The Secret Doctrine*: "Every star has its genii, good and evil by nature, or rather by their operation, for operation is the essence of the genii. . . . All these Genii preside over mundane affairs, they shake and overthrow the constitution of States and of individuals; they imprint their likeness on our Souls, they are present in our nerves, our marrow, our veins, our arteries, and our very brain-substance . . . They permeate by the body two parts of the Soul, that it may receive from each the impress of his own energy. But the reasonable part of the Soul is not subject to the genii; it is designed for the reception of (the) God, who enlightens it with a sunny ray. Those who are thus illumined are few in number, and from them the genii abstain." (Vol. I, p. 294-95) — Ed., AT

It follows now that their energies should be explained. Those of the demons may be described as being employed around the world and as extending generally among the things accomplished by themselves; but those of the heroes not only as not extending so far, but as being engaged with the distribution of the souls. So, therefore these being explained, the Soul is next, and ranks as the end of the series of divine beings. Having received from these two races a specific allotment of powers, it both augments the apportionment by other more abundant additions from itself, and likewise projects from itself at one time various forms and principles of life which are entirely different, and at another time still others. Thus making use of different lives and ideals according to each region of the world, it is united with those that it likes, and draws away from those from which it may wish to be separate, becoming assimilated to all, and separated from them by otherness. In this way, choosing principles akin both to the things that are sempersistent and to those that come into existence in time, it allies itself to the gods by harmonies of essence and power other than those by which the demons and half-gods are likewise entwined with them. Though possessing in a less degree than they the everlasting condition of similar life and energy, nevertheless, through the good will of the gods and the luminance imparted by their light, it often goes higher and is exalted to a higher rank, even to that of angels. It, then, remains no longer in the limitations of the psychical³ condition, but is developed completely through its whole substance into an angelic soul and an

³ The original has "Psychal." Perhaps the translator meant to convey *Psyche* as an abstract more inclusive essence than "Psychical" is generally considered. Kama Manas, when purified has a wide range and can reunite with its "parent," much Abammon's following comments indicate. — Ed. A.T.

uncontaminate life Hence, manifestly, the Soul seems to contain in itself manifold essences, different rational qualities, and all manner of idealities. If, however, we must speak the honest truth, the contingency exists, that it is always limited in reference to one particular thing; yet being in communication with the Causes it is at different times allied to different ones.

So great, therefore, being the differences among them in all these respects, it is no longer worth while to dispute in regard to the particular thing which is the cause of difference among them. Whatsoever nature they every one have, by that they are to be distinguished from the others. So far also, as they form one common society, to such an extent their common quality may be contemplated; for in this way it will be possible to comprehend without mistake, and to define distinctly the view to be entertained of the whole subject.

EPIPHANIES OR "APPARITIONS"

Let us now proceed to the Epiphanies or apparitions (which are seen at the Initiations). What is the difference in them? For thou puttest the question: "What is the token (at the Sacred Rites) of the presence of a god, an angel or an arch-angel, or a demon, or of some archon, or a soul?"¹

¹ Scutellius enumerates nine classes of spiritual beings, namely:

1. Invisible Gods;
2. Visible Gods of the Sky;
3. Archangels;
4. Angels;
5. Demons;
6. Leaders;
7. Princes;
8. Heroes or Demi-gods;
9. Souls.

Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians enumerates the following:

1. Princes;
2. Authorities;
3. Kosmocrates or princes of the Cosmos;

I will, therefore, in a single statement lay down the proposition that the apparitions are in accord with their essences, powers and energies. For such as they are as such do they manifest themselves to those who are making the invocations; and they not only exhibit energies and forms which are characteristic of themselves, but they likewise display their own particular tokens. In order, however, to draw the distinctions minutely, this is the explanation: The spectral forms of the gods are uniform; those of the demons are diversified; those of the angels are more simple in appearance than those belonging to the demons, but inferior to those of the gods; those of the archangels approach nearer to the divine Causes; those of the archons — if those that have charge of the sublunary elements seem to thee to be the lords of the world² — will be diversified but arranged in proper order; but if they are princes of the region of Matter, they will not only be more diversified but much more imperfect than the others ; and those of the souls will appear in every kind of style.

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4. Spiritual essences in the super-celestial spheres.

Damascius enumerates six orders in the Chaldæan Categories, as follows:

1. Gods that are purely mind;
2. The Gods subsisting before all subordinate dominion;
3. Rulers;
4. Archangels;
5. Divinities that are confined to no specific place or service;
6. Divinities or geniuses with specific duties.
— A.W.

² These, the Kosmokrators, are supposed by Thomas Taylor to be the rulers of the planets. The Assyrians and Chaldæans enumerated, nine distinct orders — three Triads of three classes each. The Archangels correspond to the seven Amshaspands of the Zoroastrian category; and the archons of the sphere of Matter appear to have been often regarded as evil potencies. The ancients, however, did not always distinguish good and evil quite as the moderns with their ethical standards. — A.W.

In the (Epoptic) Vision the figures of the gods shine brilliantly;¹ those of the archangels are awe inspiring and yet gentle; those of the angels are milder; those of the demons are alarming. Those of the half-gods, although these are left out in your question, yet there should be an answer for the sake of the truth because they are more gentle than those of the demons. Those of the archons are terrifying to the Beholders,² if they are the archons of the universe; and hurtful and distressing, if they are of the realm of Matter. The figures of the Souls are similar to those of the half-gods except that they are inferior to them.

Moreover, the figures of the gods in regard to size, aspect, external appearance and everything around them, are absolutely unchangeable. Those of the archangels are very near to those of the gods in these respects, but come short of being actually the same. Those of the angels are inferior to these, but are unchangeable. Those of the demons are seen in different shapes and appear great and small at different times; but the manifestations are the same. Those of the archons who are rulers are unchangeable, but the apparitions of those that belong to the realm of Matter are apt to change into innumerable forms. Those of the half-gods are like those of the demons, and those of the souls conform in no small degree to changeableness, peculiar to the demons.

¹ Proclus following Iamblichus gives this description: "In all the Perfective Rites and Mysteries, the gods project many shapes of themselves, and display many changing figures; there will be a formless luminance radiating from them; then again it will be represented in a human form, and again it will go into some different shape." Some of the figures were empousæ and not gods, and excited alarm; others were attractive, and others encouraged. — A.W.

² The "Beholders," *epoptæ* or seers, were the individuals engaged in being initiated, or "perfected." We have preserved this term uniformly to avoid confusing readers. — A.W.

Further still, to the gods there pertain order and tranquillity; and with the figures of the archangels there exists a dramatic representation of order and quietude. With the angels there is present the disposition for order and peacefulness, but they are not free from motion. The figures of the demons are accompanied by tumult and disorder. With those of the archons there are objects to be seen analogous to each class which we have already mentioned: those of the realm of Matter being borne along tumultuously. Those of the half-gods are constantly in motion and are never exempt from change, and those of the Souls resemble the figures of half-gods, but at the same time are inferior to them.

With these peculiarities there flashes out from the gods Beauty which seems inconceivable, holding the Beholders fixed with wonder, imparting to them an unutterable gladness, displaying itself to view with ineffable symmetry, and carrying off the palm from other forms of comeliness. The glorious views of the archangels have themselves very great beauty, but it is by no means ineffable and admirable as that of the gods. Those of the angels partake in a degree of the beauty which they receive from the archangels.

The spirits at the Autopsia, the demons and half-gods,³ both of them

³ The Greek term "autoptic spirits," meaning those which appear at the "Autopsia," or Perfective Rite. Mr. Robert Brown, Jr., ably describes it. The candidates, or Beholders, having passed the preliminary discipline as *Mystæ*, are ushered into the *Sekos*, or chamber of Initiation. "Here, deeply excited and agitated by all they have gone through, ready to believe anything and everything, in that state of abstinence, which is, or is supposed to be, most favorable to the reception of supernatural displays, with their minds more or less affected by drugs and their whole being permeated with the impression and expectation of a revelation of the more than mortal, they were allowed to see. This is the Autopsia, or Personal inspection, the Crown of Mysteries, the *Etopteia*111, or Divine Beholding, which was used as a synonym to express the highest earthly

possess beauty in defined forms; but that of the demons is set forth in ways that make their essence distinct, and that of the half-gods displays a manlike character. The figures of the archons are classified by the twofold distinction. For those of the one class display a beauty predominant and self-originated; and those of the other class exhibit an ingenious mock-representation of a beautiful shape. The figures of the souls are themselves arranged in definite forms, but these are more diverse than is the case with the half-gods, being more particularly circumscribed and controlled by a single ideal.

If, however, it is necessary in regard to them all that they shall be defined by a common rule, I say that as every one of them all is constituted, and as it has its own peculiar nature, even so do they all participate of the Absolute Beauty according to the existing allotment.

MANIFESTATIONS AT THE RITES

Proceeding therefore to other peculiarities of the superior races, we will remark that in the Sacred Performances there is with the gods an incredible celerity, and although they themselves are immutable and steadfast, they shine out swifter than mind itself. But with the archangels the swift movements are commingled in some way with the dramatic performances. Those of the angels, however, are connected with a certain moving impulse and take part no further in a similar manner in the Perfective Rite¹ by way of speaking.

happiness, and he who enjoyed it became an Epoptes, or Contemplator, beyond which this world could afford him nothing." — *Great Dionysiac Myth*, VI, ii, 3. Compare also *epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, XII, 2-4. — A.W.

¹ Greek, *τὸ ἀποτελεσματικόν*, το *apotelestikon*, perfective rite. The Romans termed the ceremonies "Initiations," as signifying the beginning of a new life, while the Greeks regarded

With the demons there is a show of rapidness in the Performances which is more than genuine. But with the figures of the half-gods, there appears a certain grandness in the motions; nevertheless it is not possible to effect these things, which they desire at the Perfective Rite as quickly as it is for the demons. In the case of those of the archons, those of the former class possessing authority, exhibit performances that appear highly creditable; and those of the second class have more display, but fall short in regard to results at the end. The figures of the souls are seen to be incessantly in motion, but feebler than in the case of those of the half-gods.

In addition to these points, the magnitude of the apparitions may be considered. In the case of the gods it is displayed to such a degree as sometimes to hide from view the entire sky, the sun and the moon, and likewise to make it no longer possible for the earth to stand firm while they are making their descent.²

When archangels appear, there are certain regions of the world set in motion, and a divided luminance goes in advance before them. But they themselves according to the magnitude of their dominion display also light in

it as denoting a completing of the Herculean labors of the Soul. The services were conducted after the form of a dramatic representation, and Clement styled them accordingly, "the Drama of the Mysteries." The ancient Theatre took its rise from these rites, as the Modern Theatre had its origin in the Mystery-Plays of the Monks in the Middle Ages. The Athenian Theatre was a Temple of Bacchus. — A.W.

² The Chaldæan Oracles describe these scenic displays in very similar terms:

"If thou invoked me often, thou wouldst behold what thou desirest:
For then the concave vault of heaven does not appear,
The stars shine not, the moonlight wastes away,
The earth no more stands still;
All things are to be seen by the flashes of the lightnings." — A.W.

correspondence with its dimension. The angelic luminosity is very much less, and is likewise greatly divided. In the case of the demons them-selves, it is still more diffused than with the angels, and their magnitude is observed to be not always equal. The manifestation of the half-gods is less than this, but it exhibits more of pride of condition. The figures of the archons that are rulers of pericosmic forms appear large and indeed of huge dimensions, but those that are distributed over the realm of Matter employ more ostentation and false pretending. Those of the souls do not all seem equal, and they appear smaller than the figures of the half-gods. In short, it is according to the magnitude of the powers in each of the Superior races, according to the vastness of the dominion through which they are extended and in which they exercise authority, and according to the due proportion itself, that the magnitude of the manifestations is graciously exhibited in every one of them.

After these explanations let us define the characteristics of these images thus individually manifest. In the autoptic visions of the gods, the most brilliant spectacles of reality it-self are to be beheld. They not only shine steadily but they are plainly visible as if in organic shapes. The images of the archangels present themselves to view genuine and perfect. Those of the angels preserve the form itself, but they come short in the completeness of distinctive tokens. Those of the demons are scarcely perceptible, and those of the half-gods are still inferior. Those of the cosmic archons are clear, and those of the archons of the realm of Matter are indistinct, but both classes seem to be exercising authority. Those of the souls appear like mere shadows.

In like manner, let us explain also, in regard to the luminosity. The images of the gods glow with abundance of light,

and those of the archangels are surpassingly luminous.¹ Those of the angels are resplendent with light, but the demons present the appearance of smouldering fire, and the half-gods a commingling from many sources. The cosmic archons are relatively more pure from such admixture, but those of the realm of Matter exhibit a mingling of dissimilar and incongruous elements. The Souls are more distinctly visible from many admixtures in the sphere of generated existence, the light being supplied only by partial gleams.

In the same manner we will speak further of the things which have been discussed. The Fire of the gods shines brilliantly an undivided flame without sound, and it fills all the depths of the world like a conflagration, but not after the manner of a worldly occurrence.² The fire of the archangel is unbroken, but there is to be seen around it a great mass going be-fore it or following after it. The fire of the angels is disjoined, yet it appears in very perfect forms. That of the demons is not only circumscribed into still briefer dimensions, and may be explained in a word, but it is not worthy to be noticed by those who are contemplating spectacle of the superior beings. That of the half-gods contain after a manner the same peculiarities, but at the same time it falls short of an exact similarity to that of the demons. That of

¹ The Chaldæan Oracles disapprove of invoking these manifestations. "Thou shalt not invoke the Autoptic Image of Being, for it is not proper for thee to see these things before the body is perfected, or initiated." — A.W.

² The divine essence was anciently described in every religion as fire, and so the "eternal fire" was preserved in temples and on altars, as its symbol. Hence, the Chaldæan Oracle commands: "When thou shalt behold the Very Holy Fire without form, shining in flashes down into the depths of the world, then listen to the Voice of the Fire." Zoroaster at the Altar and Moses on Mount Sinai (Deuteronomy IV, 4) are de-scribed as hearing the Voice of the Supreme Being from such a source. — A.W.

the archons of the higher class is observed to be more glowing; but in the case of those belonging to the realm of Matter, it is darker. That of the Souls themselves exhibits many divisions and various forms mingled together from many of the natures around the world.

To repeat: The fire of the gods is always stable to the view. That of the archangels is mild; that of the angels is in constant motion; that of the demons is unstable; that of the heroes is for the most part in swift motion; that of the archons of the first class is mild, but that of those of the lower order is full of fluctuation. That of the souls changes with innumerable motions.

THE SUPERIOR RACES AND MATTER

Nevertheless, that which operates to purify the souls (from impurity incident in the realm of generated existence) is complete in the gods, but is simply of an exalting character in the archangels. The angels only loosen the bonds which fasten them to the sphere of matter. Demons draw them into the realm of nature,¹ and the half-gods bring them down into the province of the operations of the senses. The archons either entrust them with the charge of things pertaining to the cosmic world, or with the dominion of those belonging to the realm of matter, as the case may be. Souls, when they appear to the Beholders, attract in some manner downward to the sphere of generated existence.

And, further, this fact is to be kept in view: that every-thing of the visible likeness that is pure and stable thou shouldst attribute to the Superior Races.

¹ Minutius Felix remarks that "the demons bear downward by heavy weight, and turn from God to material conditions." The Ghaldean Oracle also says: "When bewitching (magnetizing) souls they always draw them away from the Sacred Rites." Much that is considered spiritual, and even divine influence, is of this character.

Whatever of them is very brilliant and firmly fixed in itself, ascribe to the gods. What-ever is luminous and nevertheless exists as by something else than itself, impute to the archangels; and whatever remains in a different form assign to the angels. Whatever is borne along as by a breeze and is not stably fixed, but is permeated by alien natures, all which is conformable to the inferior orders, is to be credited to some foreign source.

This classification, however, may also be made according to the difference of the commingling. For with the demons emanations from the planetary worlds are mingled and are borne along unsteadily by the motion of the astral world. With the half-gods, groups of spirits belonging to the department of generated life are again mixed up around which they are also themselves constantly in motion. The cosmic archons likewise remain exhibiting the cosmic character which they possess; but those archons that belong to the realm of matter are filled with exhalations of the material region. Souls are infected with extraordinary defilements and alien spirits. With these accompaniments each of these races exhibits itself at the epiphanies.

To thee it will be no unimportant evidence that on these occasions there is in the case of the gods a consuming of mat-ter all at once as by lightning. With the archangels it is destroyed in a short time. In the case of the angels there is a loosening and leading away from it. With the demons there is an arranging of it in an orderly manner. With the half-gods it is to be observed that they become adapted to it in due measures and give careful attention to it ingeniously. The archons that rule the planetary worlds are placed with it as though they were superior, and so shine forth as from themselves; but those of the realm of matter exhibit themselves as entirely filled up from matter. As for the souls, those also,

that are pure manifest themselves outside of matter, but those of the opposite character are encompassed by it.

BENEFITS DERIVED FROM INITIATION

Moreover, the benefits acquired from the manifestations, are neither all alike, nor do they have the same fruits.¹ The advent of the god imparts to us health of body, virtue of soul, purity of mind, and indeed, to speak to the point, the leading of everything in us upward to its own first principles. It not only takes away the cold and destructive quality in us, but it augments the vital warmth and makes it more potent and pre-dominant. It likewise brings everything into accord with the soul and mind. The light not only shines in the mental constitution, but it also exhibits that which is not body as body to the eyes of the soul through those of the body.

The coming of the archangels likewise brings the same benefits, but it does not give them at all times, nor to all persons, nor such as are sufficient, or complete, or that may not be taken away; nor does the light shine in a manner equal to what is beheld at the manifestations of the gods. The presence of the angels dispenses benefits as if making a distribution of them, and the energy through which it is manifested comes far short of including in itself a perfect light. That of the demons weighs down the body and chastens it with diseases, drags down the soul into the realm of nature, and also fails to remove from bodies the sensibility born with bodies, detains in this region those who were hastening toward the fire, and does not set free from the bonds of Fate. The appearing of the half-gods is similar in various respects to that of the demons, but it differs in this

¹ The Chaldean Oracles have this declaration: "From those descending from the Empyrean regions the soul obtains the soul-nourishing flower."

respect, that it arouses the individual to noble and important deeds. The display of the cosmic archons at the autopsia imparts advantages of a general character and everything pertaining to the business of life; and that of the archons of the realm of matter extends benefits incident to the sphere of matter, and such works as pertain to the earth. Still further, moreover, the Vision of the Souls that are uncontaminated and established in the order of angels is elevating in its influence and salutary to the soul. It likewise imparts a sacred hope and bestows those benefits to which a sacred hope aspires. But the Vision of Souls of a different quality produces a tendency downward into the sphere of generated existence, corrupts the fruits of hope, and fills the Beholders with Perturbations that nail them fast to corporeal conditions.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



Intuitive Decision-Making in an Age of Chaos

by Paul O'Brien

<http://www.alternativemagazine.com/10/obrien1.html>

"Chaos and uncertainty are market opportunities for the wise."—Tom Peters, Thriving on Chaos

We live and work in an age of uncertainty and chaos. As Alvin Toffler's seminal work *Future Shock* predicted in the early 1970s — and as subsequent events have confirmed — the pace of change is accelerating. Shifting conditions support myriad unforeseen opportunities. We are challenged to make decisions.

Decision-making is generally not fun, but it is arguably the single most important thing we do. A president resists terrorists; an investor decides to sell short. Making good, timely decisions is the

highest-leverage activity going. That's why leaders and executives are paid royal sums.

We've always known that the quality of our decisions determines our success in life. In recent times, the need for good decision-making has become crucial. Our media-bombarded brains are confronted with as many choices in a single year as our grandparents faced in decades. The Chinese curse "May you live in interesting times" has come true—with a vengeance.

Cope we must; prosper we can. Rapid change presents new choices and requires new responses. How can we make pivotal decisions more rapidly?

The Limits of Reason

"As soon as questions of will or decision or reason or choice of action arise, human science is at a loss." — Noam Chomsky, TV interview, 1978

Ever since the Age of Reason, the western world has glorified scientific rationalism, finding in it the solution to every problem. Data in, answers out. In our modern age, with instant access to virtually unlimited data, you'd expect that logical decision-making would have reached its apex.

Think again. When we weigh pros and cons, analyze statistics, apply probability theory, or toy with computer models, logical analysis is only as good as the quality of the information available. And there's the rub.

We've got too much information, and it's often impossible to differentiate the reliable from the bogus. Even the good stuff has a shorter shelf life; rapid change makes current information obsolete quickly. We could delay decision-making while awaiting more information (and all too often do); meanwhile, we miss new opportunities. How can we determine when to act—and which portions of

available information are true or meaningful? The answer is intuition.

Face it, good decision-making is more an art than a science. Having harnessed powerful computers—the ultimate models of left-brain processing — can we now humbly admit that our commitment to any given course of action is based largely on gut-feel? Can we accept and appreciate a system of thought that is non-scientific?

Beyond Reason's Realm

"[Intuition] does not denote something contrary to reason, but something outside the province of reason." — C. G. Jung: Psychological Types

If intuition is defined as something other than reason, little wonder that the concept is so grudgingly accepted in the modern age. Reason, after all, has supposedly reigned supreme since the Age of Enlightenment back in the 17th century. Rationalist Francis Bacon was quite clear: "Reason doth both buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things."

Yet even the most casual observer of history can bear witness to our species' sad legacy of attempts at pure reason. When we try by means of reason alone to divine the workings of the universe or to conduct relationships with one another, we falter. Are we then hapless captives of irrationality? Is all around us mere chaos, not subject to empirical examination and understanding?

Linearity, logic, and clarity of thought unquestionably play a significant role in the unfolding of nature's secrets. Experience suggests, however, that something else helps us make our discoveries — some faculty of knowing that takes place without the use of rational processes. Call it intuition.

Intuition exists outside the stream of ordinary consciousness. It may announce itself in many ways — as a vague hunch or as a fully developed idea. It may arrive as a mathematical equation, as an invention, or as a decision about the best path to take.

The question arises: Must we simply trust our gut feelings? Or can we find systematic ways to support or stimulate our intuitive function? Fortunately, a number of people — including prominent scientists and business leaders — have rediscovered ancient technologies for intuitive decision-making and creativity. Two such technologies are the ancient Chinese oracle known as the I Ching and the Tarot.

Oracle Systems & Decision-Making

Not only did the I Ching fascinate psychologist Carl Jung, it was also popular with his fellow scientists Werner Heisenberg and Albert Einstein. Heisenberg, discoverer of the Uncertainty Principle, even had the yin-yang symbol (representing the binary polarity of the I Ching's 64 patterns) added to his family's coat-of-arms.

A more recent example from the world of business is Paul Wenner, a successful entrepreneur with a cause. In 1985, he founded Gardenburger, Inc. to provide a healthy fast-food alternative. Much sweat equity and thousands of decisions later, Gardenburger rose to become the world's fastest growth stock in 1994. Paul is now a multimillionaire, author of a major book on vegetarianism and the booklet *Ten Secrets to Success*.

One of Wenner's secrets is the use of the I Ching—in the form of a software program appropriately named *Synchronicity* — to stimulate intuition and support critical decision-making. Wenner states that “the *Synchronicity* program played a major role in my company's success and growth.”

The Principle of Synchronicity

A certain curious principle that I have termed synchronicity, a concept that formulates a point of view diametrically opposed to that of causality . . . synchronicity takes the coincidence of events in space and time as meaning something more than mere chance, namely, a peculiar interdependence of objective events among themselves as well as with the subjective (psychic) states of the observer or observers. — Carl Jung

Over the past several decades, the perceived gap between the empirical and the mystical has been closing. Credit for bringing these two camps within hailing distance must go to the great German-born psychologist Carl Jung, who introduced the West to the idea of meaningful coincidence, or synchronicity.

Jung's work looms behind any exploration of intuition. Although today's Jungians may hesitate to follow the leader, Jung fearlessly explored the territory connecting scientific inquiry with spiritual experience. He emphasized the importance of symbolism, suggesting that symbols always point to a deeper truth, and counseling us to interpret our own unique sets of symbols.

In a 1952 monograph entitled “*Synchronicity, An Acausal Connecting Principle*,” Jung contrasted the western mind—influenced by early Greek philosophers who focused on details—with the eastern perspective, which views the detail as part of the whole. To Jung, the eastern approach leveraged a more contemplative approach, a more holistic viewpoint impossible for the unassisted intellect, prone as it is to tunnel vision. Jung pointed to a power of discernment that can take advantage of “the irrational functions of consciousness sensation and intuition.”

Herein lay Jung's enchantment with the I Ching: it codifies a method of grasping a situation not by components, but as a seamless whole. "There is no need of any criteria which imposes conditions and restricts the wholeness of the natural process. In the I Ching, the coins fall just as happens to suit them."

How can any sort of truth be divined from such an apparently happenstance methodology? Two Chinese sages, King Wen and the Duke of Chou, devised the I Ching some 4,000 years ago to strengthen the connection between the psychic and physical realms. Today, we approach the I Ching prepared to resonate inwardly with one of its sixty-four archetypal patterns—an ability we call intuition. As Jung put it, the I Ching oracle interprets an "inner unconscious knowledge that corresponds to the state of consciousness at the moment."

And so it is that an answer to a long-unsolved quandary seems to pop into our heads. So it is that events oozing with connective portent have no apparent causal relationship. Such moments are hardly random; something in the external world triggers our inner knowledge, and the two realities merge within the working intellect. The I Ching codifies this phenomenon, presenting an accessible system that can be used deliberately with surprising results.

An Intuitive Renaissance

The I Ching, since its revival in the 1960s, has been categorized as "New Age" in the popular media. It is, however, anything but new—having been used by emperors, sages, and ordinary people for thousands of years. Today, this oracle continues to be put to practical use by psychotherapists, physicists, and by enlightened yet practical individuals like Paul Wenner.

A general angst has settled over us in this Age of Chaos. Lacking the guidance of a trustworthy internal pilot, we founder in a bog of anxiety, confusion, mistrust, and indecision. No matter how adroit the voices of reason, they cannot seem to slake our thirst. Parched for guidance and wisdom, once again we turn to the I Ching—a powerful method with an ancient and honorable pedigree—for clarity of insight and intuitive decision-making.

[Alternatives Magazine, Summer 1999]
<http://www.alternativesmagazine.com/10/obrien1.html>

TRUE OCCULTISM OR THEOSOPHY

Know at once and remember always, that *true Occultism or Theosophy* is the "Great Renunciation of SELF," unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action. It is ALTRUISM, and it throws him who practices it out of calculation of the ranks of the living altogether. "Not for himself, but for the world, he lives," as soon as he has pledged himself to the work. Much is forgiven during the first years of probation. But, no sooner is he "accepted" than his personality must disappear, and he has to become *a mere beneficent force in Nature*. There are two poles for him after that, two paths, and no midward place of rest. He has either to ascend laboriously, step by step, often through numerous incarnations and *no Devachanic break*, the golden ladder leading to Mahatmaship (the *Arhat* or *Bodhisattva* condition), or — he will let himself slide down the ladder at the first false step, and roll down into *Dugpaship*. . . .

From "Occultism versus the Occult Arts" H. P. BLAVATSKY

The Inner Constitution of Man

[Abstract of a lecture delivered at Irving Hall, San Francisco, October 26th, 1891, which was printed in *The New Californian*, Vol. I, December 1891, pp. 207-213]

"We are such stuff as dreams are made of." —
Shakespeare.
 [The Tempest, Act IV, Sc. 1.]

"Have perseverance as one who doth for evermore endure, for thy shadows [personalities] live and vanish. That which in thee shall live forever, that which in thee knows, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life; it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike." — [Voice of the Silence, p. 31.]

It is of these "dreams" of which we are made, and of this man for whom "the hour will never strike" that I have to speak to you tonight. Or, in other words, of the inner constitution of man, divided in a seven-fold manner; called sometimes the seven-fold constitution of man. This seven-fold constitution is not confined, in our opinion, to man, but is shared with him by the whole of nature also. The consideration of this subject, therefore, properly demands that of the whole theosophical theory of evolution, so that tonight I cannot hope to go over it, but only that part of it which particularly relates to man.

In the theosophical theory, spirit and matter are co-existent, and co-eternal. There is no spirit without matter and, *vice versa*, there is no matter without spirit. These two are the manifestations of the One Absolute reality. That is to say, matter is at one pole of this reality and spirit at the other. In other words, spirit contains the plan, as it were, which it impresses upon matter, which receives this and carries out its evolution from the moment that manifestation begins. Therefore, this evolution is on all the seven planes. The word "plane" is used in Theosophy—and by many others before this—to indicate not only a place, but also a state or condition. For instance we have the plane of mind, of body, the spiritual,

and the physical planes. This does not mean that they are separated from each other like the compartments of a ship, or floors of a house. These planes are conditions, or states, of which one may interpenetrate the other, and evolution may be carried on to perfection so far as this relates to inner planes, such as those of man's septenary constitution. To illustrate: Consider the shadow from some object in an electric light, thrown in a certain direction. Another electric light may throw a beam at right angles to this black shadow. The shadow and the light thus cross each other, but they do not interfere. The shadow, when it strikes an object beyond, still envelopes it in darkness, although the electric light, has shone through its center. Thus the shadow and the bright light may exist at the place where they cross, independently, otherwise they would negative each other, and there would be a cessation of light or of shadow beyond the point where they met. Instead of this, both shadow and light will continue on to their respective destinations. This sufficiently illustrates my meaning, that the planes of evolution may proceed within each other, and yet not interfere, and it is not necessary that they be separated in any sense whatever. There are many illustrations which could be drawn from science. Mr. Tyndall substantiates this with respect to the colors of the solar spectrum. We know these are all in the solar light, unseen by us until they are separated by the prism. And so on, in almost every direction, are similar illustrations.

Evolution proceeds on seven planes throughout the manifested universe. Man, in this world, is the highest manifestation of this evolution, and therefore contains within himself its higher seven planes, which before his advent were not perceptible, although they existed always in the germ. Buddha declares that man is made up or formed from thought germs.

He is not alone in this assertion. Many philosophers since his time have said the same thing; that man is a thinker, and is made up of and the result of his thoughts. Western minds have become so accustomed to judging him by his mortal body, and to listen to theories which teach the conditions whereby mental states may be materially produced, that at last it has lost sight of man as a thinker at all, and cannot understand why he is made up of his thoughts. We admit that he has a body, and that this body is not thought, but declare that it is the result of his thoughts. The body, now used by all human beings, is the result of the thought of the human race in the past, which thought, at length enabled it to so mold matter as to furnish the body in which man, who is the thinker, really lives.

Man, the thinker, is not divided in this seven-fold way, but man consisting of body and other elements of his nature is so divided. This seven-fold division is not absent anywhere in nature. The seven days of a week is an instance. The layers of the skin are divided in a seven-fold way. In the growth of the child before birth, there are seven distinct divisions. In the progress and construction of the great works of man, there is even seen the seven-fold division. Of a great building, for example, the architect first formulates the plan. The materials existing in various states, represent a second stage; collecting them together after that, a third; united in the building, a fourth; decorating it, a fifth; furnishing it, a sixth; and its occupation by man, the seventh and last. And so it is with man. The ideal plan is laid down; the materials of which are scattered through space; these are collected; then built together in the various forms of nature, until that of man is reached.

The first division of man is body, composed of what is called matter, or atoms, held together in a definite form. Have you ever reflected that your body,

composed of matter, is made out of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, and therefore you have in you portions of the tiger and all ferocious beasts, as well as the gentle? You have also vegetable and mineral matter collected in your body, for this represents all that evolution on the physical plane has accomplished in the world. With the Evolutionists of today, we admit that at one time there was only a mass of fire mist, and, although our theory of evolution does do so, it is unnecessary to go beyond that for our present purpose. These say there was first this fire mist, which, by means of the processes of nature, began to revolve into a vortex, and so continued until it became sufficiently dense for a crust to form upon it. This kept growing thicker, until we have the world as it exists today, which finally, without any life or intelligence of its own, produced these. That is, from nothing came forth something. We admit with them that this process went on, but we assert that it was in accordance with the plan laid down by other human beings, who evolved it as the result of the experience of other lives on earths which they had passed through in the great wheel of eternity. But we say further, that [in] this fire mist, of the scientists, are beings, carrying the plan of evolution with them. They first put this matter through the mineral school, so to speak, residing within each particle, and continuing the process for millions and millions of years. When this had been sufficiently accomplished these beings then passed on; that is, pushed forward some of this matter into the vegetable kingdom. This process was carried on for uncountable years. Then this same collection of beings carried the evolution of atoms up into the animal kingdom, where we are now, as mere masses of flesh, not as human shapes. This process went on until the whole mass had received education in the animal kingdom.

The geological history of the world verifies these statements, excepting, of course, the presence of these egos. I admit that its links do not give us any proof of these beings, but I insist that a survey of the whole scheme demands their presence. In the early ages we find only forms of trees; later, we observe enormous, or mammoth, beasts. They have disappeared when the necessity for them passed. There isn't even a "missing link."

The anatomist of today insists that these were the forefathers of our animals; that such and such a huge beast is the original of such and such a smaller one. The process of perfecting that brought them to the stage where they now are was done by and through these beings. Are our bodies, then, the result of this evolution? If so, we are connected with all the lower kingdoms. Without life this body would be useless, and the Theosophic theory is that there is no spot in space where there is no life. We have been accustomed to talking about life as something belonging to material bodies, but as to the intervening space, we have generally thought of it as without life. It is undoubtedly true, I think, that in every point in space there is the same stream of life, in which all beings exist, and hence this Life Principle is the second division of the Theosophic classification of man's constitution.

Now, the question arises, what is life and what is death? Ordinarily, death is thought of as something that comes to all beings, without exception. Theosophy denies that there is such a thing as death at all. We don't say there is no death for this body. But we declare that what is called death is really life; is one of its phenomena. Man may be compared to an electric lamp, composed of carbon interposed at a break in the wire. The current, caused to flow through this wire, reaches the carbon, is resisted and broken until the carbon is exhausted. Man is a

carbon standing in a current of life, consisting of molecules united in such a manner that he is capable of living—burning — just so long. That is, carrying the theory into everyday life, he is capable of remaining active just so many hours, when he becomes fatigued because life is so strong he cannot longer resist it. In the morning he awakens, to once more renew the contest, and keeps on so doing from year to year, until life has grown too strong for him and he is compelled to give up the fight and abandon his home in the body. So that there is really no such thing as death, but only a change, an abandoning of the body. This, then, is the second division of man's nature; called in the Sanskrit philosophy, *Praia*, meaning breath, because it is said that man lives by means of breath. It is derived from the sun, which is the center of life or being for this globe.

The next division is the Astral body, called the Design body, or *Linga Sarira*, that on which the physical structure is built; a further materialization of the ideal plan which existed in the beginning of this evolution. Ages since, at the time animals were going through the evolution necessary to prepare the human form, only the Astral man existed. This Astral body was therefore first; before man existed in material form, and, I think, represents the time when according to the Christian Bible Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Paradise, for it was a state of paradise to have only an astral body at a time when a physical one would have compelled man to maintain a perpetual warfare against the monsters of prehistoric ages.

The Theosophical theory is that Adam was existing as an Astral Body, and having reached that point in evolution where matter could be built into this body he received a "coat of skin," or became a man of flesh and blood as he is today. I advert to this because it is from the sacred

book of the Christian, which has been reviled and scoffed at because it has never been explained except in its literal sense.

The Astral body is the shape of man's body, but contains in itself organs which connect the man inside the real figure with the outside organs; eyes, ears, nose, etc. Without the Astral body it would be impossible to account for the possession of senses which are not man's true outer senses. The somnambulist, for instance, walking with his eyes open sees nothing; is looking at you and cannot see you. Our explanation is, that the connection between himself in the Astral body and the outer organs is cut off. In hypnotism, any organ or organs may be so cut off while others remain active, thus accounting for many of its phenomena. The Astral body therefore is in reality more the man than the body, but is so connected with it that it is not able to act except in certain cases. "Mediums" are such instances. A medium is a hysterical, nervous person. We know that looking over mediumship we find them afflicted with something akin to this; catalepsy, for instance. The condition in which many curious things happen through mediums is this: The proper adjustment of all the functions, nervous, material, and mental, is really a condition of the Astral body, which is able sometimes to manifest itself. In our opinion, nearly all the phenomena of Spiritualism may be traced to the Astral body, are manipulations of it; and we know that when one goes to a medium he simply awakens her Astral body and receives from it his own thoughts in reply to his queries, and nothing more, except in some few rare cases.

The divorce between religion and science has been so great that the "Inner Man" has been forced to manifest improperly and out of place, in order to keep alive the evidence that there was such a body. Had science been united to and gone hand in hand with spiritual

philosophy, we would have had a uniform development. Since man's investigations have been curbed he has revolted within, and he has been manifesting this inner nature for the last forty years. The facts of Spiritualism are thus of use, but at the same time are dangerous. They bring back to the earth influences which ought not to return; pictures of old crimes which produce in men once more the desire to commit them.

We come next to the division of passions and desires, the basis of action from which men find their incentive to do both good and evil. When a man dies and is buried his kamic body is released. The life principle is also released from these atoms to go into others. Then the kamic body, with all the passions and desires is set free. We will suppose the case of a suicide. His kamic body escapes full of the idea of suicide. Similarly, the man who has indulged in drinking and all sorts of sensualities, goes out full of these things. A murderer who is hung is in the same condition. Guiteau would go out full of that last scene where he defied his accusers, and where he declared he would destroy all the people who had anything to do with his incarceration. What happens? Man's higher principles go on and on with evolution, finally being reincarnated. If after death these lower elements are seized by mediums and brought back to earth, infused with additional life, not permitted to disintegrate, it is a crime. Everyone who goes to a medium and asks that their dead may return commits a crime. It is a crime against the person who is dead, and against the medium; it brings around her bad influences, for the majority that can return are full of crime. They are of the earth, earthy. Now, when I am dead my astral body will not have my senses; it will contain only my passions and desires, which swerve me as they swerve you also, and if I am drawn back against my will I may do harm. If you could actually see what occurs at a seance you would never go

to another. You would see all these vile shapes enveloping the sitters like a huge octopus. Mediumship is nothing but communicating with the astral dead; it is the worship of the dead, and as such it has been condemned for ages. Moses said "Ye shall kill a witch." He prohibited his people from having anything to do with such things.

Having considered the lower principles of man we now come to that which is immortal, or mind, soul and spirit, called respectively, Manas, Buddhi and Atma. Atma, or spirit, is universal, and Buddhi its vehicle. Manas is the individualized thinker, the one who is conscious. These three together are eternally passing through incarnation and coming back again and again to gain experience; to reap reward or punishment. Before birth, in the pre-natal state, man is in almost the same condition that he is after death, so that a consideration of the post-mortem state will serve for the pre-natal. The difference is only slight. By a simple illustration you will probably understand the ordinary, or devachanic condition after death, and its relation to life. Imagine a young Theosophist who is to deliver a speech. Previous to his appearance he thinks of it continually, perhaps for days, goes over his ideas and wonders what kind of an impression he will make. In the evening he delivers it, in a brief time compared to that he has spent in thinking about it. When he has delivered it, he thinks of the impression he has made. The next day and for many days he still thinks of it. Isn't the thought more than the act? The state of Devachan is where he is in a similar manner thinking over the things of his last life until he returns to rebirth.

Thus after the death of the body we keep up this thinking, and develop this part of our nature, until the time comes when it is exhausted, and we come back to life to continue evolution, until the race has been perfected.

Theosophy and Epidemics

William Q. Judge of Brooklyn Tells of the Microbe Theory

[A Newspaper account of a talk by Mr. Judge printed in the Brooklyn *Eagle* of 1892.]

At the meeting of the Aryan Theosophical Society in New York yesterday William Q. Judge, the president, spoke on the subject of epidemics. He said:

The United States is now face to face with a disease which threatens to become epidemic if not prevented from entering the land. Cholera has been here once before to devastate and may get in again. Existing in perpetuity in India it travels over the globe by way of Mohammedan pilgrimages to Mecca, from thence to Russia and then through Europe here. It now skulks in our bay and is perhaps about to be brought into our country through other points. This is a physical epidemic, very important for the time but not so important in the eyes of the theosophist as other epidemics which can develop in the mental and moral organization of man.

Cholera, or yellow fever, or grippe, are peculiar diseases which terrify by their sudden action, but which are really physical and preventable, often curable. Grippe and cholera seem often to flash up suddenly at places very different from their first appearance, leading some to suppose there is a mystery which is not physical in it all. But when we consider that some snake bites in the East act throughout the whole body in a few seconds, and others produce death on the instant, we see that the mystery lies in the ignorance about the disease. Late experiments with cobra and other snake poison have shown that the poison destroys the cells of the blood with inconceivable rapidity, the corpuscles appearing to send the infection along on the instant. In a similar manner, bacteriologists have proved how the microbes of different kinds increase by the million with amazing speed.

No theosophist should deny that science is right in saying that microbes produce disease and also prevent it. For it is an old theosophical, and once secret, doctrine that the microbes—then called lives—are divided into two classes, one called builders and the other, destroyers. These, it was held, warred with each other, and whichever side won, the result was disease and death, or health and life. This, too, the old theosophists held, was the cause of man's term of life. For if the builders won all the time up to maturity they again divided themselves into two classes and, beginning to devour each other, at last brought about the death of the body at about 70 years of age.

The theosophists also assert that this microbe theory obtains in the mental and moral spheres, and that epidemics of a moral character may break out among men, causing sudden changes of character in persons who before that were very discreet. The French revolution, in which rivers of blood ran, was brought to its awful pitch by the sudden increase of mental microbes, which produce moral disease sweeping over vast numbers of men. Lynchings and riots such as that of New Orleans, he [Mr. Judge] said, were of the same origin and were nothing more than the sudden development of these criminal microbes in the natures of men, who at other times were perfectly respectable. In the French revolution many excellent persons were carried away by the epidemic and led into the doing or countenancing of dreadful deeds. He referred also to the witch burning in Salem a century ago and declared that the otherwise eminent and respectable citizens who took active part in them were the victims of a mental and moral epidemic that drew them into actions of a criminal sort.

Turning to the present day, Mr. Judge pointed out that in the United States a microbe was developing in the mental and moral spheres which would sooner or later

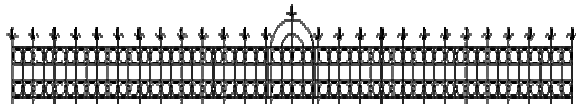
develop so quickly as to infect large masses of men. The recent strike riots and crimes on both sides evidence this, and if our thoughts, our mental feelings, were not speedily changed a vast revolution would be the result. Irrespective of the rights of either side in these struggles, the reason for them was to be found in the selfish character of our civilization, which ignores the idea of universal brotherhood. Great numbers of respectable men are incensed at each other and sides are being taken. The theosophist should stand aloof or he may be a victim to the epidemic on one side or the other. Even some well known members of the clergy have begun to assert that the country's legislation is in the interest of capital as against labor, and newspapers criticize them. The microbe is spreading. When it has made a few more advances it will gain a force overwhelming, and spreading then in vast numbers we will see suddenly springing up a revolution into which all will be drawn—one side the aggressors, the other, defenders.

And the discoveries of "mental suggestion" and "hypnotism" will not be forgotten in this disturbance. By suggestion an artificial reproduction of these moral and mental microbes will be brought about and thus natural capacity added to. One side will have its army of suggested persons to do its bidding, and so will the other.

The remedy proposed by Mr. Judge was a vigorous spreading of the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, together with the actual practice of good deeds by those who have time and money. The laborers should go to the rich and preach these as compellers of kind acts. The rich should hasten to show to the poor by immediate and universal benevolences that they are acting as nature intended, that is, as nature's trustees of their wealth and time. In that way and none other can the day of revolution be averted. Legislation is idle,

arguments on rights and legalities vain. The poor, almost to a man, believe that the rich oppress them. The middling-well-off are between the two other classes.

Theosophy does not seek to abolish rights nor to alter social claims. It declares, however, that each man must serve his neighbor, and that selfish indulgence by the wealthy to the neglect of the poor is a source of destruction. A great charity organization should be formed by every well-to-do woman devoting herself to the poor, and every well-to-do man giving her the means to do so, and all cutting out at once their rounds of balls, parties, teas and frivolities. Otherwise the direful result of an epidemic in the moral sphere cannot be averted.



Tuesday Discussions with Mr. Judge

[— discussion with Mr. Judge and others — *Echoes...* iii.427-28]

B. X . — A thought occurs here worthy to keep. This constant struggle, up and down, surely goes on. It is easy to aspire when we feel jubilant in spirit, but not easy when we are in the depth of despondency. In the first case it is natural, for the jubilant feeling is caused by the present aspiration. If we only aspire then, the progress will be slow. But if we force ourselves to contemplation of the Supreme Soul when we are in despondency, then in the succeeding period of joy which will come, the bound upward is to a point beyond where we were before, and so the next downward rush will not be so low as the last, whereas if we leave it to itself we may for a long period never rise above, or rather never pass certain limits of this oscillation. So it is more valuable for us to aspire and to reach toward the Supreme Soul, when we are in despondency, than when we find ourselves in a highly

elevated condition. We must refer to this again in another light.

Col. — Theosophists should take offence at no man, and have no pet theories of right for others. By helping a questioner he can build good Karma for himself. In all men is more or less of good. Nor should we despotically drive another into well doing. We should plant seeds of good. Lopping off, perforce, a branch of evil does no radical good, for the cause may still remain. So a correct view of Karma leads to a struggle with oneself in which all others are helped and affected, as we are so linked with others that any change in us must affect them.

+ [WQJ] — The three great kinds of Karma should be well understood. That is, of our family, of our race or nation, and of the present age. It is very certain that if any of our duties are left unfulfilled, whether at death or upon renouncing the world, they will rebound on us at some time. These kinds of Karma are exhibited in the defects and good qualities of (a) the family, (b) the nation, and (c) the whole humanity. The first we may know and cure, (b) is obscure for us, (c) almost unknown. But all are powerful. So the rash person who rushes madly for Adepts and chelaship, unwittingly may put his head in the lion's mouth. The defects due to family Karma are strong enough to overwhelm him at the first trial, and how powerful, nay, dreadful, are the defects of his nation, all to him a blank. Here nature is cruel perhaps — no, only just — although inexorable. We first then must try to know our family defects, and by doing good Karma bring up to the front the reserved force of our past high deeds and aspirations, so that when we shall have got to a point of trial the good qualities are in sufficient strength to help us. This is what we may call "Karmic stamina." It is what Jesus meant when he said, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

E. B. H. — I think every mental or physical fault allowed to hold its ground, insidiously leaves at every recurrence a sediment in the soul. This drags us back to earth, because of the desire which accompanied it. It would seem then that what people call fate is truly fate, but we made it and we alone can unmake it.

B. X. — That is true, and that is the whole struggle. This "fate" is Samsara, or the great wheel of rebirths, from which each alone must deliver himself.

G. — Perhaps the stress so often laid by Theosophy upon our not being anxious about the effect of our actions is really intended to prevent us occupying ourselves too much with what comes into the cognizance of our fully developed powers, lest we should not give those which are in embryo a chance to assert themselves — that, in fact, there is a different and more important effect of our actions than that generally seen, this effect being the one on which our attention should be fixed.

The danger in that case is that one may be continually thinking about what kind of Karma he is generating, which, it seems to me, would be unhealthy and abnormal and only refined selfishness-like thinking all the time of his own salvation from hellfire.

Col.-After all, but a small part of each man's total Karma is the effect of his own action; there are, besides the Karma of his own making, the Karma of the family to which he belongs, his national Karma, the Karma which results from the condition, moral, intellectual or social of the civilization in which his nature is developed, and so forth, to all of which he is subjected. Before mankind can hope to escape from the bonds of matter all these different Karmas must run down and cease to have action.

E. D. H. — Can Karma come to a head?

+ — Undoubtedly, it is coming to a head all the time in life, blossoming out in the shape of thoughts, words and actions, which are themselves the seeds of future Karmic bloom and fruit. These are the lesser wheels within that greater wheel of Karma, each turn of which brings us back to the world of matter once more.

B. X. — The meaning of what is said in *Bhagavad-Gita* about acting without being bound in the action, is, that we should learn to do any action because we believe it to be right, having no thought for what the consequences may be. But if we regard the consequences, then we are really acting not because we are sure of our standard of action, but with a view to some result. This inevitably binds us in the bonds of action, and results in a Karma that will bring us surely back to that kind of life. We are not to be indifferent, because that is worse yet.



Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.

Abraham Lincoln

I went to the store the other day to buy a bolt for our front door, for, as I told the storekeeper, the governor was coming here. "Aye," said he, "and the legislature too." "Then I will take two bolts," said I.

Henry David Thoreau

He who cannot dance claims the floor is uneven.

Hindu saying

In a virtuous community, men of sense and of principle will always be placed at the head of affairs. In a declining state of public morals, men will be so blinded to their true interests as to put the incapable and unworthy at the helm. It is therefore vain to complain of the follies or crimes of a government. We must lay our hands on our own hearts and say, "Here is the sin that makes the public sin."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Let us not paralyze our capacity for good by brooding over man's capacity for evil.

David Sarnoff