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Editorial

Have you ever been momentarily transported into the vision of a white bird flying high into the bright sunlit sky of the morning? In esoteric writings, the light of the dawn, or a white bird soaring into the heavens, signifies the light of the Soul opening to the Greater Light of spiritual knowledge.

As Sufi Najm Rasi expresses it: *"If the light rises in the Sky of the heart... and, in the utterly pure inner man attains the brightness of the sun or of many suns... then his heart is nothing but light, his subtle body is light, his material covering is light, his hearing, his sight, his hand, his exterior, his interior are nothing but light, his mouth and his tongue also".*¹

Over many centuries, mystics, and deep spiritual seekers of all religions and none, have written about their absorption into Light of Oneness, yet struggle to express it. That is hardly surprising, when we consider Blavatsky's description of *"An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable Principle on which all speculation is impossible... It is beyond the range and reach of thought - in the words of Mandukya [Upanishad], "unthinkable and unspeakable".*²

In the Nag Hamadi findings, I came across this extract from the writings of Thomas reporting the secret sayings of Jesus: *"If they say to you where are your origins, say to them we have come from the light where the light has begun from itself. If they say to you – who are you, say we are his children and we are the children of the living father, if they ask you what is a sign of your father in you, say it is a movement and a quiet".*³

May all of humanity aspire to a realisation of the 'movement and the quiet'.

Susan Bayliss
Editor

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¹ The Seat of Consciousness in Ancient Literature, Richard E. Lin, p 286. McFarlane & Company, 2007.

² The SD, H. P. Blavatsky, Vol I, Proem, p 14. Theosophical University Press 2019. Published by HPB in 1888.

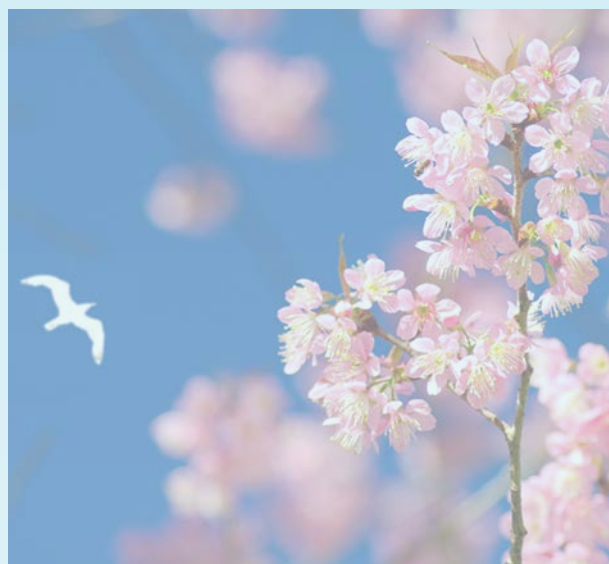
³ Jung and the Lost Gospels, Stephan Hoeller, p 189. The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, 1994.

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From the National President



If you have ever observed people walking down the high street you may have noticed that very few of them are looking up. Some have their head down, eyes fixed on the pavement ahead, some are scanning the shop windows and yet others have their attention solely on their phone, not looking where they are going let alone looking up. But why look up? One reason is that the simple action of straightening the body and raising the head, lifts one's mood and looking up means that you see so much more. Interesting and sometimes strange architecture for one thing and of course the sky, even if only glimpsed between high-rise buildings. I have also noticed that on walks in the countryside most people keep their eyes fixed on the path ahead and see little of their surroundings until they stop. I have always been fascinated by the sky and the great variety of clouds which, apart from the low grey blanket of cloud, always lift my spirits.

I wonder if this sort of cloud was the inspiration for the anonymous Medieval Christian Mystic who wrote the work on Contemplation called "The Cloud of Unknowing".* The date of this work is thought to be about the 1370s and the author possibly a monk. Despite its age the book still resonates with the modern world and our theosophical teachings. One of the basic principles of the work is that God is essentially indescribable being utterly beyond our powers of comprehension. The image of the cloud is used to describe the impossibility of any mortal being able to realize God however hard they try through reasoning, Bible study or even ordinary prayer. It is through mystical prayer only that the Divine can be known. God is not "unknowable" for He can be reached by contemplation and love.

The author recommends meditation on a mantra; a single syllable such as the word Love. *"Fasten this word to thy heart... with this word thou shalt beat on this cloud and this darkness above thee. With this word thou shalt sink down all manner of thought under the cloud of forgetting"* (Chapter 7). He uses the word 'darkness' to describe a lack of knowing and the word cloud to mean that which hides us from God just as a real cloud hides the sun from our view. And in Chapter 4, he says *"He cannot be comprehended by our intellect or any man's – or any angel's for that matter. For both we and they are created beings. But only to our intellect is he incomprehensible: not to our love"*.

He stresses that like all spiritual paths, the way of contemplation is demanding and involves hardship and discipline. At the end of Chapter 6 he states firmly *"Strike that thick cloud of unknowing with the sharp dart of longing love, and on no account, whatever, think of giving up"*.

Jenny Baker
National President
May 2021



Reference: **"The Cloud of Unknowing"*. Translated into modern English by Clifton Wolters. Penguin Classics.



Homeopathy

Lindsay Nash

Why are you reading about Homeopathy in a Theosophical magazine? Well, because Homeopathy works on principles akin to Theosophical teachings.

Homeopathy is much in the news these days. Unfortunately for all the wrong reasons. According to some scientists it has only a placebo effect and is a complete waste of time and money. According to other scientists it is highly dangerous as it uses substances which are known to be poisonous such as arsenic, strychnine and hemlock. Obviously both extremes cannot be true. In fact, neither are. Homeopathy has been around for over 200 years and some would say that its principles of cure come down to us from oldest antiquity.

Much in the way that HP Blavatsky brought to light the age-old wisdom of Theosophy in the 1800s, Samuel Hahnemann brought to light Homeopathy in the late 1700s. Unlike HPB though he was quite poor. Although he qualified with honours as a doctor he was unconvinced by the medical methods of the day and felt practices such as bleeding with leeches made the patient weak and thus contradict the Hippocratic Oath to do no harm. Living at a time when alchemy was still in vogue, Hahnemann spent some time reading and translating ancient texts (he was proficient in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic, French, and other languages) and experimenting with chemistry.

During an outbreak of malaria Hahnemann, like other doctors, tried cinchona (used even today as quinine). However, he was unhappy with the side effects. He had tested various substances on himself using a rather alchemical method (detailed below), which was designed to bring out the curative essence of a substance by transferring it into a 'memory' within water but avoiding any deleterious side effects. He now potentised cinchona and finding it produced malaria-like symptoms if taken repeatedly,

hypothesised that it might also cure the disease. It did so with better results than in material dose. So was born Homoeopathy. Curing 'like with like'. (Modern day vaccines are a grosser attempt to do a similar thing).

One of the main 'problems' with validating the homoeopathic method is that it is not compatible with being tested by the well-known scientific double-blind trial in which two groups of matched (as far as possible in terms of symptoms, age, gender, etc) patients are given either an active homoeopathic remedy or an inert placebo. Neither the patient nor the practitioner knows which tablet is which. The difficulty with using this method with homeopathic treatment, is that homeopaths treat the person rather than the disease and thus do not give the same remedy to everyone with a similar condition. Orthodox medicine primarily treats symptoms, attempting to suppress uncomfortable things like pain and inflammation, whereas homeopathy gives a remedy to stimulate the patient's vital force and help the body to heal itself.

Homeopaths consider the whole person on every level and assess how the person has come to manifest the dis-ease. So, a pain in the neck might be caused by sensitivity to cold air, frustration, injury, or degeneration of the cervical vertebrae. In order to be able to assess an individual's needs, the Homoeopath takes a full case history and gets to know the 'story' of the ailment in detail. This can take over an hour. An appropriate remedy will then be selected which will not only cover the symptoms but also, wherever possible, the modalities; such as if the pain is made better by heat or cold, at certain times of day and whether it is affected by diet etc.

Often it takes a while for the patient to learn to become self-aware. Instead of thinking 'I have a headache' and reaching for a painkiller, the individual must consider if s/he has been sitting

in the sun, had a bad night's sleep, is dehydrated or is feeling stressed. They also need to consider where in the head the pain is concentrated and what type of pain it actually is, for example: throbbing, piercing, burning, vice-like etc.

The homeopathic view of the body is that it is a whole and treats the whole person rather than looking for individual symptoms in different parts of it. Orthodox allopathic medicine treats these symptoms by (usually suppressive) drugs in order to free the patient of pain, fever etc. As a Homoeopath, I regard symptoms as a message from the higher self-manifesting disorder in the physical realm and requesting that attention be paid to what is occurring throughout the organism.

The state of being is considered exactly in terms of the 'as above - so below' maxim, and attests that physical symptoms (apart from those caused by external accident) only appear after disorder has filtered down from erroneous thought or emotion. Orthodox medicine considers only tangible symptoms and signs (especially pain - mental or physical) and treats these with chemicals which assuage, even if there are consequent side effects. Even mental and emotional problems will be treated in this way, as allopathic medicine believes mental and emotional disorders are due to chemical imbalance in the brain.

Homeopathy's view of the individual in contrast reflects the law of karma. Thoughts effect emotions which will eventually (often years later and seemingly to the orthodox eye) result in physical signs and symptoms. In fact, the way we speak often reflects this e.g. *"It felt like a kick in the stomach when I heard that"*, *"I'm on my knees with all this work"*, *"you are just a pain in the neck"*. Thus, arthritis may be considered a sign of suppressed anger, heart conditions due to long term fear, and cancer to resentment. Such illnesses can even be due to occurrences lifetimes ago. For example, I had a lady patient with breathing difficulties. The medics said she had asthma and sleep apnoea but could find no

cause (and doubtless never looked for one). The steroid inhalers were causing many unpleasant side-effects, so she turned in desperation (which is often the case) to homeopathy. On taking a full history I discovered that she occasionally had nightmares of suffocating. Eventually she talked of the Nazi final solution, so I decided to treat her exactly for gas poisoning even though obviously nothing of the sort had happened in this lifetime. She was completely cured although she did not believe in reincarnation.

Homeopathy's view of healing is a bit like an onion. Before physical symptoms manifest (consider them as the outer skin of the onion) disorder will have come through from the inner deeper layers. This is akin to Theosophy's seven-fold nature of man. As healing occurs things will be brought up from the past to be cured. So, it is as if a 'shadow' of say childhood glandular fever or injury comes back briefly. Every cell in the body has its own memory. You may well for example, have noticed an aching arm apparently for no reason and when you think back, then recall a serious accident in which it was broken years ago but on the same date. Or perhaps you feel unaccountably sad and realise it is the anniversary of a loved ones passing.

The other homeopathic laws of cure are from within out, from more to less life-threatening and from above below. This can be clearly understood by examining the atopic diseases. Asthma affects the lungs and is life threatening, hay fever affects more upper respiratory tract, while eczema albeit very itchy is more superficial and unlikely to kill you.

Following the 'law of similars', a homeopathic treatment is the minimum dose of an element which in material dose would cause similar symptoms to those experienced by the patient. A homoeopathic remedy is made by taking one part in 10 or 100 of a substance (which may be animal, vegetable, or mineral in origin), and succussing* the dilution. This produces the first dilution. One part of this is taken and added to another 9/99 parts pure water and again

* Succussion is the process of shaking and taping a phial of the said dilution.

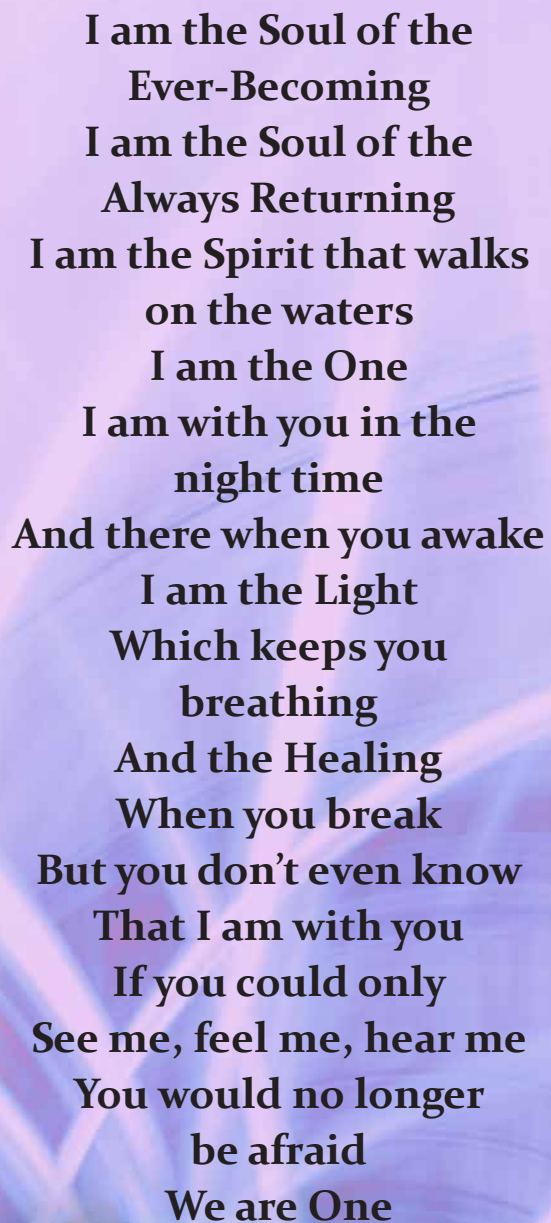
succussed to produce the 2nd dilution. This process is repeated as many as 100,000 times to create different potencies. The higher the potency the deeper the remedy allowing it to heal deep, possibly forgotten, trauma on physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual levels.

In order to ascertain how a substance may be able to heal it needs to be 'proved'. To do this a number of healthy individuals take the remedy repeatedly for several weeks and record its effects. If 90 out of 100 get a sharp right sided headache which is better for sleep, then we know that the remedy has a good chance of healing that in a patient. If, however, if for another remedy, only two provers report diarrhoea we will know that remedy is unlikely to be of use in dysentery.

The method of succussion and dilution allows substances to be used to heal which in material dose might kill. This is probably the source of allopathic medicine's claim that homeopathy is very dangerous. Which is quite amusing since they also claim that it is merely a placebo as it contains no discernible chemical agent. It can however be detected by methods which measure energy or vibration.

A homoeopathic remedy influences the vital force by giving it a blueprint of what is wrong. This influences the body to heal itself. In fact, in acute infections a patient either dies or recovers. It just needs a little help sometimes to do the latter.

Lindsay Nash joined the Society in 2009 and is a long-standing student of Theosophy, Homeopathy, and other related Wisdoms. She has been a long-standing National Councillor for Nottingham Lodge, and served on the TSE's Board of Trustees for a number of years. Lindsay is also a practicing Homeopath, having qualified as homeopath in 1986, and has a master's degree in community medicine and a doctorate in health education. At the same time as practising homoeopathy, she has also worked in research and evaluation for several universities, including Cambridge and London universities and other national and European projects.



**I am the Soul of the
Ever-Becoming
I am the Soul of the
Always Returning
I am the Spirit that walks
on the waters
I am the One
I am with you in the
night time
And there when you awake
I am the Light
Which keeps you
breathing
And the Healing
When you break
But you don't even know
That I am with you
If you could only
See me, feel me, hear me
You would no longer
be afraid
We are One**

Lindsay Nash

Anna Kingsford – A Life Less Ordinary

Damon Scothern



Some of you may already know something of the life and work of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, but their important place in the history of the Theosophical Society is worthy of deeper study.

Anna was a very strict vegetarian and staunch anti-vivisectionist. She was also one of the first English women to obtain a degree in medicine after Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, and she was the only medical student at the time to graduate without having experimented on a single animal. She pursued her degree in Paris, graduating in 1880 after six years of study, and this enabled her to continue her animal advocacy from a position of authority.

Edward Maitland graduated from Cambridge with the intention of taking holy orders, but he gradually became disillusioned with Christianity as presented by the church at that time. In order to avoid his predestined vocation, he travelled abroad extensively for a number of years, spending time mainly in Australia and America, where he was one of the 'band of forty-niners' in the 1849 California Gold Rush, though with little success. After returning home he became an accomplished writer, and it was through one of his novels, *"By and By"*, that he met Anna Kingsford for the first time in 1874.



Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland soon became aware that their joint mission was to bring about *"the restoration of the true, esoteric, and spiritual Christianity"*. And they regarded it as a very remarkable coincidence that, while the object of their collaboration was *"the restoration of the esoteric philosophy or Theosophy of the West, and the interpretation thereby of the Christian and kindred religions"*, the collaboration between Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott had a similar object with regard to the esoteric philosophy or Theosophy of the East; and both parties had up till then been working on complementary parallel lines, but in complete ignorance of each other's existence.

It was after a series of lectures on Esoteric Christianity to a private audience in London in 1881, that Kingsford and Maitland put the finishing touches to their most significant work, *"The Perfect Way or The Finding of Christ"*. First published anonymously in 1882, the book was warmly received by the esoterically oriented readership of England and America. As is made clear in the following comment taken from a Boston newspaper:

"The Perfect Way is the title of a book which has excited great attention in London, and in Boston circles of modern scientific and theosophic discussion, and the name of the author has been sought in vain. Mrs. Waters (Clara Erskine Clement), who has just returned from Europe, solves the mystery. The author of these remarkable lectures is Dr Anna Kingsford of London, a woman described as having the face and figure of a Greek goddess, so perfect is her beauty. She is of the golden-blond type, and her manner is one of exceptional dignity and grace. The Metaphysical Club of Boston were deeply interested in The Perfect Way last year. A remarkable book it is, whether one accepts its ideas or not. Dr Kingsford's theory of life, in brief outline, is that it is a series of reincarnations, by means of which the soul acquires its experiences; that the deeds and aspirations of one life predetermine entirely the quality of the next incarnation."

Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland were also recognised by the Mahatma Koot Hoomi, as indicated by the following comment taken from Mahatma Letter 111¹ to A.P. Sinnett:

"Well may you admire and more should you wonder at the marvellous lucidity of that remarkable seeress, who ignorant of Sanskrit or Pali, and thus shut out from their metaphysical treasures, has yet seen a great light shining from behind the dark hills of exoteric religions. How, think you, did the "Writers of the Perfect Way" come to know that Adonai was the Son and not the Father; or that the third Person of the Christian Trinity is female? Verily, they lay in that work several times their hands upon the keystone of Occultism. Only does the lady -

who persists using without an explanation the misleading term "God" in her writings - know how nearly she comes up to our doctrine when saying "Having for Father, Spirit which is Life (the endless Circle or Parabrahm) and for Mother the Great Deep, which is Substance (Prakriti in its undifferentiated condition) - Adonai possesses the potency of both and wields the dual powers of all things." We would say triple, but in the sense as given this will do".

Much of the philosophy contained within *"The Perfect Way"* came to Anna in visions during her sleep. She was able to remember them with remarkable lucidity and record them upon waking. Maitland helped her to interpret the meaning of those that were not immediately apparent. He published her visions posthumously in the book *"Clothed with the Sun"*. One of many notable visions she had over several years came in August of 1877:

"I perceive a great war in Europe. There are multitudes of soldiers in white uniforms, some in red, all Europe seems at war... It seems to me as if France were about to be destroyed utterly. The invader's helmet has a spike. I could draw it better than I could describe it. All France is doomed, part will be a German province. I see England in possession of Calais, Normandy and the Brittany coast, yes, all the Northern shore of France. Belgium seems to me to be Prussian."

Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland attended some meetings of the Theosophical Society, and some TS members attended their lectures. They were admitted to membership of the Theosophical Society on 3 January 1883, on the recommendation of Charles Carleton Massey. Anna was immediately offered, and accepted, the office of President of the London Lodge, with Maitland becoming Vice-President. They became two of the founding and influential members which strengthened the work of the Theosophical Society in London, which over a period of years led to the founding of the Theosophical Society in England and thereafter the Welsh and Scottish Sections, and others in Europe.

¹ Letter 59 in the Barker numbering.

Anna's views coincided with many Theosophical teachings and in some cases were even in advance of those coming from HPB's teachers. It was on account of some of those omissions, in what has so far been disclosed, as well as her criticism of Alfred Percy Sinnett's book *"Esoteric Buddhism"*, stating that it was neither "Buddhistic" nor "Esoteric", that HPB wrote the following to Sinnett in this excerpt from a letter to him: *"and now the outcome of it all is, that I, crippled down and half dead, am to sit up nights again and rewrite the whole of Isis Unveiled, calling it the Secret Doctrine and making three if not four volumes out of the original two".*²

However, as is not unusual in human organizations, even (perhaps especially) in those that study and teach metaphysics, differences of opinion continued to arise regarding the "truth" of various teachings, and the upshot of it all was that Kingsford and Maitland withdrew from the London Lodge and formed their own Hermetic Lodge of the Theosophical Society, which was inaugurated in April 1884 but very shortly afterwards became a completely independent entity under the name of the Hermetic Society*.

Anna always had fragile health and it deteriorated significantly in November 1886, when, to use her own words, she *"waded across Paris in the sleet and mud and stood a long time in wet boots and clothes, and got back at last after about five hours, soaked to the skin."* The resulting respiratory illness would prove fatal, as she died about 15 months later at the very early age of 41 on February 22, 1888. The cause of death was recorded as tuberculosis, then known to the layperson as consumption.

There can be no doubt that Anna Kingsford's life was one of extraordinary accomplishments in

the realms of Vegetarianism, Anti-Vivisection campaigning, Women's rights, and especially in her Esoteric writings. Like Plato, she was recognised by Koot Hoomi as a "fifth rounder", but her works remain little known, though every bit as relevant, and maybe even more so, today.

This short article is the briefest of introductions to the life and works of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland. However, fellow member Brian McAllister will shed further light on them and their philosophy through a series of articles on "The Perfect Way". Brian, who tracked down and edited the letters published in "Lost Letters of Edward Maitland"³, is very knowledgeable in this field. Hopefully these articles may generate at least some new interest in Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland and their wonderful writings on their erudite and deeply Theosophical expositions on Esoteric Christianity.

"It was no human life that was involved in the matter, for that only is a human life which is a humane life." Anna Kingsford.

Damon Scothern joined the Society in 2007 and is a long-standing student of Theosophy. He is General Manager at the Theosophical Society in England's headquarters in London, film-maker, and member of the web-team.



² Letters of HPB to A.P. Sinnett, Letter 28, p. 64.

* The Hermetic Society was formed on May 9, 1884 in London, as an offspring of the short-lived Hermetic Lodge of the Theosophical Society. Other members of the Hermetic Society included C. C. Massey, artist Isabelle de Steiger, Irish poet and mythologist Ella Young and writer Kenneth Morris. Lecturers included Dr. Kingsford, E. Maitland, C. C. Massey, Mohini Mohun Chatterji, Roden Noel, Arthur Lillie, MacGregor Mathers, and William Wynn Westcott.

³ Imagier, 2014.

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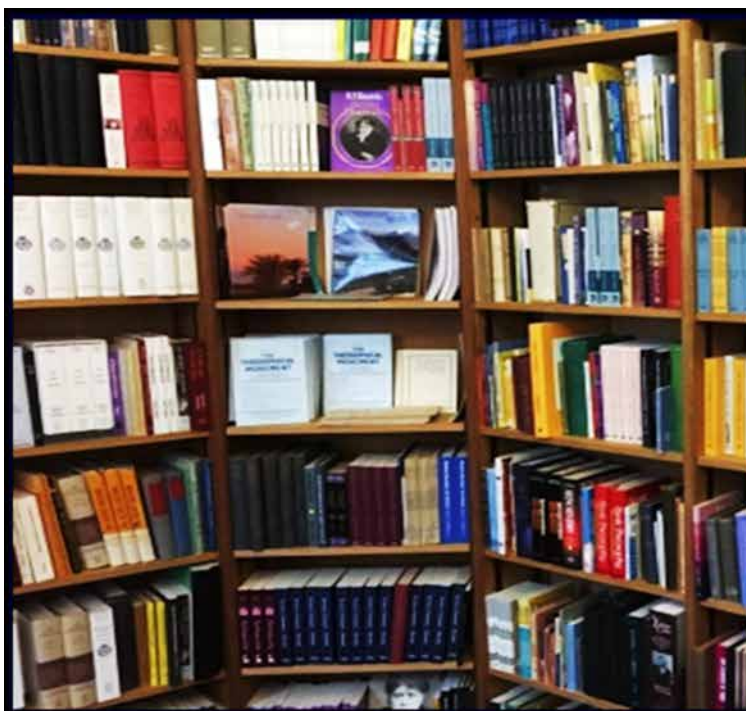
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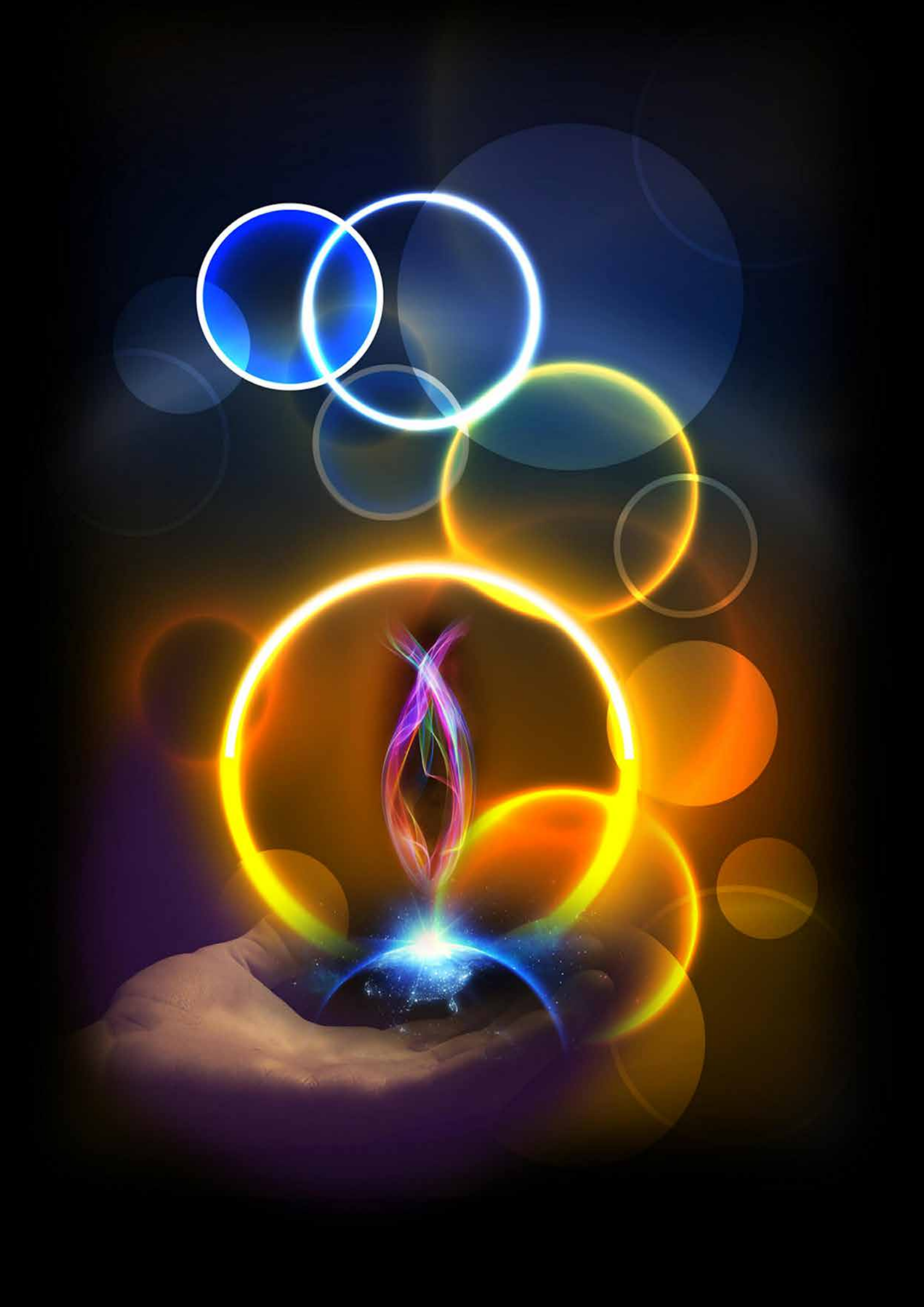


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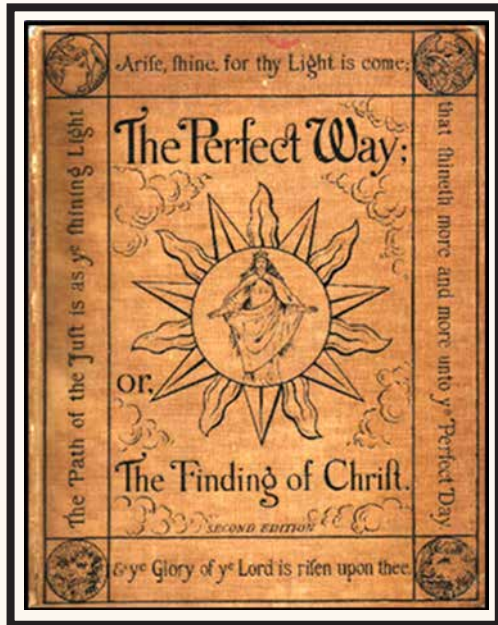
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“The Perfect Way”

A Masterpiece of Esoteric Christianity

Brian McAllister



An introduction to this sadly neglected, yet wonderful, collaborative work, placing it in the context of its time, and providing a simple outline of the timeless philosophy it embodies.

It was about forty-one years ago that I first came across *The Perfect Way*, a work jointly written in the latter part of the Victorian era by Anna Kingsford, the wife of a Shropshire parson, and Edward Maitland, a successful novelist. At the time I had been a member of the Theosophical Society for about a year and happened to be reading *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* when I came across a reference to *The Perfect Way* which at that time I had never heard of before. Now, for some reason I cannot explain, this reference to *The Perfect Way* in Letter No. 59 made a very deep impression on me and I remember thinking: “That sounds like an interesting book”, but in those pre-Internet days I did not think to pursue the matter any further. Then, to my amazement, about six months later, while talking to a friend about this, it emerged that she herself had a copy of this very book. Before long, the book was in my hands, and from the moment I started reading it, I knew I had discovered something really special as it resonated so much with me.

And so began my journey of exploration into the life and works of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland. Samuel Hopgood Hart was a London solicitor who kept alive the memory of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland for many years after their deaths by reissuing their works and by publishing other writings of theirs that had not previously been published.

Now, as for the book itself, the First Edition was published early in 1882, following a series of lectures in the Summer of 1881 when its contents were divulged to a specially selected private audience in the drawing room of Mrs Kingsford’s London home. This audience was chiefly composed of some of the most prominent Spiritualists and Theosophists of the day since these were the only quarters sufficiently open-minded to give a hearing to such a radical viewpoint as that put forward in *The Perfect Way*.

And the front cover of the Second Edition (identical with the front cover of the First Edition, apart from being a different colour and having the words “Second Edition” under the full title), as you can see is “*The Perfect Way or The Finding of Christ*”. The reason the cover of the Second Edition is shown is simply because its design is much easier to make out than the one on the peacock-blue cover of the First Edition.

This cover design, which Anna Kingsford created, sums up perfectly what the book is all about. In the centre you see the “woman clothed with the sun” of the Apocalypse, denoting, as the book explains, the soul and her full illumination by the spirit. At the corners are the symbols of the four evangelists and elemental divinities, signifying the four levels of existence, both in man and the universe. This is because each Gospel may be regarded as dedicated to one of the four elemental divinities.

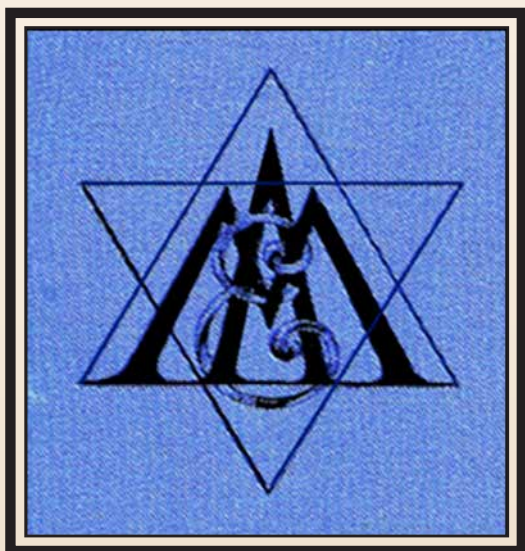
At the bottom right-hand corner is the Ox, which represents Matthew and Demeter, the

Earth Goddess, signifying the physical plane. At the bottom left-hand corner is the Lion, which represents Mark and Hephaistos, the Fire God, signifying the astral plane. At the top left-hand corner is the Angel (with the face of a man), which represents Luke and Poseidon, the Sea God, signifying the plane of the Soul and the Intuition. And at the top right-hand corner is the Eagle, which represents John and Pallas Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom, signifying the Spiritual plane.

And around the Borders are the following two biblical texts. The first text on the Left & Right Borders reads: *"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day"* (Proverbs 4, v.18). This refers to the spiritual path of the aspirant, which is opened up by the development of the Intuition, or Divine woman of man's mental system.

And the second text on the Top & Bottom Borders reads: *"Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee"* (Isaiah 60, v.1). This refers to the ultimate potential destiny of the aspirant on the spiritual path – the complete restoration, crowning and exaltation of the Intuition, or Divine Woman, which is the one essential condition for the realization of the perfection of man's nature, which, mystically, is called the "Finding of Christ".

The close-up of the design at the centre of the back cover of the First Edition, the actual colour of which, to aid visibility has been significantly lightened from its deep blue. This design



consists of interlocking triangles, denoting the interlinking of the spiritual and the material worlds; and within the triangles a monogram composed of the letters A, E, and M, which are the initials of the first names of the writers of the work (Anna and Edward) and of Lady Caithness (Marie – that is, Marie, Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar), who funded its publication. This monogram is only to be found on the back cover of the First Edition which was also the only edition of this work that was published anonymously.

Moving on to the substance of this article – the Esoteric Christian Philosophy of The Perfect Way, let me first explain what I mean by the term 'esoteric'. The word 'esoteric', comes from the Greek word 'esoterikos', meaning 'inner', so what the Esoteric Christianity of The Perfect Way claims to represent is none other than the inner, real, and divinely-intended sense of Christianity, as opposed to the 'outer', apparent, and ecclesiastical sense.

Now, in order to provide you with some basic background information on The Perfect Way and its Esoteric Christian Philosophy and the context in which the work first made its appearance, I will use a simple question and answer format:

Question 1: What was the source of the philosophy set out in The Perfect Way?

Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland claimed that the philosophy of The Perfect Way was a recovery of the original transcendental doctrine which underlay the sacred mysteries of antiquity, and which found its most recent expression in Christianity. They said they recovered this doctrine through their own intuitional perception and soul recollection, aided to some degree by spiritual illumination. This was often done in the sleep state, especially in the case of Anna Kingsford, who had truly wonderful dreams and the capacity to recall them in exceptional detail.

Question 2: What was the objective of the writers of The Perfect Way?

Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland considered the Christian Orthodoxy of their day to be very materialistic and held it accountable for the rapid

growth of materialism in the form of agnosticism. I should explain here that what Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland meant, when they spoke of materialism in the context of religion, was as follows:-

The preference for things of sense rather than things of the spirit, which leads to placing emphasis on persons, events, and material things rather than on the purely spiritual principles, processes and states that these are intended to denote. Bearing this in mind, it is not in the least surprising that the objective of the writers of The Perfect Way was to set out the philosophy they had recovered in the hope that it would restore and rehabilitate the Truth and the True Way and thus act as a salutary antidote to the prevailing materialistic tendencies.

Question 3: Why did Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland present this philosophy through the medium of Christian terminology?

For the simple reason that it was intended to be an interpretation of the original Gospel message, a fact revealed to Anna Kingsford under illumination in the following prophetic verses:

“The days of the covenant of manifestation are passing away: the Gospel of interpretation cometh”.

“There shall nothing new be told; but that which is ancient shall be interpreted”.¹

“For the interpretation of hidden things is at hand; and men shall eat of the precious fruits of God”.

“They shall eat manna from heaven; and shall drink of the river of Salem”.

“The Lord maketh all things new: He taketh away the letter to establish the spirit”.²

These verses are the source of the term “Gospel of Interpretation”, a name sometimes used to denote the philosophy recovered by Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland for the obvious reason that it provides the key to interpret the

original Gospel, or “covenant of manifestation” as it is referred to here.

Question 4: How does the Philosophy of The Perfect Way differ from the orthodox presentation of Christianity?

The Philosophy of The Perfect Way cannot be described as either Christian or Catholic in the accepted sense of these terms, but it claims to be both Christian and Catholic in their original and true sense. The Philosophy of The Perfect Way considers that religion is only valid if it is non-historical, and independent of times, places, and persons, and if it appeals perpetually to the mind and conscience. And since the orthodox presentation of Christianity in their day failed totally on all of these counts, resting, as it did, on literalism and blind acceptance of dogma, it is not surprising that Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland denounced it as corrupt, false, superstitious, and idolatrous.

The recovered philosophy considers that Religion is not a thing of the past, or of any one age, but is an ever-present, ever-occurring actuality: one and the same for every person. Hence Jesus Christ is no mere historical personage, but above and beyond this, a Spiritual Ideal and an Eternal Verity, whose spiritual history is indicative of the spiritual potentiality of every single person.

It is necessary here to define the terms ‘Superstition’ and ‘Idolatry’ as used by the writers of The Perfect Way:- Superstition is divorcing faith from reason which results in faith that is not based on knowledge and therefore does not appeal to the understanding. Idolatry is materialising spiritual Truth by concealing under gross images the real substantial Ideas implied and setting up these images for worship in place of the celestial verities they represent.

Question 5: Did Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland view their recovery of the philosophy of The Perfect Way as having a prophetic aspect? Most decidedly yes. As has already been said, the time at which The Perfect Way was written and brought before the world, was a period when,

¹ A Prophecy of the Kingdom of the Soul, mystically called the Day of the Woman (v. 10-11).

² Hymn to Iacchos (V. 25-27).

from the perspective of its writers, the current Christian orthodoxy was decadent and tainted by materiality, and agnostic materialism was everywhere on the rise. Indeed, they considered that Daniel's prophecy of the "time of the end" was, to all intents and purposes, fulfilled because of the presence of the "abomination of desolation" in the "holy place", which they took to mean the glorification of Matter instead of Spirit, leading to the extinguishing of the world's spiritual life and the idea of a divine humanity.

There were also other prophecies that appeared to refer especially to the years 1876 to 1881 inclusive, but with particular emphasis on 1881 – the year Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland first unveiled the recovered philosophy of The Perfect Way. According to these prophecies, this was to be the time when, as a result of a new illumination, the old order would come to an end, and the foundation would be laid for a universal kingdom of justice and knowledge, the reign of Michael no less. And since The Perfect Way came into being precisely during this period, when materialism was on the increase in both the church and the world, it is quite understandable that Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland should regard the philosophy they had recovered as fulfilling these prophecies, in that it provided a foundation on which to build a new and better order of things.

Now, despite its complexity, I will attempt to provide you with an outline of the Esoteric Christian Philosophy, based on a very helpful restatement and concise summary of it, which was written by Edward Maitland himself a few years after the death of Anna Kingsford.³ For the sake of clarity, this outline of the philosophy will be expressed in the simplest and briefest possible terms:

God is essential and absolute Consciousness.

As Spirit, God is a Unity.

As Energy and Substance, God is a Duality.

Energy being the masculine aspect of God and Substance the feminine aspect.

Now, either as a Unity, or as a Duality, as defined, God is unmanifest.

But, through the evolution of His Trinity, God passes into creation and becomes manifest. Creation, or the manifestation of God, occurs when the divine Will projects the divine Substance into conditions and limitations, whereby the divine Substance becomes outwardly perceptible as Matter. Now, Matter is not in itself evil, but being a limitation of Spirit, and, therefore, a limitation of God and of consciousness, it is the cause of evil. Such limitation is essential to creation, since creation is manifestation, and manifestation implies gradations and contrasts.

Given that all things consist of the divine Energy and Substance, all things are God as to their constituent principles; but because of the limitations necessary to creation, all things are not God as to their condition. But, since it is derived from Spirit, Matter is capable of reverting to the condition of Spirit. The tendency of Matter to revert to Spirit, or more precisely, the tendency of Substance to revert from its material and "created" or "fallen" condition to its spiritual and original condition, is the cause of Evolution.

Evolution is the manifestation of what is within; and since what is within divine things, namely, the Energy and Substance of which all things consist, is itself divine, Evolution reaches its goal, and full manifestation is attained, only when divinity is reached. Now, all that prevents an individual from realizing his or her own divine potentiality is his or her own will, which is to say that redemption is not compulsory. In this is to be found the mystery, known as the "Mystery of Godliness", the mystery, that is, of the "Christ", or the redemption of Spirit from Matter. This mystery may be explained as follows:

Spirit in its "created", or "fallen", condition of Matter returns to its essential condition in Soul. Soul is generated in matter by means of progressive alignment with the Spirit. Life is the elaboration of Soul through the varied transformations of matter. Soul is the medium in which Spirit becomes an individual. This is because Spirit of itself is diffuse, but when it is enclosed in an envelope of Soul-Substance, it is able to become an individual personality. Both Energy and Substance are Spirit, but in speaking

³ Intima Sacra: A Manual of Esoteric Devotion (See Preface).

of spirit as distinct from soul, it should be remembered that spirit is always energy and soul is always substance.

The soul is first engendered in the lowest forms of organic life, from which it works upwards, through plants and animals, to man. Once generated and made an individual, the soul is immortal and passes from one form to another, developing the qualities inherent in its substance, until, at its most advanced stage, it aligns sufficiently to receive the divine Spirit. Receiving the divine Spirit into his soul, the individual becomes 'Christed', and, as such, is now both God and man, since Christ is the point of union between the human and the divine.

Thus, it is perfectly valid to say that, just as God is pure Spirit, so pure Spirit is God, and not any the less God because of being given individuality as a human soul, or because, on becoming an individual in this way, such a soul is clothed with a human body. This is the mystery of divine Incarnation. And the secret and method of the Christ is inward purification.

And because this process is interior, it cannot be accomplished by a substitute, that is, each individual must do it for himself or herself. The two stages of humanity's evolution are Creation and Redemption. Creation occurs through the process of generation and is of the physical. Redemption occurs through the process of regeneration and is of the spiritual.

The outcome of Creation is "Adam", the bodily nature, "in whom", as Paul puts it, "all die". The outcome of Redemption is "Christ", the spiritual nature, "in whom", as Paul puts it, "all have eternal life". Similarly with the Soul, which, as Substance, is "feminine". In the initial human stage of her evolution, she is "Eve" who, succumbing to the bodily, or sense, nature, and lapsing into materiality, becomes the "mother" of degenerate, or "fallen", man. In the perfected stage, purified from materiality and regaining her proper spiritual condition, she is "Virgin Mary" and "Mother" of regenerate man. In other words, she is the spiritual self of the individual, whose soul she is.

To sum up. Scripture that is mystical indicates the journey of man and his soul from the first to the last stage of their spiritual history, giving them

at each stage a new name in accordance with their condition. For example, "Adam", "David", and "Jesus", in the case of man, and "Eve", "Mary Magdalen", and "Virgin Mary", in the case of his soul. In this context "David" and "Mary Magdalen" represent, respectively, the intermediate stage of the journey of man and of his soul. Every stage of this long process has to be undergone by everyone who finally attains perfection through the realization of man's highest potentialities.

The process of regeneration is always an on-going one that is interior to the individual. In describing it, Scripture represents an eternal truth, the keys to interpret which are the words Now and Within, so it follows that any creed that is founded on Scripture is intelligible and true only when expressed in the present tense and referred to the Soul.

Since Regeneration is a long and arduous process, and requires, at least to a certain advanced stage, to be accomplished while in the body, no single earth-life, no matter how long, can suffice for it. Thus, it is necessary for the soul to return again and again into the body, as a child to school, in order to obtain the education, correction, trials and other experiences requisite for attaining the full stature of humanity. And only when it has learnt all the lessons the body has to teach, and through conflict with the body; has acquired knowledge and strength to overcome the body and is freed of the tendencies towards materiality which have made it subject to the body; is it fitted to dispense with the body and ascend to higher conditions. Hence the doctrine of reincarnation, which is implicit in Scripture, though lost sight of by the churches, is now in the Gospel of Interpretation made explicit, and is emphatically declared and insisted on as an indispensable and integral article of faith.

To finish off, I have included two extracts from The Perfect Way, both of which were contributed by Anna Kingsford. The first of these concerns the core principle of Religion, as she saw it, that is, the principle that sacred Mysteries relate only to the Soul:

"The key-note of Religion is sounded in the words, 'My kingdom is not of this world'. All

her mysteries, all her oracles, are conceived in this spirit, and similarly are all sacred scriptures to be interpreted. For anything in Religion to be true and strong, it must be true and strong for the Soul. The Soul is the true and only person concerned; and any relation which Religion may have to the body or phenomenal man, is indirect, and by correspondence only. It is for the Soul that the Divine Word is written; and it is her nature, her history, her functions, her conflicts, her redemption, which are ever the theme of sacred narrative, prophecy, and doctrine".⁴

The second extract from *The Perfect Way* is an account of a vision "*Concerning the Three Veils Between Man and God*", which was given to Anna Kingsford in March 1881. These three veils separating man from God, and referred to as Blood, Idolatry, and the Curse of Eve, represent the obstacles to the perception of divine truth which must be removed in order to usher in the Kingdom of the Soul and the Rule of the Intuition:

"A golden chalice, like those used in Catholic rites, but having three linings, was given to me by an Angel. These linings, he told me, signified the three degrees of the heavens, - purity of life, purity of heart, and purity of doctrine. Immediately afterwards, there appeared a great dome-covered temple, Moslem in style, and on the threshold of it a tall Angel clad in linen, who with an air of command was directing a party of men engaged in destroying and throwing into the street numerous crucifixes, bibles, prayer-books, altar-utensils, and other sacred emblems. As I stood watching, somewhat scandalised at the apparent sacrilege, a Voice at a great height in the air cried with startling distinctness, "All the idols He shall utterly destroy!"

Then the same Voice, seeming to ascend still higher, cried to me, "Come hither and see!". Immediately it appeared to me that I was lifted up by my hair and carried above the earth. And suddenly there arose in mid-air the apparition of a man of majestic aspect, in an antique garb, and surrounded by a throng of prostrate worshippers. At first the appearance of this figure was strange to me; but while I looked intently at it, a change

came over the face and dress, and I thought I recognised Buddha, – the Messiah of India. But scarcely had I convinced myself of this, when a great Voice, like a thousand voices shouting in unison, cried to the worshippers: "Stand upright on your feet: Worship God only!". And again the figure changed, as though a cloud had passed before it, and now it seemed to assume the shape of Jesus. Again I saw the kneeling adorers, and again the mighty Voice cried, "Arise! Worship God only!". The sound of this Voice was like thunder, and I noted that it had seven echoes. Seven times the cry reverberated, ascending with each utterance, as though mounting from sphere to sphere. Then suddenly I fell through the air, as though a hand had been withdrawn from sustaining me: and again touching the earth, I stood within the temple I had seen in the first part of my vision. At its east end was a great altar, from above and behind which came faintly a white and beautiful Light, the radiance of which was arrested and obscured by a dark curtain suspended from the dome before the altar. And the body of the temple, which, but for the curtain, would have been fully illumined, was plunged in gloom, broken only by the fitful gleams of a few half-expiring oil-lamps, hanging here and there from the vast cupola. At the right of the altar stood the same tall Angel I had before seen on the temple threshold, holding in his hand a smoking censer. Then, observing that he was looking earnestly at me, I said to him: "Tell me, what curtain is this before the Light, and why is the temple in darkness?". And he answered, "This veil is not One, but Three; and the Three are Blood, Idolatry, and the Curse of Eve. And to you it is given to withdraw them. Be faithful and courageous; the time has come". Now the first curtain was red, and very heavy; and with a great effort I drew it aside, and said, "I have put away the veil of blood from before Thy Face. Shine, O Lord God!". But a Voice from behind the folds of the two remaining coverings answered me, "I cannot shine, because of the idols".

And lo, before me a curtain of many colours, woven about with all manner of images, crucifixes, madonnas, Old and New Testaments, prayer-books, and other religious symbols, some strange and hideous like the idols of China and Japan, some

⁴ *The Perfect Way* (Lecture 4, Paragraph 4).

beautiful like those of the Greeks and Christians. And the weight of the curtain was like lead, for it was thick with gold and silver embroideries. But with both hands I tore it away, and cried, "I have put away the idols from before Thy Face. Shine, O Lord God!". And now the Light was clearer and brighter. But yet before me hung a third veil, all of black; and upon it was traced in outline the figure of four Lilies on a single stem inverted, their cups opening downwards. And from behind this veil, the Voice answered me again, "I cannot shine, because of the curse of Eve". Then I put forth all my strength, and with a great will rent away the curtain, crying, "I have put away her curse from before Thee. Shine, O Lord God!".

And there was no more a veil, but a landscape, more glorious and perfect than words can paint, a Garden of absolute beauty, filled with trees of palm, and olive, and fig, rivers of clear water and lawns of tender green; and distant groves and forests framed about by mountains crowned with snow; and on the brow of their shining peaks a rising Sun, whose light it was I had seen behind the veils. And about the Sun, in mid-air hung white misty shapes of great Angels, as clouds at morning float above the place of dawn. And beneath, under a mighty tree of cedar, stood a white elephant, bearing in his golden houdah a beautiful woman robed as a queen, and wearing a crown. But while I looked, entranced, and longing to look for ever, the garden, the altar, and the temple were carried up from me into Heaven.

Then as I stood gazing upwards, came again the Voice, at first high in the air, but falling earthwards as I listened. And behold, before me appeared the white pinnacle of a minaret, and around and beneath it the sky was all gold and red with the glory of the rising Sun. And I perceived that now the voice was that of a solitary Muezzin standing on the minaret with uplifted hands and crying:

*Put away Blood from among you!
Destroy your Idols!
Restore your Queen!*

And straightway a Voice, like that of an infinite multitude, coming as though from above and around and beneath my feet, - a Voice like a wind rising upwards from caverns under the hills to their loftiest far-off heights among the stars, responded: "Worship God alone!"⁵

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⁵ The Perfect Way (Lecture VI, Paragraph 42), and "Clothed with the Sun" (Illuminations: Part One, No.1).





On the Science of Near-Death Experience

Antti Savinainen

It is often said that there can be no knowledge, let alone scientific knowledge, about the afterlife. However, there is a large body of research on the near-death experience (NDE) that meets the criteria of science. Most of the research on the NDE makes use of medical data and interviews gathered from those who have been resuscitated (for a good overview, see Carter, 2010). Interviews have been conducted on people who had NDEs a long time previously, and with those who have had NDEs in the very recent past. The picture emerging from these studies is quite consistent, although not all people describe all the stages of the NDE.

The first reported stage is usually a feeling of deep peace; all pain has ceased. This is followed by an out-of-body experience: Near Death Experiencers can see and hear, often from the vantage point of a ceiling, what is going on around them. For instance, they are able to describe the resuscitation in quite a detail. They also report a lucid and heightened awareness despite the fact that their brain functioning is severely compromised, for example because of a heart attack.

About 30% of Western Near Death experiencers report transitions to another realm, sometimes described as passing through a long tunnel, which can be perceived as dark or multicolored. At any rate, the passage is very fast. The tunnel leads to a light that is exceptionally bright, but not blinding. The experience of the light is accompanied by an overwhelming feeling of bliss, unconditional love, and acceptance. Often people meet deceased relatives, friends, and other beings of light.

Some Near Death experiencers (13% in studies involving Western subjects) report a panoramic life review, which may contain the person's whole life in a momentary flash or just a few highlights. The life review takes place very quickly, but the experiencers can follow it intensively. Some report that they experience how their thoughts,

words, and actions affected other people. There is a moral element in the life review that makes it possible for the person to evaluate his or her past life objectively. However, this is not described as judging in the sense of condemning. The life review is usually experienced in the light, but it can also happen before entering the light. It is interesting to note that the life review has been aptly described in theosophical sources for well over hundred years ago. A theosophical explanation of the *objective* nature of life review is that the personality is illuminated with the light of her Higher Self (Marjanen et al., 2017, p. 39–41).

During the NDE people can gain access to universal knowledge, making it possible to understand everything, their own lives as well as why people do what they do. Life and existence have a deep meaning; everything is connected in unity. At the end of the NDE there is the perception of a border (about the third of the Near Death experiencers report this): they realize intuitively, or it is explained by the light being, that should they cross the border, they would not be able to resume their lives on earth. The NDE is such a blissful experience that it is hard to come back into the sick, damaged body. The decision becomes easier when the experiencer remembers or is reminded of children or other people who need him/her.

A very small fraction of Near Death experiences are frightening (typically 1–2%). People experiencing a frightening NDE may have attempted suicide, have taken an overdose of drugs, or they may have been ordinary people with strong fears of dying at the beginning of the NDE. After leaving their bodies, these people have entered into a dark, meaningless void filled with loneliness and despair. They may sense the presence of an evil force and hear horrific voices. Some describe a place very similar to images of the traditional hell. However, these very unpleasant experiences may have a positive effect: some people have taken the experience as a warning and a chance to change their lives for the better.

The NDE is a life-changing experience that can greatly affect the person's values and outlook on life. The Dutch cardiologist Pim van Lommel and his colleagues (2001) published a longitudinal, prospective study on the NDE. This study was published in *The Lancet* which is one of the most prestigious journals in medicine. The study documented significant differences between the Near Death experiencers and the control group (people who had had a heart attack with no NDE). There were life changes in both groups, but the NDE group had undergone more profound changes. The NDE group showed more acceptance to others, and they were more loving and empathetic. Their interest in spirituality had increased, whereas it had decreased in the control group. In addition, van Lommel's study concurred with earlier research indicating a decline in religious affiliation among Near Death experiencers, whereas church attendance increased to some extent in the control group. The NDE group had less interest in money, possessions, and social norms. Fear of death had decreased in both groups, but more strongly so in the NDE group. Belief in life after death was more prominent in the NDE group than in the control group. Many of the Near Death experiencers said that they had a very acute sense of other people's emotions and that they had acquired paranormal abilities (although the validity of this claim was not investigated by van Lommel's research team).

Love for oneself, others, and nature are important for people who have had NDEs. These changes are clearly evident in the following extract (van Lommel, 2010):

"I'm no longer afraid of death, because I'll never forget what happened to me there. Now I'm certain that life goes on. Over the years I've undergone a number of changes. I feel a strong connection with nature. I've acquired a great sense of justice. I've become more patient and peaceful. My anger is a thing of the past. I feel a strong urge to never lie again. I'd rather keep silent than tell a little white lie. I do struggle with deadlines: things must get done within a certain time. I enjoy life immensely. I believe that people have stopped living from the heart."

Van Lommel observes that usually people with the NDE become more forgiving, tolerant, and

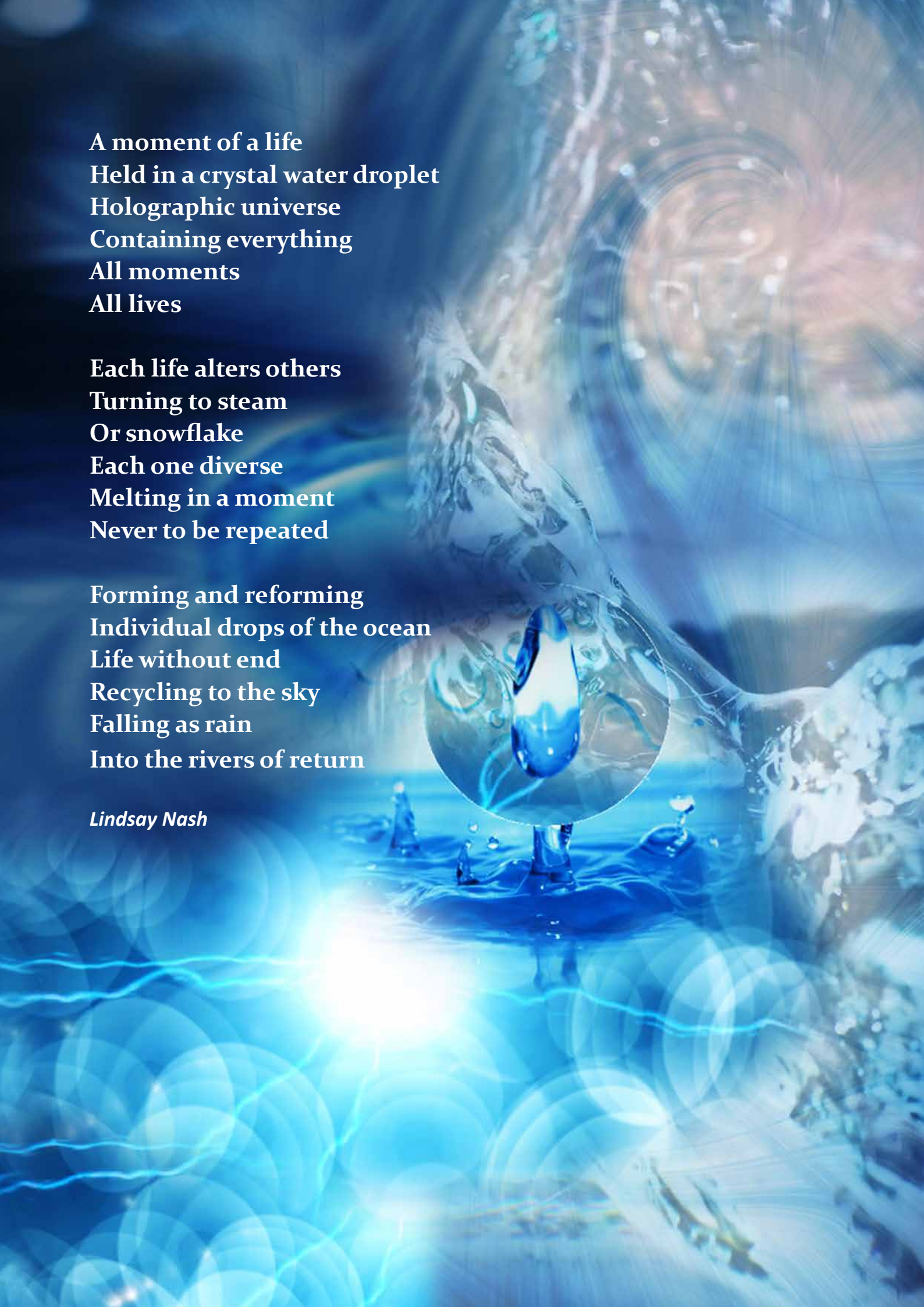
compassionate: to put it concisely, they seek to express unconditional love. In addition, van Lommel notes that life reviews speak of a cosmic law: whatever we do to another person will ultimately have an effect on us as well; everything is interconnected. This cosmic law is known as karma in the Eastern religions and in Theosophy.

Although the empirical evidence on the NDE is quite substantial, there are various interpretations of the NDE. Mainstream science appears to assume that all NDEs are, in one way or another, produced by the brain (Braithwaite, 2008). Nevertheless, NDE researchers have presented quite strong arguments that the brain-based explanatory models are not plausible in explaining the NDE, which strongly suggests that a human being has a spiritual aspect which survives death. This is also the view taught by Theosophy.

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A moment of a life
Held in a crystal water droplet
Holographic universe
Containing everything
All moments
All lives

Each life alters others
Turning to steam
Or snowflake
Each one diverse
Melting in a moment
Never to be repeated

Forming and reforming
Individual drops of the ocean
Life without end
Recycling to the sky
Falling as rain
Into the rivers of return

Lindsay Nash

THEOSOPHY

“Theosophy is the shoreless ocean of universal truth, love and wisdom, reflecting its radiance on the earth, while the Theosophical Society is only a visible bubble on that reflection. Theosophy is divine nature, visible and invisible, and its Society human nature trying to ascend to its divine parent. Theosophy, finally, is the fixed eternal sun, and it’s Society the evanescent comet trying to settle in an orbit to become a planet, ever revolving within the attraction of the sun of truth. It was formed to assist in showing to men that such a thing as Theosophy exists, and to help them to ascend toward it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities.”

The Key to Theosophy, H. P. Blavatsky 1889.

THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS

The first proposition is that there is one underlying, unconditioned, indivisible Truth, variously called “the Absolute”, “the Unknown Root”, “the One Reality”, etc. It is causeless and timeless, and therefore unknowable and non-describable: “It is ‘Be-ness’ rather than Being”. However, transient states of matter and consciousness are manifested in IT, in an unfolding gradation from the subtlest to the densest, the final of which is physical plane. According to this view, manifest existence is a “change of condition” and therefore neither the result of creation nor a random event. Everything in the universe is informed by the potentialities present in the “Unknown Root,” and manifest with different degrees of Life (or energy), Consciousness, and Matter.

The second proposition is “the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow”. Accordingly, manifest existence is an eternally re-occurring event on a “boundless plane”: “the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,” each one “standing in the relation of an effect as regards its predecessor, and being a cause as regards its successor”, doing so over vast but finite periods of time.

The third proposition related to the above is “The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul... and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the Cycle of Incarnation (or ‘Necessity’) in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term.” The individual souls are seen as units of consciousness (Monads) that are intrinsic parts of a universal oversoul, just as different sparks are parts of a fire. These Monads undergo a process of evolution where consciousness unfolds and matter develops. This evolution is not random, but informed by intelligence and with a purpose. Evolution follows distinct paths in accord with certain immutable laws, aspects of which are perceivable on the physical level. One such law is the law of periodicity and cyclicity; another is the law of karma or cause and effect.

SUMMARY

1. There is One absolute, eternal principle.
2. Creation is cyclic at all levels.
3. One Life, and all expressions of it must pass through all cycles according to Law.

The Secret Doctrine - The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy. H. P. Blavatsky 1888.

The Theosophical Society in England

The Theosophical Society is a worldwide organisation whose primary object is the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction, based on the realisation that all life is One. Founded in 1875, the Society draws together those of goodwill whatever their religious affiliation (if any), social status, gender, or ethnicity. The Society promotes such understanding through the study and practical application of the Ageless Wisdom of Theosophy.

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Divine Spark

Atma.

Divine Principle – Pure Spirit
The Higher Self

Monad

Buddhi.

Reincarnating Spiritual Ego
'The Watcher'
The
Spiritual Soul

Higher Triad

Buddhi Manas.

Higher Mind
Vehicle of the Spiritual Soul
Intelligence

Antahkarana.

Kama Manas.

Lower Mind
Personality

Kama Rupa.

Emotional or Desire Body

Linga Sarira.

Model Body
Upon which the Physical is Built

Rupa or
Sthula-Sarira.

Physical body
Vehicle of all other Principles
During Life

Lower Quaternary

Prana - Life Principle or Vitality



The Sevenfold Planes of Nature

Words in Theosophy

Susan Bayliss

Part Two

In Part One, the meaning of various words such as 'Etheric', 'Astral', 'Ego', 'Spiritual Soul', 'Higher Self', and 'Monad' were examined. For Part Two, 'Antaḥkaraṇa' will be considered. But firstly, here is a recap of some of the words and phrases that are useful for understanding 'Antaḥkaraṇa':

Ego - The Individuality - Spiritual Soul or Buddhi. The reincarnating entity and not the personal 'I'. Atma-Buddhi in conjunction with higher manas.

Manas – Mind. The Lower or instinctive Mind, the seat of desire and emotion that also controls the sensory and motor organs, and the Higher Mind, which is the Watcher or observer, the reincarnating Ego.

Buddhi - Intelligence. The principle that is able to discern truth from deceit and illusion and which makes wisdom possible

Higher Self – A state of consciousness only experienced in Samadhi or Nirvana, which has no association with the personal-self. It is One with the Absolute and beyond our personal affairs.

Monad – The individual spark of life, a truly 'indivisible thing', indistinguishable from the ONE.

Atma - The One Universal Principle of which it is a ray. Buddhi is its vehicle, Atma and Buddhi are one unit.

It is during the process of spiritual practice, that we begin to develop a link between the personality and the principle of higher mind or Buddhi-Manas. In the Esoteric Teachings, this is called 'Antaḥkaraṇa', a Sanskrit word meaning "internal instrument". In *'The Voice of the Silence'*, Madame Blavatsky says it is the Path of communication,

or communion between the lower manas of the personality and the higher manas or human Soul.¹ Rainbows are often portrayed in mythology as a mystical crossing to the heavens or as a path to spiritual knowledge, and sometimes Antaḥkaraṇa is referred to as a 'bridge' or 'rainbow bridge'. However, in Theosophy the Antaḥkaraṇa is not seen as a structural principle but as a temporary function, active when the lower mind aspires towards the higher.²

So, the question arises as to how the personality fits into the process of spiritual awakening? In our everyday world our mind and actions tend to be focussed on the processes of everyday life: earning a living, caring for our families, and if time permits, for leisure activities and perhaps for spiritual study. However, to make steady progress, spiritual study and practice is essential, because it is only through dedicated study, and a conscious effort at understanding the Theosophical teachings and then putting them into daily practice, that we begin to know what we really are. This is referred to as the path of spiritual self-development or 'the Path'.

In her Glossary, Blavatsky expands further: *"The term [Antaḥkaraṇa] has various meanings, which differ with every school of philosophy*



'The Seven Principles'
H. P. Blavatsky.

¹ Glossary to Fragment III, p 88-89. *The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky. Theosophical University 2015.

² Theosophical Glossary, H. P. Blavatsky.

and sect. Thus, Sankarâchârya renders the word as “understanding”; others, as “the internal instrument, the Soul, formed by the thinking principle and egoism”; whereas the Occultists explain it as the path or bridge between the Higher and the Lower Manas, the divine Ego, and the personal Soul of man. It serves as a medium of communication between the two and conveys from the Lower to the Higher Ego all those personal impressions and thoughts of men which can, by their nature, be assimilated and stored by the undying Entity, and be thus made immortal with it, these being the only elements of the evanescent Personality that survive death and time. It thus stands to reason that only that which is noble, spiritual and divine in man can testify in Eternity to his having lived”.

How is this communication achieved? Put simply, by resolutely applying what we learn in our spiritual studies. This is far from simple to achieve, but through spiritual preparation and training, self-observation and meditation, it is possible to learn to let go of the personal. So that through a search for the spiritual, the lower is increasingly aligned with the higher. H.P.B. explains:

“Lower Manas clothes itself with the essence of the Astral Light... and this Astral Envelope shuts it out from its Parent, except through the Antaḥkaraṇa. The Antaḥkaraṇa is therefore that portion of the Lower Manas which is one with the Higher, the essence, that which retains its purity; on it are impressed all good and noble aspirations, and in it are the upward energies of the Lower Manas, the energies and tendencies which become its Devachanic³ experiences. The

*whole fate of an incarnation depends on whether this pure essence, Antaḥkaraṇa, can restrain the Kama-Manas [lower personality] or not. It is the only salvation. Break this and you become an animal”.*⁴

In the Voice of the Silence’, she clarifies further: *“Before thou standest on the threshold of the Path; before thou crossest the foremost Gate, thou hast to merge the two into the One and sacrifice the personal to SELF impersonal, and thus destroy the “path” between the two - Antaḥkaraṇa. Thou hast to be prepared to answer Dharma, the stern law, whose voice will ask thee at thy first, at thy initial step: “Hast thou complied with all the rules, O thou of lofty hopes?” “Hast thou attuned thy heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind? For as the sacred River’s roaring voice whereby all Naturesounds are echoed back, so must the heart of him ‘who in the stream would enter,’ thrill in response to every sigh and thought of all that lives and breathes”.*⁵

*“For if the “Secret Path” is unattainable this “day,” it is within thy reach “to-morrow”.*⁶ *Learn that no efforts, not the smallest - whether in right or wrong direction - can vanish from the world of causes. E’en wasted smoke remains not traceless. “A harsh word uttered in past lives, is not destroyed but ever comes again.”*⁷

Part Three, will explore more words and ideas found in Theosophy.

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³ Devachan - the after-death state experienced in the interval between incarnations.

⁴ Collected Writings, Vol. XII, p 710.

⁵ The Voice of the Silence, H. P. Blavatsky, Fragment III, p 50. Theosophical University 2015.

⁶ “To-morrow” means the following rebirth or reincarnation. Glossary to Fragment III, p 85. The Voice of the Silence, H. P. Blavatsky, p 34. Theosophical University 2015.

⁷ Op cit, p 34.



Pay Attention!

Robert Woolley

There can be few of us who have never been told to PAY ATTENTION. In my childhood it became part of the background. In adulthood it struck me how extraordinary a command it is. PAY ATTENTION? What sort of currency is ATTENTION? What are its units? What is its exchange rate?

When our parents and teachers command us to PAY ATTENTION they hope to make us aware of something, to focus our consciousness on things they consider important. Later, we find that learning to meditate is about learning to control our attention.

Sitting in school some sunny summer day, did your attention ever wander out of the window, drawn perhaps by the hum of mowers on the playing field and the smell of cut grass? Did it wander to some distant holiday beach and things you hoped might happen there? And was your attention dragged suddenly back to face some incomprehensible question, a demand for an answer you could not give, and the killer question “Where were you when I was explaining... ?” Your body was in the classroom, but where were YOU? The honest answer is that YOU were on a beach in mind-space.

You focus your consciousness on all sorts of sensations, things and thoughts, i.e. you pay attention to them. But the YOU that experiences them is “your” consciousness. I call it “the Is-ness that Knows”. It is Atma/Buddhi, the SELF. So, when you PAY ATTENTION, you are giving the object of your attention part of your very self. It is a very special sort of currency with which you pay. It needs special care in how you get it and how you spend it.

I mentioned “your” consciousness, but consciousness is not something we *HAVE*, it is what we *ARE*. In principle timeless and infinite, but in our present state it is somewhat limited - try listening to two conversations at once (If you are that good, try three!). We usually think of the consciousness that we are, as being passive and receptive. Being conscious of something, knowing something, is an inward process of receiving. Indeed Buddhi (and attention) is usually spoken

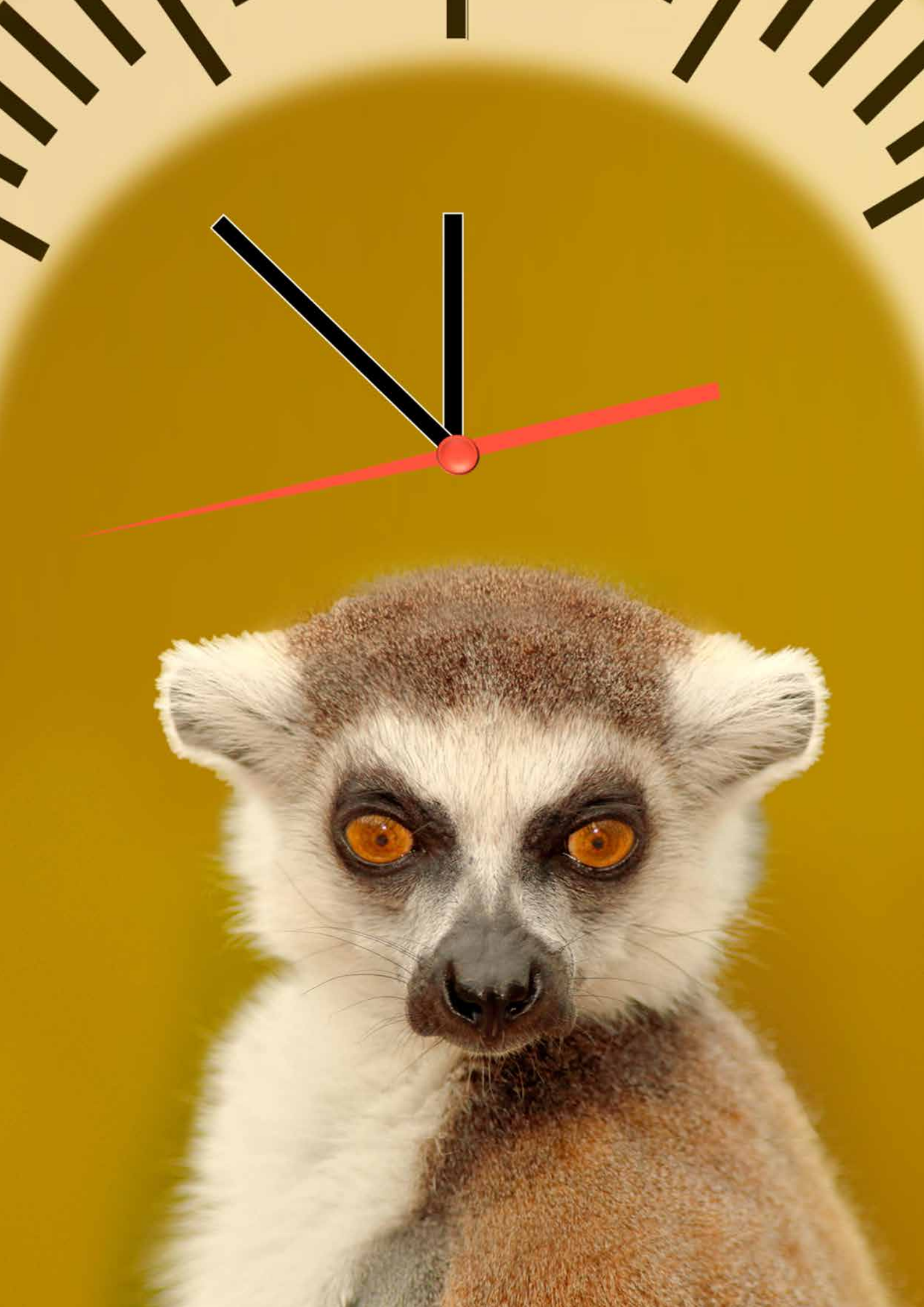
of in that receptive way as the power of knowing. But Buddhi (and attention) also have an outgoing, active aspect.

You know this because you know that staring at the back of someone’s head often causes them to turn round to see where this attention is coming from. (Rupert Sheldrake verified this experimentally). You also know that some people are “attention seekers”, especially children. My granddaughter visibly wilts when she doesn’t get attention! You experience other people’s attention as an energy, as a presence. If you pay attention to your own Is-ness-that-Knows you experience your own presence. It seems that all forms of energy, including the energy of thought, Prana, Kundalini and Kriya-Shakti are emanations of some consciousness. They are the means by which consciousness, at whatever scale, manifests a mental and physical world. Each of us is creating our own world by the way we PAY ATTENTION.

If you walk down Regent Street and PAY ATTENTION to the grand architecture and the bustle of the place, you experience a world of elegance and energy. If you PAY ATTENTION to the litter and the beggars, it is a world of poverty and misery. Either way, you strengthen that version of the world. When you PAY ATTENTION deliberately and intentionally to what you want to achieve or things you want to happen, you feed the manifestation of those things with the energy of your attention. Some would talk about “the Law of Attraction”; I say you INVEST ATTENTION.

The best Investment you can make is to PAY ATTENTION to the SELF – the SELF in you and the SELF in others. Then you will KNOW YOUR SELF, and perchance know it in others. This is an investment that grows, and every step on this Path helps others to grow as well as your SELF.

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Have Animals Souls?

H. P. Blavatsky

Part One

"Continually soaked with blood, the whole earth is but an immense altar upon which all that lives has to be immolated - endlessly, incessantly....".
Comte Joseph De Maistre (Soirées I. ii, 35).

MANY are the 'antiquated religious superstitions' of the East which Western nations often and unwisely deride: but none is so laughed at and practically set at defiance as the great respect of Oriental people for animal life. Flesh-eaters cannot sympathize with total abstainers from meat.

We Europeans are nations of civilized barbarians with but a few millenniums between ourselves and our cave-dwelling forefathers who sucked the blood and marrow from uncooked bones. Thus, it is only natural that those who hold human life so cheaply in their frequent and often iniquitous wars, should entirely disregard the death-agonies of the brute creation, and daily sacrifice millions of innocent harmless lives. For we are too epicurean to devour tiger steaks or crocodile cutlets but must have tender lambs and golden feathered pheasants.

All this is only as it should be in our era of scientific vivisectors. Nor is it a matter of great wonder that the hardy European should laugh at the mild Hindu, who shudders at the bare thought of killing a cow, or that he should refuse to sympathize with the Buddhist and Jain, in their respect for the life of every sentient creature from the elephant to the gnat. But, if meat-eating has indeed become a 'vital necessity', the tyrant's plea!, among Western nations. If hosts of victims in every city, borough and village of the civilized world must needs be daily slaughtered in temples dedicated to the deity, denounced by St. Paul and worshipped by men 'whose God is their belly': if all this and much more cannot be avoided, who can urge the same excuse for sport?

Fishing, shooting, and hunting, the most fascinating of all the 'amusements' of civilized life, are certainly the most objectionable from the standpoint of occult philosophy, the most sinful

in the eyes of the followers of these religious systems which are the direct outcome of the Esoteric Doctrine, Hinduism and Buddhism. Is it altogether without any good reason that the adherents of these two religions, now the oldest in the world, regard the animal world, from the huge quadruped down to the infinitesimally small insect, as their 'younger brothers', however ludicrous the idea to a European? This question shall receive due consideration further on.

Nevertheless, exaggerated as the notion may seem, it is certain that few of us are able to picture to ourselves without shuddering the scenes which take place early every morning in the innumerable shambles of the so-called civilized world, or even those daily enacted during the 'shooting season'. The first sunbeam has not yet awakened slumbering nature, when from all points of the compass myriads of sacrifices are being prepared to salute the rising luminary. Never was heathen Moloch gladdened by such a cry of agony from his victims as the pitiful wail that in all countries, rings like a long hymn of suffering throughout nature, all day and every day from morning until evening. In ancient Sparta, whose stern citizens none were ever less sensitive to the delicate feelings of the human heart, a boy, when convicted of torturing an animal for amusement, was put to death as one whose nature was so thoroughly villainous that he could not be permitted to live. But in civilized Europe rapidly progressing in all things save Christian virtues - might remain unto this day the synonym of right. The entirely useless, cruel practice of shooting for mere sport countless hosts of birds and animals is nowhere carried on with more fervour than in Protestant England, where the merciful teachings of Christ have hardly made human hearts softer than they were in the days of Nimrod, 'the mighty hunter before the Lord'. Christian ethics are as conveniently turned into paradoxical syllogisms as those of the 'heathen'. The writer was told one day by a sportsman that since *"not a sparrow falls on the ground without the will of the Father"*, he who

kills for sport - say, one hundred sparrows, does thereby one hundred times over his Father's will!

A wretched lot is that of poor brute creatures, hardened as it is into implacable fatality by the hand of humanity. The rational soul of the human being seems born to become the murderer of the irrational soul of the animal - in the full sense of the word, since the Christian doctrine teaches that the soul of the animal dies with its body. Might not the legend of Cain and Abel have had a dual signification? Look at that other disgrace of our cultured age - the scientific slaughterhouses called 'vivisection rooms'. Enter one of those laboratories and behold one or other of these men and women at their ghastly work. I have but to translate the forcible description of an eyewitness, one who has thoroughly studied the *modus operandi* of those "executioners", a well-known French author:

Vivisection, he says, *"is a specialty in which torture, scientifically economised by our butcher-academics, is applied during whole days, weeks, and even months to the fibres and muscles of one and the same victim. It (torture) makes use of every and any kind of weapon, performs its analysis before a pitiless audience, divides the task every morning between ten apprentices at once, of whom one works on the eye, another one on the leg, the third on the brain, a fourth on the marrow; and whose inexperienced hands succeed, nevertheless, towards night after a hard day's work, in laying bare the whole of the living carcass they had been ordered to chisel out, and that in the evening, is carefully stored away in the cellar, in order that early next morning it may be worked upon again if only there is a breath of life and sensibility left in the victim! We know that the trustees of the Grammont law♦ (loi) have tried to rebel against this abomination; but Pans showed herself more inexorable than London and Glasgow."*¹

And yet these gentlemen boasted of the grand object pursued, and of the grand secrets discovered by them. *"Horror and lies!"* - exclaims the same author. *"In the matter of secrets - a few localizations of faculties and cerebral motions excepted - we know but of one secret that belongs to them by rights: it is the secret of torture eternalized, beside which the terrible natural law of autophagy (mutual manducation), the horrors of war, the merry massacres of sport, and the sufferings of the animal under the butcher's knife - are as nothing! Glory to our men of science! They have surpassed every former kind of torture, and remain now and for ever, without any possible contestation, the kings of artificial anguish and despair!"*²

The usual plea for butchering, killing, and even for legally torturing animals - as in vivisection - is a verse or two in the Bible, and its ill-digested meaning, disfigured by the so-called scholasticism represented by Thomas Aquinas. Even De Mirville, that ardent defender of the rights of the church, calls such texts: *"Biblical tolerances, forced from God after the deluge, as so many others, and based upon the decadence of our strength"*. However this may be, such texts are amply contradicted by others in the same Bible. The meat-eater, the sportsman and even the vivisector, if there are among the last named those who believe in special creation and the Bible, generally quote for their justification that verse in Genesis, in which God gives dual Adam: *"dominion over the fish, fowl, cattle, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth"* (Ch. I., v. 28); hence - as the Christian understands it - power of life and death over every animal on the globe. To this the far more philosophical Brahman and Buddhist might answer: "Not so. Evolution starts to mould future humanities within the lowest scales of being. Therefore, by killing an animal, or even an insect, we arrest the progress of an entity towards its

♦ In France in the mid-19th century, the activity of animal protection advocates was becoming more organized in a context where the relationship between humans and animals was undergoing deep change and where France was experiencing political and social upheavals. La Société Protectrice des Animaux (SPA, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) was founded in 1845. It aimed to moralize human behaviour and to improve the living conditions of animals by using two strategies: education and repression. The Grammont Law, passed in 1850, played a critical role in the struggle for animal rights. It imposed penalties against those displaying cruelty to domesticated animals in public. To a large extent, the activities of animal rights activists are based on this law. [Ed.]

¹ De la Resurrection et du Miracle. E. de Mirville.

² Op cit.

final goal in nature - HUMANITY"; and to this the student of occult philosophy may say "Amen" and add that it not only retards the evolution of that entity, but arrests that of the next succeeding human and more perfect human race to come.

Which of the opponents is right, which of them the more logical? The answer depends mainly, of course, on the personal belief of the intermediary chosen to decide the questions. If they believe in special creation - so-called - then in answer to the plain question: Why should homicide be viewed as a most ghastly sin against God and nature, and the murder of millions of living creatures be regarded as mere sport? They will reply: "Because humanity is created in God's own image and looks upward to their Creator and to their birth-place - heaven (os homini sublime dedit³); and that the gaze of the animal is fixed downward on its birth-place - the earth; for God said: *"Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind"*. (Genesis I, 24.). Again, "because humanity is endowed with an immortal soul, and the dumb brute has no immortality, not even a short survival after death".

Now to this an unsophisticated reasoner might reply that if the Bible is to be our authority upon this delicate question, there is not the slightest proof in it that humanity's birth-place is in heaven, any more than that of the last of creeping things - quite the contrary; for we find in Genesis that if God created "*man*" and blessed "*them*" (Ch. I, v. 27-28), so he created "*great whales*" and "*blessed them*" (21, 22). Moreover, "*the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground*" (II, v. 7): and "dust" is surely earth pulverized? Solomon, the king and preacher, is most decidedly an authority and admitted on all hands to have been the wisest of the Biblical sages; and he gives utterances to a series of truths in Ecclesiastes (Ch. III) which ought to have settled by this time every dispute upon the subject: "*The sons of men... might see that they themselves are beasts*" (v. 18)... "*that which befallerth the sons of men, befallerth the beasts... a man has no pre-eminence above a beast*" (v. 19) "*all go into one place; all are of the dust and turn to dust again* (v. 20)... "*who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upwards, and the spirit of the*

beast, that goeth downward to the earth?" (v. 21.) Indeed, "*who knoweth!*" At any rate it is neither science nor "school divine".

Were the object of these lines to preach vegetarianism on the authority of Bible or Veda, it would be a very easy task to do so. For, if it is quite true that God gave dual Adam - the "male and female" of Chapter I of Genesis - who has little to do with our henpecked ancestor of Chapter II - "*dominion over every living thing*", yet we nowhere find that the "Lord God" commanded that Adam or the other to devour animal creation or destroy it for sport. Quite the reverse. For pointing to the vegetable kingdom and the "*fruit of a tree yielding seed*" - God says very plainly: "*to you (humanity) it shall be for meat*" (I, 29.).

So keen was the perception of this truth among the early Christians that during the first centuries they never touched meat. In Octavio Tertullian writes to Minutius Felix: "*we are not permitted either to witness, or even hear narrated (novere) a homicide, we Christians, who refuse to taste dishes in which animal blood may have been mixed.*"

But the writer does not preach vegetarianism, simply defending "animal rights" and attempting to show the fallacy of disregarding such rights on Biblical authority. Moreover, to argue with those who would reason upon the lines of erroneous interpretations would be quite useless. One who rejects the doctrine of evolution will ever find their way paved with difficulties; hence, they will never admit that it is far more consistent with fact and logic to regard physical humanity merely as the recognized paragon of animals, and the spiritual Ego that informs them as a principle midway between the soul of the animal and the deity. It would be vain to tell them that unless they accept not only the verses quoted for his justification but the whole Bible in the light of esoteric philosophy, which reconciles the whole mass of contradictions and seeming absurdities in it, he will never obtain the key to the truth; for he will not believe it.

Yet the whole Bible teems with charity to men and with mercy and love to animals. The original Hebrew text of Chapter XXIV of Leviticus is full of

³ "Os homini sublime dedit coelumque tueri Jussit et erectus ad sidera tollere vultus" which translates as follows: "To man the Creator gave a noble visage and enjoined him to look up to the sky, and gaze always upon the stars".

it. Instead of the verses 17 and 18 as translated in the Bible: *"And he that killeth a beast shall make it good, beast for beast"* in the original it stands: *"life for life"* or rather *"soul for soul"*, nephesh tachat nephesh.⁴ And if the rigour of the law did not go to the extent of killing, as in Sparta, a person's "soul" for a beast's "soul" - still, even though they replaced the slaughtered soul by a living one, a heavy additional punishment was inflicted on the culprit.

But this was not all. In Exodus Ch. XX. 10, and Ch. XXIII. 2 et seq., rest on the Sabbath day extended to cattle and every other animal. *"The seventh day is the sabbath... thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy... cattle; and the Sabbath year... the seventh year thou shalt let it (the land) rest and lie still... that thine ox and thine ass may rest"*. Which commandment, if it means anything, shows that even the brute creation was not excluded by the ancient Hebrews from a participation in the worship of their deity, and that it was placed upon many occasions on a par with man himself. The whole question rests upon the misconception that "soul" - nephesh, is entirely distinct from "spirit" - ruach. And yet it is clearly stated that *"God breathed into the nostrils (of humanity) the breath of life and man became a living soul"*, nephesh, neither more or less than an animal, for the soul of an animal is also called nephesh. It is by development that the soul becomes spirit, both being the lower and the higher rungs of one and the same ladder whose basis is the UNIVERSAL SOUL or spirit.

This statement will startle those good men and women who, however much they may love their cats and dogs, are yet too much devoted to the teachings of their respective churches ever to admit such a heresy. "The irrational soul of a dog or a frog divine and immortal as our own souls are?" - they are sure to exclaim but so they are. It is not the humble writer of the present article who says so, but no less an authority for every good Christian than that king of the preachers - St. Paul. Our opponents who so indignantly refuse to listen to the arguments of either modern or esoteric science may perhaps lend a

more willing ear to what this saint and apostle has to say on the matter; the true interpretation of whose words, moreover, shall be given neither by a theosophist nor an opponent, but by one who was as good and pious a Christian as any, namely, another saint - John

Chrysostom, he who explained and commented upon the Pauline Epistles, and who is held in the highest reverence by the divines of both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches. Christians have already found that experimental science is not on their side; they may be still more disagreeably surprised upon finding that no Hindu could plead more earnestly for animal life than did St. Paul in writing to the Romans. St. Paul goes further: he shows the animal hoping for, and living in the expectation of the same "deliverance from the bonds of corruption" as any good Christian. The precise expressions of that great apostle and philosopher will be quoted later on in the present Essay and their true meaning shown.

The fact that so many interpreters - Fathers of the Church and scholastics, tried to evade the real meaning of St. Paul is no proof against its inner sense, but rather against the fairness of the theologians whose inconsistency will be shown in this particular. But some people will support their propositions, however erroneous, to the last. Others, recognizing their earlier mistake, will, like Cornelius a Lapide, offer the poor animal amende honorable*. Speculating upon the part assigned by nature to the brute creation in the great drama of life, he says: *"The aim of all creatures is the service of man. Hence, together with him (their master) they are waiting for their renovation"* - cum homine renovationem suam expectant.⁵ "Serving" man, surely cannot mean being tortured, killed, uselessly shot and otherwise misused; while it is almost needless to explain the word "renovation". Christians understand by it the renovation of bodies after the second coming of Christ; and limit it to man, to the exclusion of animals. The students of the Secret Doctrine explain it by the successive renovation and perfection of forms on the scale of ob-

⁴ Compare also the difference between the translation of the same verse in the Vulgata, and the texts of Luther and De Wette.

* Amende honorable: A public or open apology, typically with some form of reparation. Originally a mode of punishment in France which required the offender, barefoot and stripped to his shirt, and led into a church or auditory with a torch in his hand and a rope round his neck held by the public executioner, to beg pardon on his knees of his God, his king, and his country.

jective and subjective being, and in a long series of evolutionary transformations from animal to man, and upward...

This will, of course, be again rejected by Christians with indignation. We shall be told that it is not thus that the Bible was explained to them, nor can it ever mean that. It is useless to insist upon it. Many and sad in their results were the erroneous interpretations of that which people are pleased to call the "Word of God". The sentence "*cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren*"⁵ (Gen. IX, 25), generated centuries of misery and undeserved woe for the wretched slaves. It is the clergy of the United States who were their bitterest enemies in the anti-slavery question, which question they opposed Bible in hand. Yet slavery is proved to have been the cause of the natural decay of every country; and even proud Rome fell because "*the majority in the ancient world were slaves*", as Geyer justly remarks. But so terribly imbued at all times were the best, the most intellectual Christians with those many erroneous interpretations of the Bible, that even one of their grandest poets, while defending the right of man to freedom, allots no such portion to the poor animal:

*God gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but man over man
He made not lord; such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free*
(Milton).

But, like murder, error "will out," and incongruity must unavoidably occur whenever erroneous conclusions are supported either against or in favour of a prejudged question. The opponents of Eastern philozoism thus offer their critics a formidable weapon to upset their ablest arguments by such incongruity between premises and conclusions, facts postulated, and deductions made.

It is the purpose of the present Essay to throw a ray of light upon this most serious and interesting subject. Roman Catholic writers in order to support the genuineness of the many miraculous

resurrections of animals produced by their saints, have made them the subject of endless debates. The "soul in animals" was, in the opinion of Bossuet, "*the most difficult as the most important of all philosophical questions*".

Confronted with the doctrine of the Church that animals, though not soul-less, have no permanent or immortal soul in them, and that the principle which animates them dies with the body, it becomes interesting to learn how the 'school-men' and the 'Church divines' reconcile this statement with that other claim that animals may be and have been frequently and miraculously resurrected.

Though but a feeble attempt - one more elaborate would require volumes - the present Essay, by showing the inconsistency of the scholastic and theological interpretations of the Bible, aims at convincing people of the great criminality of taking - especially in sport and vivisection - animal life. Its object, at any rate, is to show that however absurd the notion that either man or brute can be resurrected after the life-principle has fled from the body forever, such resurrections - if they were true - would not be more impossible in the case of a dumb brute than in that of a man; for either both are endowed by nature with what is so loosely called by us "soul", or neither the one nor the other is so endowed.

*What a chimera is man! What a confused chaos,
what a subject of contradiction! A professed judge
of all things, and yet a feeble worm of the earth!
The great depository and guardian of truth, and
yet a mere huddle of uncertainty! The glory and
the scandal of the universe!*

(Pascal).

WE shall now proceed to see what are 'the views of the Christian Church' as to the nature of the soul in the brute, to examine how she reconciles the discrepancy between the resurrection of a dead animal and the assumption that its soul dies with it, and to notice some miracles in connection with animals. Before the final and decisive blow is dealt to that selfish doctrine, which has become so pregnant with cruel and merciless practices

⁵ Commen. Apocal., ch. v. 137.

⁵ Gen. IX, 25.

toward the poor animal world, the reader must be made acquainted with the early hesitations of the Fathers of the Patristic age themselves, as to the right interpretation of the words spoken with reference to that question by St. Paul.

It is amusing to note how the Karma of two of the most indefatigable defenders of the Latin Church – Messrs. Des. Mousseaux and De Mirville, in whose works the record of the few miracles here noted are found – led both of them to furnish the weapons now used against their own sincere but very erroneous views. It is but justice to acknowledge here that De Mirville is the first to recognize the error of the Church in, this particular, and to defend animal life, as far as he dares do so.

The great battle of the Future having to be fought out between the “Creationists” or the Christians, as all the believers in a special creation and a personal god, and the Evolutionists or the Hindus, Buddhists, all the Free-thinkers and last, though not least, most of the men of science, a recapitulation of their respective positions is advisable.

1. The Christian world postulates its right over animal life: (a) on the afore-quoted Biblical texts and the later scholastic interpretations; (b) on the assumed absence of anything like divine or human soul in animals. Man survives death, the brute does not.
2. The Eastern Evolutionists, basing their deductions upon their great philosophical systems, maintain it is a sin against nature’s work and progress to kill any living being - for reasons given in the preceding pages.
3. The Western Evolutionists, armed with the latest discoveries of science, heed neither Christians nor Heathens. Some scientific men believe in Evolution, others do not. They agree, nevertheless, upon one point: namely, that physical, exact research offers no grounds for the presumption that man is endowed with an immortal, divine soul, any more than his dog.

Thus, while the Asiatic Evolutionists behave toward animals consistently with their scientific and religious views, neither the church nor the

materialistic school of science is logical in the practical applications of their respective theories. The former, teaching that every living thing is created singly and specially by God, as any human babe may be, and that it finds itself from birth to death under the watchful care of a wise and kind Providence, allows the inferior creation at the same time only a temporary soul. The latter, regarding both man and animal as the soulless production of some hitherto undiscovered forces in nature, yet practically creates an abyss between the two. A man of science, the most determined materialist, one who proceeds to vivisect a living animal with the utmost coolness, would yet shudder at the thought of laming - not to speak of torturing to death - his fellow man. Nor does one find among those great materialists who were religiously inclined men any who have shown themselves consistent and logical in defining the true moral status of the animal on this earth and the rights of man over it.

Some instances must now be brought to prove the charges stated. Appealing to serious and cultured minds it must be postulated that the views of the various authorities here cited are not unfamiliar to the reader. It will suffice therefore simply to give short epitomes of some of the conclusions they have arrived at - beginning with the Churchmen.

As already stated, the Church exacts belief in the miracles performed by her great Saints. Among the various prodigies accomplished we shall choose for the present only those that bear directly upon our subject - namely, the miraculous resurrections of dead animals. Now one who credits man with an immortal soul independent of the body it animates can easily believe that by some divine miracle the soul can be recalled and forced back into the tabernacle it deserts apparently for ever. But how can one accept the same possibility in the case of an animal, since this faith teaches that the animal has no independent soul, since it is annihilated with the body? For hundreds of years, ever since Thomas of Aquinas, the Church has authoritatively taught that the soul of the brute dies with its organism. What then is recalled back into the clay to reanimate it? It is at this juncture that scholasticism steps in, and - taking the difficulty in hand - reconciles the irreconcilable.

It premises by saying that the miracles of the Resurrection of animals are numberless and as well authenticated as *“the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ”*.⁶ instances without number. As Father Burigny, a hagiographer of the 17th century, pleasantly remarks concerning the bustards resuscitated by St. Remi - *“I may be told, no doubt, that I am a goose myself to give credence to such ‘blue bird’ tales. I shall answer the joker, in such a case, by saying that, if he disputes this point, then must he also strike out from the life of St. Isidore of Spain the statement that he resuscitated from death his master’s horse; from the biography of St. Nicolas of Tolentino - that he brought back to life a partridge, instead of eating it; from that of St. Francis - that he recovered from the blazing coals of an oven, where it was baking, the body of a lamb, which he forthwith resurrected; and that he also made boiled fishes, which he resuscitated, swim in their sauce; etc., etc. Above all he, the sceptic, will have to charge more than 100,000 eye-witnesses - among whom at least a few ought to be allowed some common sense - with being either liars or dupes”*.

A far higher authority than Father Burigny, namely, Pope Benedict (Benoit) XIV, corroborates and affirms the above evidence. The names, moreover, as eye-witnesses to the resurrections, of Saint Sylvestrus, Francois de Paule, Severin of Cracow and a host of others are all mentioned in the Bollandists. *“Only he adds”* - says Cardinal de Ventura who quotes him - *“that, as resurrection, however, to deserve the name requires the identical and numerical reproduction of the form”*⁷, *as much as of the material of the dead creature; and as that form (or soul) of the brute is always annihilated with its body according to St. Thomas’ doctrine, God, in every such case finds himself obliged to create for the purpose of the miracle a new form for the resurrected animal; from which it follows that the resurrected brute was not altogether identical with what it had been before its death (non idem omnino esse)”*.⁸

Now this looks terribly like one of the mayas of magic. However, although the difficulty is not absolutely explained, the following is made clear:

the principle, that animated the animal during its life, and which is termed soul, being dead or dissipated after the death of the body, another soul - *“a kind of an informal soul”* - as the Pope and the Cardinal tell us - is created for the purpose of miracle by God; a soul, moreover, which is distinct from that of man, which is *“an independent, ethereal and ever-lasting entity”*.

Besides the natural objection to such a proceeding being called a *“miracle”* produced by the saint, for it is simply God behind his back who *“creates”* for the purpose of his glorification an entirely new soul as well as a new body, the whole of the Thomasian doctrine is open to objection. For, as Descartes very reasonably remarks: *“if the soul of the animal is so distinct (in its immateriality) from its body, we believe it hardly possible to avoid recognizing it as a spiritual principle, hence - an intelligent one.”*

The reader need hardly be reminded that Descartes held the living animal as being simply an automaton, a *“well wound-up clock-work”*, according to Malebranche. One, therefore, who adopts the Cartesian theory about the animal would do as well to accept at once the views of the modern materialists. For, since that automaton is capable of feelings, such as love, gratitude, etc., and is endowed as undeniably with memory, all such attributes must be as materialism teaches us *“properties of matter”*. But if the animal is an *“automaton,”* why not Man? Exact science - anatomy, physiology, etc. - finds not the smallest difference between the bodies of the two; and who knows justly enquires Solomon - whether the spirit of man *“goeth upward”* any more than that of the beast? Thus, we find metaphysical Descartes as inconsistent as anyone.

But what does St. Thomas say to this? Allowing a soul (anima) to the brute, and declaring it immaterial, he refuses it at the same time the qualification of spiritual. Because, he says: *“it would in such case imply intelligence, a virtue and a special operation reserved only for the human soul.”* But as at the fourth Council of Lateran it had been decided that *“God had created two distinct substances, the corporeal (mundanam) and*

⁶ De Beatificatione, etc., by Pope Benedict XIV.

⁷ In scholastic philosophy, the word *“form”* applies to the immaterial principle which informs or animates the body.

⁸ De Beatificatione. etc. I, IV, c. XI, Art. 6.

the spiritual (spiritualem), and that something incorporeal must be of necessity spiritual St. Thomas had to resort to a kind of compromise, which can avoid being called a subterfuge only when performed by a saint. He says: “*This soul of the brute is neither spirit, nor body; it is of a middle nature*”.⁹ This is a very unfortunate statement. For elsewhere, St. Thomas says that “*all the souls - even those of plants - have the substantial form of their bodies*”, and if this is true of plants, why not of animals? It is certainly neither “spirit” nor pure matter, but of that essence which St. Thomas calls “*a middle nature*”. But why, once on the right path, deny it survivance - let alone immortality? The contradiction is so flagrant that De Mirville in despair exclaims, “*Here we are, in the presence of three substances, instead of the two, as decreed by the Lateran Council!*”, and proceeds forthwith to contradict, as much as he dares, the ‘Angelic Doctor’.

The great Bossuet in his *Traité de la Connaissance de Dieu et de soi même*, analyses and compares the system of Descartes with that of St. Thomas. No one can find fault with him for giving the preference in the matter of logic to Descartes. He finds the Cartesian “invention” - that of the automaton, as “getting better out of the difficulty” than that of St. Thomas, accepted fully by the Catholic Church; for which Father Ventura feels indignant against Bossuet for accepting “such a miserable and puerile error”. And, though allowing the animals a soul with all its qualities of affection and sense, true to his master St. Thomas, he too refuses them intelligence and reasoning powers. “Bossuet,” he says, “is the more to be blamed, since he himself has said: “*I foresee that a great war is being prepared against the Church under the name of Cartesian philosophy*”. He is right there, for out of the “sentient matter” of the brain of the brute animal comes out quite naturally Locke’s thinking matter, and out of the latter all the materialistic schools of our century. But when he fails, it is through supporting St. Thomas’ doctrine, which

is full of flaws and evident contradictions. For, if the soul of the animal is, as the Roman Church teaches, an informal, immaterial principle, then it becomes evident that, being independent of physical organism, it cannot “die with the animal” any more than in the case of man. If we admit that it subsists and survives, in what respect does it differ from the soul of man? And that it is eternal - once we accept St. Thomas’ authority on any subject - though he contradicts himself elsewhere. “*The soul of man is immortal, and the soul of the animal perishes*”¹⁰ he says. This, after having queried in Vol. II of the same grand work¹¹: “*are there any beings that re-emerge into nothingness?*” and answered himself: “*No, for in the Ecclesiastes it is said: (iii. 14) Whatsoever GOD doeth, it shall be for ever. With God there is no variableness*” (James I. 17). “*Therefore*”, goes on St. Thomas, “*neither in the natural order of things, nor by means of miracles, is there any creature that re-emerges into nothingness (is annihilated); there is naught in the creature that is annihilated, for that which shows with the greatest radiance divine goodness is the perpetual conservation of the creatures*”.¹²

This sentence is commented upon and confirmed in the annotation by the Abbé Drioux, his translator. “No”, he remarks - “*nothing is annihilated; it is a principle that has become with modern science a kind of axiom*”.

And, if so, why should there be an exception made to this invariable rule in nature, recognized both by science and theology, only in the case of the soul of the animal? Even though it had no intelligence, an assumption from which every impartial thinker will ever and very strongly demur.

Part Two will follow in the next issue of *Esoterica*.

H. P. Blavatsky. *From Theosophical Siftings, Vol III No. 7., as published in ‘The Theosophist’ January, February, and March, 1886.*

⁹ Quoted by Cardinal de Ventura in his *Philosophie Chretienne*, Vol. 11, p. 386. See also De Mirville, *Résurrections animales*.

¹⁰ *Summa*, Vol. V. p. 164.

¹¹ Op cit p 256.

¹² Op cit, Drioux edition in 8 vols.

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The Science of Spirituality

Ianthe Hoskins

Blavatsky Lecture - Part Two



An addition, or extension, of humanity's capacity for self-awareness lies in our ability to recognize limits to our own self-awareness: to know that we know not. This little light of self-consciousness is sufficient to reveal how great is the surrounding darkness. Following this picture, we may say that the task of human consciousness is to merge its limited light into the infinite light: *"To shatter the limits of life and be lost in a glory intense and profound, as the soul with a cry goes out into music and seeks to be one with the sound."*¹

The operation of the general principle of identification and repudiation may be observed to underlie the process of awakening which takes place in the normal psychological development of the individual from birth to maturity. In one who has begun to participate consciously in their own evolution, it will be further observed in the gradual alteration of the relationship between the individual and his or her bodies, and in the extension of the process of psychological evolution through a long series of incarnations. It will be found at work wherever the raising of the *"diaphragm of consciousness"* brings about a change in the relationship between the subjective and objective fields of experience.

But although changes are taking place in consciousness in the subhuman and superhuman fields as well as in the human, it will be observed that it is in the human being, and only in the human being, that a problem of consciousness seems to arise. Krishnamurti has pointed out that self-awareness arises only out of conflict, and conflict is born of mind, the prerogative of humanity: *"When are you conscious of the 'I'?"* he asks. *"When are you conscious of yourself? Only when you are frustrated, when you are hindered, when there is a resistance; otherwise, you are supremely unconscious of your little self as 'I' ... You are only conscious of yourself when there is a conflict. So, as we live in nothing else but conflict, we are conscious of that most of the time; and therefore, there is that consciousness, that conception, which is born of the 'I'. The 'I' in that conflict is nothing*

else but the consciousness of yourself as a form with a name, with certain prejudices, with certain idiosyncrasies, tendencies, faculties, longings, and frustrations”²

Yet the conflict and the pain are the inevitable accompaniments of growth, and they assure the suffering individual that s/he has turned their face away from childhood and is on the road that will lead ultimately to spiritual maturity. *“The turpidity of the waters”*, writes Edward Caird, *“only proves that the angel has come down to trouble them, and the important thing is that when so disturbed, they have a healing virtue.”³*

The development of mind has disturbed the animal peace, and brought with it the possibility of self-consciousness which, in its turn, implies awareness of otherness and therefore of separation. The part played by the mind in thus creating and fostering the illusion of separateness has been described by Dr. van der Leeuw in ‘The Conquest of Illusion’:

“The intellect, as the mind bound to illusion, can but work under the limitations of our world-image. The fundamental structure of that world-image is that of a duality, with myself on the one side and everything else on the other side—self and not-self. The intellect thus necessarily accepts the separateness of all things as a basic fact, accepts the ‘otherness’ of the world around me as undeniable and in all its cogitations can never free itself from the burden of that basic structure in which it is imprisoned. It is possible for the intellect to recognize theoretically the existence of unity, unity of life, unity of energy, or what else we may call that which unites all things, but even then separateness and multiplicity impress themselves so very much more forcibly upon the intellect, that the conception of a fundamental unity becomes but a pale shadow by the side of their varied and coloured interplay. The very methods of the intellect - distinguishing between one thing and another, analysing a thing into its component elements, learning to observe the minutest differences between one case and another - all these point to separateness and multiplicity as the domain of the intellect. For its data, the intellect has to rely on sense-perception and deduction from basic principles, out of these it builds its theories and systems”⁴

The story of the education of humanity will be more clearly understood in the light of the paradox of human consciousness than with any other explanation. The life in each one of us is one life, the life we experience is a life of separation and diversity. Between the two poles lies the way which HPB, with her vast and penetrating comprehension of the evolutionary scheme, has called *“the weary uphill path of the Golgotha of Life”*.⁵ The educative experiences afforded to the individual through the communities whose life they will normally share, social groups, nations, it will be seen to serve a twofold purpose. While those experiences will enlarge our horizon, broaden our sympathies, and increase the field with which we are able to identify ourselves, they will also tend to intensify our individuality and to strengthen the barriers that divide our life from the life in others. We will become more and more distinctively individual and separate, and as experience lends definition to our own personality, so does it accentuate the difference between ourselves and others.

If there were no provision made to counteract this inevitable intensification of individual identity, it would be difficult to see how humanity could be educated beyond the attainment of selfhood into the consciousness of the unified life. But a study of the various influences which play upon the developing human personality will show that the individual is not left without assistance. From the infancy of the human race, it would appear that the forces which develop in humanity the characteristic modes of thought and feeling which accentuate individuality, are counterbalanced by the forces of organized religion and ethical systems. Now the function both of religion and of ethics is to keep before the individual in ways suited to him or her the fact of the fundamental identity of all life, until they know the truth of that fact for themselves

Through the medium of religious worship and practices, a constant attempt is made to awaken the individual to a sense of the larger life beyond the transitory forms, first by association by spiritual ties with the limited group of the faithful, among whom a feeling of fellowship must override all the factors that tend towards separateness, and then as religion ceases to be bounded by social and national limits, by the

extension of that fellowship-group across all barriers until it becomes co-extensive with the human race. A comparative study of religions shows clearly that the teaching given to humanity through its spiritual leaders has been directed towards the realization of unity through a spiritual fellowship, for *"as religion begins by declaring the Unity of God, so it ends by proclaiming the Brotherhood of Man."*⁶ Similarly, the identity of the essential elements in all ethical systems resides in the fact that the basis of morality is the oneness of the Self. In whatever disguise the golden rule may be presented, each expression of it is fundamentally a restatement of the teaching of the Buddha: *"Practice the truth that thy brother is the same as thou"*.

While religion and ethics foster the realization of unity by providing a practical guide to brotherly action, the awakening human spirit may emancipate itself from an external discipline and seek the unified life by the direct route of Self-realization. Mysticism and occultism alike offer techniques which, although different in their approach, are directed towards the same end, the immediate apprehension of the One. Mysticism is rooted in the fact of unity. *"The mystics tell us perpetually"*, writes Evelyn Underhill, *"that 'selfhood must be killed' before Reality can be attained"*, and *"When the I, the Me, and the Mine are dead, the work of the Lord is done"*, says Kabir. *"The substance of that wrongness of act and relation which constitutes 'sin' is the separation of the individual spirit from the whole; the ridiculous megalomania which makes each individual the centre of his universe"*.⁷ The laws of occultism likewise derive their justification from the unity of the Self: *"Do not fancy," says Light on the Path, "that you can stand aside from the bad man or the foolish man. They are yourself, though in a less degree than your friend or your Master"*.⁸

An analysis of the many instructions regarding conduct in the daily life of the occultist, such as are given in 'At the Feet of the Master', will show that they fall quite simply into two groups, those which seek to impress upon the individual the necessity for conduct that shall help others, and those which warn against actions which may be harmful to others. All alike are based on the fact of unity, since it is declared that *"only*

what the One wills can ever be really pleasant for any one. The claim has been made that in the idea of a Universal Consciousness may be found "the raw material of physics and psychology, the foundations of natural religion, the meaning of spiritual progress, a basis for Ethics and a rationalization of Altruism".⁹ The claim may be a bold one, yet it seems to be amply justified; for as we analyse the teachings of religion, the rules of ethics, the declarations of mysticism and the laws of occultism, we find that the source of their validity and their unifying and harmonizing principle is in every case the fact of the Oneness of Life.

But if an individual persists in turning a deaf ear to the systematic teaching that is put before them, if they will not listen to the voice of religion or to the commands of ethics, and if they are not yet sufficiently awake to pursue the inner road to the Self, then life itself will teach them the fact of unity by the bitterly painful method of trial and error. Experience and suffering will show that *"all life is linked and kin"*, and that therefore 'no man liveth unto himself alone'. Each will learn in their own life, in personal loss and pain and grief, the truth of the teaching of the Buddha that the whole wide world weeps with the woe of one. They will prove its truth in the social life of their community, as they discover that the dirt, disease, and degradation of one section disturbs the peace and checks the progress of the whole. And will find it demonstrated on a yet larger scale in the social and economic conditions of the nations of the world, in the consequences of illiteracy or famine, in the incidence of trade cycles and slumps, in the rise and fall of wages, and in the laws by which the economic problems of one nation endanger the prosperity of others.

Yet again, in his/her private life, s/he will prove its psychological validity, in that the more s/he pursues personal ends, the less will s/he be able to find the satisfaction which he seeks: *"A man who becomes selfish"*, warns Light on the Path, *"isolates himself, grows less interesting and less agreeable to others. The sight is an awful one, and people shrink from a very selfish person at last as from a beast of prey"*.¹⁰ By slow and gradual pressures or by sudden catastrophes, life will force upon the unwilling individual, the realization that the fundamental sin of humanity

is selfishness and that its essential grace is love. For selfishness is the denial of the fact of unity, while love is the active assertion of that fact.

The whole of humanity is involved, to a greater or lesser extent, in the problem of separateness, and since separateness and suffering must inevitably go together, humanity searches desperately for a solution to its problem. We have seen that the key to the human problem is in fact presented in a variety of ways, but in so far as it is more often implicit than explicit, s/he may remain blind to the significance of those very teachings which are designed to awaken them to the realization of unity. Now Theosophy, the Wisdom of the One, directs attention beneath the surface of exoteric rule and doctrine to that truth which has been called the Secret of the Ages, the truth that Life is One, that *"Thou art THAT"*. It presents to the searching spirit the unified picture of a Plan, which indicates at once the cause, the purpose, and the method of the journey of humanity.

Theosophy has been defined many times, but since no definition is exhaustive, we may be permitted to add yet another and to speak of it as the Science of Spirituality. First, to justify its claim as a science, Theosophy must show itself to be a system of knowledge with certain recognized features, namely, a field, a body of data, and a method. As a system of knowledge, Theosophy is the repository of those three great truths *"which are absolute and cannot be lost, but yet may remain silent for lack of speech"*¹¹, the fact of the existence of One Divine Principle underlying all things, the fact of the divinity and consequent immortality of the human spirit, and the fact of the ubiquity of law and justice. The field of Theosophy is coextensive with life; it comprehends all forms, all times, all processes, and the spirit that is involved in them. Its body of data consists not only of those traditional teachings about humanity and the universe which have been preserved from very ancient times, but of all subsequent discoveries of truth, in every department of human activity, by which the original outline is being constantly elaborated and enlarged.

The method of Theosophy is the most accurate and the most exacting of all scientific techniques, for it is none other than the development within



Statue of the Buddha, TSE Headquarters London.

humanity itself of the powers of direct perception at every level of being. Now spirituality is, strictly speaking, that which pertains to spirit. But spirit is life, and life is one. Hence true spirituality is seen to be 'the self-consciousness of the Self, the realization of the One in the many, of the Life in the forms'. Referring to the mistake that is made of imagining Nirvana to be equivalent to annihilation, HPB asserts that, far from that being the case, *"the merging of all things in the Divine Unity is spirituality of a most refined character"*.¹² If mysticism has been correctly defined as the art of union with reality, then Theosophy can claim to be the science of union with reality, which is the Science of Spirituality.

It may be contended, however, that true science is such knowledge as 'hath a tendency to use'. If that be so, then once more the claim of Theosophy to the name of science is amply justified, for by presenting to humanity the idea of a Plan behind the universe, it offers the means of participating in the Plan and of turning knowledge into action. For knowledge of the Plan is knowledge of law, and knowledge of law gives power to use it.

In the physical sciences the observation of law has been repeatedly shown to have this twofold value. It not only makes prediction possible, but it also gives humanity the power to utilize the operation of law to bring about pre-determined ends. In an essay contributed in 'The Great Design', Professor Fraser-Harris gives a number of examples of successful prediction in different fields of science which have been made



possible by the study of natural law, such as the prediction of unknown planets in Astronomy, of unknown elements in Chemistry and of unknown secretions in Biology. The question he then asks is particularly pertinent: Why should it not be possible to make similar predictions in the field of consciousness?

Now the framework of the Plan makes such prediction possible, and further, by indicating to humanity the nature of the step that lies ahead, it invites co-operation in the evolutionary scheme. The suggestion has been made, indeed, that such co-operation is itself part of the scheme. *"The most important result of our 'empirical' investigation,"* writes Hans Driesch in 'The Great Design', is this: *"we are not only entitled to say that there is a plan in Reality, we also know that we are placed in the midst of this plan, and that the further realization of the plan depends on ourselves."*¹³ Huxley, too, observing the distinctive phases in the evolution of ethical systems, suggests that an understanding of the evolutionary movement of ethics makes it possible for humanity to align itself with the direction of progress, and so to fulfil its role as the agent through whom evolution may unfold its further possibilities.¹⁴ The Secret Doctrine goes even further: *"Humanity,"* it is there written, *"is the child of cyclic Destiny, and not one of its Units can escape its unconscious mission, or get rid of the burden of its co-operative work with Nature"*.¹⁵

Now, when humanity takes conscious part in the process, s/he changes the pulse of evolution as it were from an arithmetical to a geometrical progression. Knowledge of the Plan enables him/her to take a short cut to the solution of the problem of separateness, and to by-pass the laborious route of trial and error with its attendant pain. It has been suggested that the purpose of training for a career is "to reduce the coefficient of fumbling". The same purpose is served by the study of the Plan of evolution and the laws under which it operates. For by clarifying the nature of the illusion which limits human perception, Theosophy gives immediately the power of conquest. By stating the nature of the work that is to be achieved by life on its journey through many-ness, it advances its accomplishment: *"Earth and moon and sun, All that is, that has been, or that ever time shall reap, is but moving home again, with mighty labours done, the Many to the Everlasting One"*.¹⁶

The illusion is separateness, and the work is the destruction of that illusion. But since in humanity the crux of the problem lies in

the identification of consciousness with the personality, the instrument through which self-consciousness is achieved, the essential task is no less than the destruction of the personality. Until s/he knows that the life within, which is the Self, is independent of any of its temporary associations, s/he has not conquered the illusion of separateness. The personality is the embodiment, the apotheosis, of the great heresy; so in varied terms but with a single message, the student of spirituality is warned repeatedly of the necessity for the complete abandonment of the personal life as a condition of the realization of the life of the spirit: *"Give up thy life, if thou wouldst live,"* says 'The Voice of the Silence', and again: *"The self of matter and the Self of Spirit can never meet. One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both. Ere the Soul's mind can understand, the bud of personality must be crushed out, the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection"*.

As long as humanity clings to a personal life and places his/her own interests before those of others, s/he is denying the unity of life. For where the Self is recognized as One, the interests of any one are equally the interests of every other. Hence, to love one's neighbour as oneself is the only way of life consistent with the recognition of unity, and love, the sense of perfect identification with another, is the fulfilling of the law. The life of spirituality is the life which is lived as though unity were a fact. This explains why Theosophy, which we have chosen to call the Science of Spirituality, was otherwise defined by HPB. She spoke of it as **"ALTRUISM"**, and insisted that true Theosophy is none other than *"the Great Renunciation of self, unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action"*.¹⁷

This fact, that the clinging to personal existence is the obstacle in the way to the free life of the spirit and that the destruction of the obstacle is necessary for the freeing of the life, is found enshrined in the great death dramas of religion. They illustrate the truth that *"the way of self-abnegation, and not the way of self-assertion, is the divinely appointed way to glory and immortality"*. The death of all that is personal and separative is the gateway to eternal life, and *"self-sacrifice is the only way to self-realization"*.¹⁸ To the student of spirituality, the

assurance that the greatest token of love is *"that a man lay down his life for his friends"* suggests something far more profound and exacting than the sacrifice of the physical body. The whole personality, with all its separative desires and thoughts, all its selfish ambitions which leave the universe out of account, must be yielded up in sacrifice. It was noted earlier that the universe originated in an act of sacrifice, the sacrifice of the life of the Logos to an existence in confining forms. But the consummation of the purpose of that act necessitates a further act of sacrifice, that of the forms to the Life. Hence, the Cross symbol is invested with a twofold significance. While it symbolizes the sacrifice of the divine Life which is "slain from the foundation of the world, dying in very truth that we might live",¹⁹ it further symbolizes the sacrifice of the separated individual self, "the way of the Cross" which leads to eternal life.

The transcendence of limiting conditions is the only way to liberation. Pain therefore is seen to serve an intelligible purpose in revealing the presence of some separative factor, some form of selfishness which must be broken. The Self has become identified with a limitation, and it must repudiate the part if it would know the whole. Yet it would perhaps be truer to say that the association with the part, with the limitation, has not to be destroyed but rather utilized as a "dead self" by means of which man may enter into a greater freedom beyond. Jung recognizes the necessity for sacrifice in psychological growth when he states that the opportunity for the widening of consciousness which is offered by each new problem involves also *"the necessity of saying good-bye to child-like unconsciousness and trust in nature"*.²⁰ Increase is bought at the price of apparent loss, and the difficulty lies in the fact that the price must be paid before the comfortable assurance of gain has been proved.

The useful illustration is sometimes given of the little child who must give up its toys in order to enter into the richer experiences of adulthood. The sacrifice that is here demanded, continues to be demanded under different forms throughout human life. The individual who wishes to roam freely through the kingdom of thought must abandon their attachment to the thought-patterns with which s/he has identified

themselves. To become the universal s/he must abandon their parochialism. To reach the freedom of the creative levels of consciousness, s/he must renounce the comfortable security of the personality. Only on this condition will they be able to prove for themselves the truth of statements made by ancient religion and modern psychology alike, that 'foregoing self, the Universe grows 'I', and that the only way to more abundant life lies in the renunciation of the limited form of life with which the individual is temporarily identified. Is it possible to state in a few words the practical outcome of a study of the Science of Spirituality?

In all that concerns the personal life, no more is required than to fulfil the instruction given in 'At the Feet of the Master': to do exactly what is said, to live as though unity were a fact and to love one's brother as oneself. *"If you ask me",* writes HPB in 'The Key to Theosophy', *"how we understand Theosophical duty practically and in view of Karma, I may answer you that our duty is to drink without a murmur to the last drop, whatever contents the cup of life may have in store for us, to pluck the roses of life only for the fragrance they may shed on others, and to be ourselves content but with the thorns, if that fragrance cannot be enjoyed without depriving someone else of it"*.²¹

In the organization of human communities and their complex relationships, the way of action will be seen on analysis to be fundamentally the same. A comparison made by an eminent anthropologist between our Western way of life and that of primitive groups throws light on the problem that confronts contemporary man.

Primitive societies are essentially simple: they offer one way of life for all, one code for all, and consequently they are characterized by an enviable absence of problems. A modern civilized community on the other hand presents a picture of extraordinary diversity and conflict: differences of religious and political thought, differences of economic and social organization, differences of moral standards - and all violated— and a complex variety of changing relationships and functions; and everywhere disputes, conflicts, material and psychological problems. At the cost of much unhappiness and

dissatisfaction, a more dignified standard of personal relationships has been acquired, and diversity and individuality have been gained by the sacrifice of primitive harmony. It would seem that the next development for humanity is the attainment of a superior harmony which shall be not the harmony of uniformity but a synthesis of diversity, in which individual differentiation shall contribute to the richness of the total pattern.²²

"A civilization", Smuts has written, *"is nothing but a spiritual structure of the dominant ideas expressing themselves in institutions and the subtle atmosphere of culture"*. But it will be conceded that the dominant ideas must be furnished in the first place by individuals. If we can place before ourselves constantly the idea of the One Life, till it dominates our every thought and action, it may be that we shall have the satisfaction of seeing the birth of a world civilization that is an expression, in terms of human institutions and cultures, of the principle of Unity. The change that must be accomplished before this ideal can be realized is essentially a change in human consciousness. But there is reason to suppose that the possibility of such a change is not an idle dream. Sir Richard Gregory has remarked how the progress of the nineteenth century lay not only in the increased command of the material resources of the world, but in the *"stupendous awakening to a sense of social responsibility... a broadening conception of the relations and obligations of man to man,"* which a study of that period reveals. That sense existed already in a limited form in primitive groups, but *"within a modern society it may reach out to embrace all members of a great nation, and possibly all men of good will. Man's social instincts have been extended from family to tribe, nation and empire, and will reach their highest and best when they embrace the world"*.²³

In addition to the support for this encouraging view that an observation of history provides, there seems to be evidence of yet another kind in the development of parapsychology. We admit with Huxley that *"the major ethical problem of our time is to achieve global unity for man"*.²⁴ The conclusions of Rhine on the far-reaching effect of non-physical investigations would seem extravagant were they not supported both by

existing knowledge of evolutionary changes and by the principles of the Ancient Wisdom. Speaking of the need for a co-operative and harmonious spirit in human relations, he continues:

“Over the firm ground of research we are moving toward this objective. By the discovery of an experimental sanction for the psycho-centric conception of man we can be brought to think of people all over the world as being more than bodies. We know, on no mere basis of faith, but on evidence, that they have independent minds with true volitional choice in the creative determination of their lives and have peculiar personal potentialities for unique cultural contributions to the world. Superficial group demarcations of physical character decline in importance as the significance of the inner life of the human mind is recognized. The social binding power of spiritual, as against physical, interrelations among men can be regarded as being fully as real, as effective, as any other power in the universe. With the security of experimental evidence behind them, these newer findings about the sciences of mental life should spread over the world as effectively as have the sciences of the body. And surely we must expect that a higher order of fraternal understanding and co-operation will follow them across the oceans

*and continents, just as better sanitation and health have followed on the trail of knowledge of hygiene and medicine”.*²⁵

The Science of Spirituality makes intelligible both the problems of human life and the attempts of individuals and of groups to find a satisfying solution. The Ancient Wisdom declares that Life is One, but humanity, in the valley of the shadow, sees only many-ness and goes from death to death. In separation and in pain we gather the fruit of individuality; in renunciation and in love we may gather the Wisdom of the Self.

Ianthe Hoskins was President of the Theosophical Society in England from 1972 to 1978 and from 1989 to 1992. She is very well-remembered for her cogent and clear expositions of the fundamental principles of Theosophy, ably condensing for the newer student, some of the most complex aspects in Madame Blavatsky's principal work 'The Secret Doctrine', amongst others. Ianthe was a teacher by profession and an esteemed international Theosophical speaker. She delivered this Blavatsky Lecture "The Science of Spirituality" in Besant Hall, London, on 28 May 1950. A stalwart worker for the TSE, Ianthe is fondly remembered for her joyful wit and unrequited enthusiasm. Born in 1912, she died in 2001.

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- ²¹ Op. cit., p. 193.
- ²² M. Mead: Coming of Age in Samoa.
- ²³ Address to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1938.
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- ²⁵ The Reach of the Mind, p. 177.

In Remembrance



Members may hide from the limelight or be very familiar faces known to many. We wish to commemorate all who have passed on having chosen Theosophy as a way of life and as a mark of respect to the gift of service they have given to the Society and our members. There have been more deaths than usual over recent months and we celebrate the lives of these members. We will surely meet again and walk on together, working in service to the world in some new life.

Ian Allen



Ian joined the Theosophical Society in 1984. Originally he was a member of Blavatsky Lodge, London. When he lived in the United States, he was an active player in the affairs of Minneapolis Lodge and his friend Von Braschler remarks *"He taught us how to sing. And had a wonderful understanding of Sanskrit."* Upon his return to England, Ian joined a local choir and attended Liberal Catholic Church meetings. He also transferred his TS membership to the South Essex Lodge. We remember fondly his good sense of humour and the invaluable contribution his scientific knowledge brought to our discussions of the esoteric philosophy. Ian would often relate his belief that in his previous life, he was a WWII fighter bomber in the German Luftwaffe.

Colyn Boyce

Donald Atkinson



Donald (Don) was born in Nelson on 26th February 1930, and he had one sister, Marjorie. Don had always lived around Nelson, Barrowford and Burnley. He went to school in Barrowford, and from an early age he was reading books by authors such as Paul Brunton and Dion Fortune. National Service sent Don to the Royal Navy. He signed on for three years, taking along his 6 volumes of the Secret Doctrine! He spent his time in Portsmouth where he found and attended his first Theosophical meeting, from where he went on to join the Astrological Lodge in London during 1954. Later on, he had a short break from the Society due to family matters, but it was not long before he re-joined in 1974.

Don was an electrician. His work saw him repairing the old type of T.Vs in people's homes and for a while had his own TV and audio shop in Nelson. He had worked down a coal mine, and at Michelins factory in Burnley, again as an electrician. He spent the last 20 years of his working life as an electro-medical engineer at the hospital group in Burnley and District, before retiring early through ill health. When Don married his wife Maureen in 1978, their combined families amounted to five children, 2 sons and 3 daughters, and now fourteen grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren.

Life revolved around Theosophy, and "holidays" were mainly spent in their camper van travelling to Theosophical meetings in England, Scotland, and Wales, and giving talks and meeting in Europe. Don also went to meetings in New York, Canada, and India. For a short time, he was an unattached member, but found being a member of a Lodge allowed him to practice brotherhood and study with like-minded people. Years ago, there were Lodges in Burnley and Blackburn, in which he held various Lodge Offices, and latterly he was a member of Bolton Lodge.

Don was an accredited speaker with the National Society. He served in many Offices in the Lodges and Federation and was National Treasurer for the Society for 9 years and was a National Councillor right up until the time of his death. He was an Executive Committee Member for many years and on the Tekels Park Board of Directors. He also served on the finances committee, the Inter-Federation Group, where Federations brought Federation Officers together to benefit all, and he worked with people like Peter Barton and Ian Pearson on future planning for the TSE. He enjoyed working with his hands and could turn his hand to anything, taking on tasks at HQ and Tekels Park. Also helping with the Tekels Camp site when the young people from the 'Order of the Round Table' were

working there and joining in at their campfires. He attended many meetings at the International Theosophical Centre at Naarden and during one trip he put electric lighting into one of the buildings as a volunteer.

Don's life revolved around theosophy. He was in demand as a speaker but what he really enjoyed was being a panellist, where he could answer 'off the cuff' on a whole range of subjects. He enjoyed his own company more than socializing but he also had a dry sense of humour. At Summer Schools, Weekend Events and Conferences you would always find him with his "Earmuffs" on recording talks and studies or behind the Book Stall run by the North West Federation Book Fund, set up by himself and Maureen. He also helped to organize and run Federation Conferences at Tekels Park, and the Trans-Pennine Weekends.

During his last few years, he became more of a recluse, continuing his studies and writing for the Federation Journal of which he was a founder member. He was the only Life Member of the Theosophical History Journal, one of the first when it began. Don will be remembered for his passion for books and music, the only real hobbies he had. Although when he married Maureen, they were keen ballroom dancers, something he had to give up when he retired with Meniere's disease.

Knowing Don, his work is not finished, and he will be continuing on his journey.

From Donald's Family

At my first Summer School, in Nottingham, I met Donald and was immediately struck by his great enthusiasm for Theosophy and The Theosophical Society. In preparation for being National Treasurer of the Theosophical Society, he went to evening classes in accountancy to make sure he had all the necessary knowledge to do the job properly. This he did for an amazing 9 years at a time when many financial problems were encountered including the refurbishment of 50 Gloucester Place.

For many years, he was a major player at the Summer Schools, recording the lectures and installing his own sound system to ensure that everyone could hear the lectures more clearly, as well as helping with the bookstall and giving some lectures. Donald was also a leading member of the North West Federation and when I was invited to do a lecture tour of the Federation Donald and his wife Maureen kindly asked me to stay with them and I saw the massive collection of Theosophical books in their garage which had become the Federation's travelling book stall for conferences and the Summer School.

Donald's enthusiasm for the TS seemed boundless as he was also committed to Tekels Park for many years which he loved till the day when with great sadness he watched it being sold. Donald was a Doyen of Theosophy and worked exceptionally hard for the Theosophical Society. He will be very difficult if not impossible to replace and he was and still is a great example for us all. I am sure he will take every opportunity when he moves on, to contribute in new fields of endeavour.

Donald will be long remembered for all his good works and for promulgating the teachings of the Masters and H P Blavatsky. He will be sorely missed.

Colin Price

Don and Maureen used to come down to Tekels Park in their old green van for Theosophical weekend conferences. They would park up on the Campsite where there were usually groups of young people camping and working on the site. Occasionally they would join us round the campfire for a while for a while before going off to sleep. Don was always interested in the conversation we were having and what we were doing on site. When Don retired he got rid of the old van and got a bigger and more comfortable motor home. He and Maureen would still come to Tekels, parking under the shade of the green beech tree behind the walled garden.

Don was a hard worker in his working life and a hard worker in his retirement, dedicating himself to continuing his study of Theosophy and working for the Theosophical Society both locally and nationally. Don was National Treasurer for nine years and a member of the National Executive Committee for many years in addition. He was a man of integrity and honesty. A decent man. A man of intelligence and intellect. A man with a sense of humour (sometimes so dry as to be desert-like!). He could be a real grump at times (aren't we all?). But Don was, at heart, a warm, loving, compassionate and kind human being, a great soul.

I wish you well, my friend, as you continue on your great journey and thank you for your work in this life. May you rest in peace and the Light Perpetual shine upon you.

Richard Bayly

I first met Donald Atkinson (Don) at the English Summer School held at Liverpool in 2010 where I witnessed him recording speakers' talks and study group meetings. This was one of many acts of service relating to the dissemination of the wisdom teachings which Don provided on behalf of our society. At Summer Schools, Weekend Events and Conferences he was easily recognized at the helm of his recording system selflessly devoting his time and energy for the benefit of our members and, when not recording talks, he was conspicuous in his presence behind the North West Federation book stall —a learning facility which he, himself founded.

I had the pleasure of staying with Don and his wife, and fellow Theosophist, Maureen on a number of occasions at their home in Burnley. During conversation Don informed me that he began to study The Secret Doctrine in his teenage years prior to him undertaking National Service in the Royal Navy with H.P.B.'s classic work functioning as his indispensable companion.

During the course of his National Service, Don was stationed in Portsmouth. It was here that he discovered and attended his first Theosophical meeting, joining the society thereafter in 1954. Interestingly here, a form of mandatory service and personal sacrifice led to a lifetime of spiritual service to which we, as members of the Theosophical Society, are eternally grateful.

Don held a numerous array of positions within the NW Federation. These ranging from Lodge treasurer; Lodge President; Federation Registrar, Treasurer and Vice President. At National level he served as Councillor and Executive Committee Member for many years. Don was National Treasurer for a period of nine years whilst, on other occasions, he assisted on the Finance Committee whilst also serving on the Tekels Park Board of Directors. He was also Life Member of the Theosophical History Journal. In addition to this extensive list, Don worked within The Inter-Federation Group and, together with Peter Barton and Ian Pearson, he was involved in work relating to the creation and implementation of a future vision for the Society. Recently, Don led a study group at Bolton Lodge with Wayne Gatfield.

I perceived Don as a man of humility derived from his understanding of the wisdom teachings and his place within the 'grand scheme of things.' However, he also exuded an aura of great power and spiritual potency. My personal memories relate primarily to his erudition in terms of spiritual teachings and, also, to his inimitable, dry sense of humour (this coming from a Scotsman!). What especially impressed me in respect of Don's lifetime of study and application of the wisdom teachings was his ability to adopt a comparative approach, relating H.P.B.'s pioneering works to those of Alice Bailey; later Theosophical writers; Indian teachings; the Qabalah; and the Western Mystery Tradition in general.

I have no doubt that those fortunate enough to have met Don would describe him as a gifted spiritual teacher. I would extend this further by stating that I considered him as a 'teacher of teachers'. Don always sought to extend the boundaries of consciousness of seekers of truth, being especially at home in instructing and honing the skills of Theosophical speakers and teachers in order that they would function more effectively towards disseminating the timeless truths contained within the wisdom teachings.

Don contributed a series of impressive articles for the NW Federation Journal of which he was a founder member. I remarked on a number of occasions to him and his wife Maureen, that it would be of great value to our membership for these to be published together in a book, thereby offering insight and assistance to advanced students of the wisdom teachings.

I lament the loss of one half of an indispensable 'double act' on behalf of our Society — Don dispensing 'pearls of wisdom' relating to Theosophical and other spiritual teachings, and his wife Maureen indefatigably performing acts of service driven by kindness and compassion — which she continues to do. However, I also celebrate our good fortune in encountering a truly unique and thoroughly dedicated member of our Society whose insights and tireless efforts serve as a source of inspiration to us all.

Gary Kidgell

Donald had a very dry and sometimes 'old fashioned' sense of humour, delivered with a smile and sometimes a wink. He was very mischievous and brought his light-hearted sense of humour into play at virtually every theosophical event. This, however, belied a very serious-minded and dedicated Theosophist, one who knew when to focus on the work in hand and when some 'light interjection' was in order - well most of the time!

Donald applied his energies to his responsibilities as National Treasurer with as much energy, vigour, and dedication as he did to his Theosophical studies, and tutoring through his study classes and lectures. He helped to steer the Society through some very difficult periods in its evolution, beset as it was at that time with major financial issues and with several subsidiary companies and properties to manage. I worked alongside Donald for the whole of his nine-year period in Office as National Treasurer and then after he retired from that role and continued to serve on the Executive Committee for some years. So, I can safely say, that though circumstances appeared daunting at times, he was a stalwart pilgrim and difficulties seldom dampened Donald's energies or enthusiasm. He took a very practical approach to most things, 'rolling up his sleeves', mentally and otherwise, to see what needed to be done and then setting about doing it. Donald was for sure one of the main pillars of the English Section.

A 'Northerner' to his roots, Donald was a very well-known character throughout the whole of the Section, regularly visiting many of the Lodges, and meeting new members and scores of old friends at Summer Schools and Conferences. He was known too for his sometimes-forthright opinions at the National Council, but always with one thing in his mind – what was best for the Society. The Teachings and the Society were his 'first' and 'last' and his decades of selfless service are a testament to that. A constant star in the firmament, he was a good friend and mentor to many, and he will be missed for a long time to come.

Susan Bayliss

From joining the Theosophical Society in 1975 and it seems that Donald was always there right from the beginning. It will seem very strange when things get back to normal, with him missing from everything. He always had a similar playful sense of humour to me, but only when the time was right. When it was time to be serious, he was just that.

Donald did his national service in the Navy. He signed on for three years and was stationed at Portsmouth where he attended his first Theosophical meeting. He joined the Society in 1954, just a year after I was born! After that he was very active in the Society. He held numerous positions in the North West Federation, including Registrar, Treasurer and Vice President; and he was Treasurer and President for Blackburn Lodge. Later, at Bolton Lodge, he led the study group along with me. Even with failing eyesight he soldiered on.

Donald was a National Councillor and served on the Executive and Finance Committees for many years, and he served as National Treasurer for nine years. At Summer Schools, weekend events and conferences, he recorded talks and studies or worked on the Federation book stall. He continued his studies and writing for the Federation Journal of which he was a founder member, and he was the only Life Member of the Theosophical History Journal.

He was always very kind to me and the talked about 'big Wayne' and 'little Wayne', meaning the serious more 'spiritual' side of me and the rather flippant attitude I have at times. Yes, it will seem very strange without Donald. There will be a hole where he once was and it will be hard to ever fill it, but life goes on. HPB always taught that "death is ever a friend and deliverer", and we know that no one really dies in the sense that the mundane world tends to think; we just walk on to other planes of being. Yet we miss people's presence, though they have been freed from their suffering and will one day return to continue their pilgrimage, quite likely with some of those they knew in a previous life. It is just that we must remain here, to carry on, until our time arrives.

Will we remember each other? I think there is an element of remembering, maybe not in concrete terms, but a kind of soul communion. It is when you meet someone and feel you have known them forever, even if the relationship is short. Sometimes it may be just one meeting. W. Q. Judge once said to his students something like 'are you so foolish to think we are meeting here for the first time?'

Donald's journey is not over, just another chapter written in the Never-Ending Story that we are all part of.

Wayne Gatfield

Blanch Ballard

For those fortunate enough to have taken part in Tekels Park meetings and gatherings during the 1980s there was the pleasure of encountering Seymour and Blanche Ballard. A charismatic couple, Seymour, was an east coast American who travelled and lectured all over the world and Blanche, a beautiful blue eyed English rose whom he married when he was 60. Blanche's kindness and generosity were well known she would never overlook a birthday or celebrations for friends, neighbours, and especially young children. For several years she was the Almoner for the Society doing much good work for those in need.

Blanche was working at the University library at Oxford when they met at a Theosophical Society meeting and plans for a life together were soon made. Seymour lived in Tekels Park while preparations for a wedding at St Francis church in Tekels were organized. At the reception in the guesthouse there were friends from all over the world. After Blanche retired from the University Library the couple moved to Green Hedges in Tekels Park where they spent their last happy years together. Seymour was in demand as a speaker and Blanche would arrange suitable programmes for him.

As the happy years in Tekels went by, Seymour, who had polio as a child and survived, developed serious problems and it became necessary for him to use a wheelchair. Blanche a fragile looking woman never flinched and took on the many problems. They bought a specially adapted car and she learned how to use hoists to get him inside. Because of his problems with mobility Blanche ensured friends and neighbours were regular visitors to talk Theosophy and a whole range of other topics. Seymour died in 2002 aged 89. Blanche arranged for the Stars and Stripes to be draped over the coffin to signify his love for his homeland.

Blanche stayed at Green Hedges for a while but later took on the task of manager of the Esoteric Society premises in Tekels. She organized meetings and looked after visiting ES members as well as ensuring the property was properly maintained. She eventually moved to an apartment in Ferndown but never really settled and moved several times to Chester, Cambridge, Eastbourne and finally to a little apartment at a retirement village in Aldershot.

Barbara Macdonald

Barbara Burgess



I think I can safely describe Barbara Burgess as a 'versatile theosophist'. She was a Member of the Society and a long-standing member of the Theosophical Order of Service, and she had a long-term interest in Healing and Alternative Medicine. She gave 37 years of devoted and wide-ranging service to the Society and its members.

I first met Barbara and her husband Philip in the late 1950's, soon after I joined the Rugby Lodge; she was a teacher, he was an engineer (electronic, I think). They lived in Coventry but attended Rugby Lodge meetings sporadically. Philip was a member of the TS helping Arthur Ellison, also a TS member, in the start-up of the new Lodge. I worked closely with them for a few years and Barbara came to some meetings of Rugby Lodge with Philip.

I met Philip and Barbara again in July 1987 when I went to Coventry Lodge to give a Talk entitled 'The Field of Change'. They both attended on this occasion and were clearly then active members of Coventry Lodge. They moved to Norfolk after retirement, joined Norwich Lodge and were soon taking a leading part in its organisation. Our paths then diverged until 1998, when my good friend, Arthur Ellison, was giving The Blavatsky Lecture at Summer School, held in July that year in Leicester University. Philip and Barbara did not usually attend Summer Schools but came to hear Arthur's Lecture, entitled 'Science, Consciousness and the Paranormal', because Philip was particularly interested in some of its content; Arthur had also been best man at their wedding.

In early January 2000, Barbara was a member (or Leader) of a Healing Group in Norwich. Barbara and her Healing Group 'magnetised' a crystal to enable it to provide energies which would be helpful to my wife, Rosemary, who was in a hospice. Barbara sent that 'magnetised' crystal to me, with instructions to hold the crystal in the palm of my left hand and then hold it in the palm of Rosemary's left hand – and let it do its work. It was after midnight

before I was able to do this. Then 'I closed my eyes and opened my mind' to let the energies of the crystal flow. When I opened my eyes some hours later – one third of the substance of the crystal had disappeared. I telephoned Barbara to tell her of my experience with the crystal and, later, showed it to her; she was as puzzled as I was by the change in the crystal.

When Barbara invited me to go to Norwich to give a Talk two years later – it was Barbara who was playing the leading role. Barbara and Philip were a devoted couple, and I would like to send them both this farewell message:

*I cup my hands before my heart to hold a thought of you therein,
Enfolding all your world in peace
And all the people in it in Harmony and Joyfulness
In beautiful, balanced, rhythmic integration,
To stand in spiritual being*

*Then softly smile and wish you well and gently let you go.
Let you go, that you may flow in freedom of your soul, my friends,
To soar along your joyous way, the surer for this thought*

Peter Barton

Barbara Burgess first joined the Theosophical Society in 1973. She and her husband Philip were both staunch members of Discovery Lodge, Coventry for many years. Philip was the lecturer in the lodge, but Barbara would lead study courses including one entitled 'An Introduction to Esoteric Principles' by William Doss McDavid. For a time, she served as Treasurer of the branch. Barbara was a member of the Theosophical Order of Service and as a practical person would lend support to any work of the organisation. Barbara was ever warm and friendly and would always produce something delicious for teatime. She was a keen promoter of vegetarian living.

In the late 1990s, upon Philip's retirement, the couple moved to Aylsham in Norfolk and became involved in the work of Norwich Lodge. A reasonably vital lodge at that time. Norwich Lodge used to meet at the elegant Assembly Rooms in the centre of the city. After a short while, Barbara became President of the lodge. She and Philip worked tirelessly to promote the work of the lodge, despite poor health and lack of helpers. By 2010, there were only Philip and Barbara and one or two other members. Philip died soon after and the branch was closed after Barbara went into a care home diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

The TS in England is grateful for Barbara's many years of service within the theosophical movement and making such a thing as Theosophy known to so many.

Patricia Winstanley, John Gray and Colyn Boyce

Barbara was a friend to many members and a very loving and endearing person. It is little known within the TSE, that Barbara also belonged to a Masonic Order and so as well as giving decades of service in the Society, Barbara and her husband Philip were also able to help many other budding spiritual aspirants through their dedicated Masonic work. Barbara was also committed to the Theosophical Order of Service and would do whatever she could to support its work.

It is hard to mention Barbara without her husband because they were devoted to each other and did absolutely everything together. Despite her own advancing years, Barbara did a magnificent job of looking after Philip and took it very hard when he died. She quickly went into decline and soon required full time care herself. It was a sad loss to everyone when she could no longer communicate, but until the end she was delighted to receive the TSE magazine and letters from Theosophical friends, which the nursing staff would read to her from time to time. It was very difficult when Barbara was unable to reply to letters and very sad that she only had her carers at the end of her life of service, but they understood just how very far away from Norfolk everyone lived.

It was a pleasure to have known Barbara and it is very difficult to say what someone has meant in your life or to convey all the good that they did for so many TS members, so this is just a small testament to Barbara - and to Philip - who were true servants of humanity. Barbara will be very sadly missed.

Barbara's long-time friends

Mike Hill



Mike joined the Society in 2002 and he will be remembered for his service at Tunbridge Wells Lodge and as a National Councillor. He was an able contributor during debates, a clear thinker and a polite but no-nonsense character. His cheerful and bright personality will be much missed at our Theosophical meetings.

Mike was a chef; boxer; socialist; trade union official; spiritualist, ray of sunshine; lover of life; swimmer; long distance walker; healer; teacher. He was diagnosed with lung cancer last summer and we hoped that with treatment, he would be with us for a few more years yet. But it was not to be, and he died on Friday 9 October 2020 at home in London.

In the last months of his life, he was deeply moved by messages from dear friends around the world and by the healing energies so many combined to send his way. When the pandemic allows, we will organise a celebration of his life because everybody who knew him will recognise that he would not want us to be sad at his passing.

Like a sunflower, he naturally turned towards the light, warming hearts and with his vast reserves of love and compassion, touching the souls of so many. We will miss him so much.

Mike's family and TS friends

Walter Kearney

Walter passed peacefully from this life just before midnight on 22 February 2021. He was 92 and Theosophy had been his guiding light for more than 42 years. Like so many TS members, Theosophy 'found' Walter when, in his typically kind-hearted way, he offered to drive a friend to a meeting of Wallasey Lodge. That physical journey brought Walter to a metaphorical 'crossroads' in his life. Walter decided to sit at the back of the meeting room to wait to take his friend back home. The speaker that evening was Rosemary Larbalestier and as her talk progressed Walter felt there was a truth in everything she was saying and that it seemed to make sense of some of his own experiences. Following that meeting, Walter made the fifty-mile round trip to Wallasey Lodge's twice monthly meetings, eventually joining the Society on 1 December 1978.

A modest, down-to-earth, and genial man. Walter had a quiet sense of humour and a generous spirit. In his study of Theosophical teachings Walter was not a 'grasshopper', more like a 'dog with a bone', never letting go of a concept until he had fully explored and digested it before moving on to another teaching. He was more concerned with understanding how the teachings were important in everyday life and applying them to his own life. It was enough for him just to know about some of the more involved teachings without exploring them. He was content to paddle in the shallower waters rather than plunge into the ocean's depths. To roughly quote Walter: *"It's enough getting to grips with this little lot (life in general) and working on myself, without thinking about Manvantaras and the like!"*

Walter was an active member of Wallasey Lodge and the North West Federation until he went to live in London with his niece just over a year ago. He became Lodge Treasurer in 1981, Federation Treasurer in 1992 and Lodge President in 1998. Never missing an opportunity of furthering his understanding of Theosophy, Walter was a member of 'The Pillars of Theosophy' study group. He also attended, almost without exception, all the NW Federation events, and many of you will remember him from the Federation's twice-yearly Conferences and the annual Trans-Pennine Weekends.

Walter will be sadly missed and always remembered with affection as a friend and fellow student of Theosophy. It was a pleasure to accompany him for part of his journey and no doubt we will share future journeys together.

Sandra Kelly

Frank Ryder

Frank joined the Society in 1960 and passed away in August 2020, having been an 'old school' TS member of Birmingham Lodge for 60 years. He was well versed in all aspects of Theosophy, with a deep and wide knowledge. He also had a deep love of the Arts and travelled extensively particularly visiting sacred sites. He was popular with TS members especially at the annual Summer School due his knowledge and wisdom and unique sense of humour. With a twinkle in his eye, he would proceed to jest, or produce either a pun or a witty remark if not both. He loved to joke with people and was never short of a repartee or two.

His wisdom and enthusiasm will be greatly missed.

Monika Kasnickas

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