

STUDIES IN
OCCULTISM

A Series of Reprints from the Writings

of

H. P. BLAVATSKY

NO. IV.

KOSMIC MIND

THE DUAL ASPECT OF WISDOM

BOSTON:
NEW ENGLAND THEOSOPHICAL CORPORATION
24 Mt. Vernon St.

1895

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H. P. BLAVATSKY

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198
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1895s
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From "Lucifer", Sept. 1890.

KOSMIC MIND.

“Whatsoever quits the *Laya* (homogeneous) state, becomes active, conscious life. Individual consciousness emanates from, and returns into Absolute consciousness which is eternal MOTION.”

(Esoteric Axioms.)

“Whatever that be which thinks, which understands, which wills, which acts, it is something celestial and divine, and upon that account must necessarily be eternal.”

—CICERO.

EDISON's conception of matter was quoted in our March editorial article. The great American electrician is reported by Mr. G. Parsons Lathrop in *Harper's Magazine* as giving out his personal belief about the atoms being “possessed by a certain amount of intelligence”, and shown indulging in other reveries of this kind. For this flight of fancy the February *Review of Reviews* takes the inventor of the phono-

graph to task, and critically remarks that "Edison is much given to dreaming", his 'scientific imagination' being constantly at work.

Would to goodness the men of science exercised their 'scientific imagination' a little more, and their dogmatic and cold negations a little less. Dreams differ. In that strange state of being which, as Byron has it, puts us in a position "with seal'd eyes to see", one often perceives more real facts than when awake. Imagination is, again, one of the strongest elements in human nature, or in the words of Dugald Stewart, it "is the great spring of human activity and the principal source of human improvement. . . . Destroy the faculty, and the condition of men will become as stationary as that of brutes." It is the best guide of our blind senses, without which the latter could never lead us beyond matter and its illusions. The greatest discoveries of modern science are due to the imaginative faculty of the discoverers. But when has anything new been postulated, when a theory clashing with and contradicting a

comfortably settled predecessor put forth, without orthodox science first sitting on it, and trying to crush it out of existence? Harvey was also regarded at first as a "dreamer" and a madman to boot. Finally, the whole of modern science is formed of "working hypotheses", the fruits of "scientific imagination", as Mr. Tyndall felicitously called it.

Is it then, because consciousness in every universal atom and the possibility of a complete control over the cells and atoms of his body by man, have not been honored so far with the *imprimatur* of the Popes of exact science, that the idea is to be dismissed as a dream? Occultism gives the same teaching. Occultism tells us that every atom, like the monad of Leibnitz, is a little universe in itself; and that every organ and cell in the human body is endowed with a brain of its own, with memory, therefore, experience and discriminative powers. The idea of Universal Life composed of individual atomic lives is one of the oldest teachings of esoteric philosophy, and the very modern hypothesis of modern

science, that of *crystalline life*, is the first ray from the ancient luminary of knowledge that has reached our scholars. If plants can be shown to have nerves and sensations and instinct (but another word for consciousness), why not allow the same in the cells of the human body? Science divides matter into organic and inorganic bodies, only because it rejects the idea of *absolute life* and a life-principle as an entity: otherwise it would be the first to see that *absolute life* cannot produce even a geometrical point, or an atom inorganic in its essence. But Occultism, you see, “teaches mysteries”, they say; and mystery is the *negation of common sense*, just as again metaphysics is but a kind of poetry, according to Mr. Tyndall. There is no such thing for science as mystery; and therefore, as a life-principle is, and must remain for the intellects of our civilized races forever a mystery *on physical lines*—they who deal in this question have to be of necessity either fools or knaves.

Dixit. Nevertheless, we may repeat with a French preacher: “mystery is the fatality

of science". Official science is surrounded on every side and hedged in by unapproachable, for ever impenetrable mysteries. And why? Simply because physical science is self-doomed to a squirrel-like progress around a wheel of matter limited by our five senses. And though it is as confessedly ignorant of the formation of matter, as of the generation of a simple cell; though it is as powerless to explain what is this, that, or the other, it will yet dogmatize and insist on what life, matter, and the rest are not. It comes to this: the words of Father Felix addressed fifty years ago to the French academicians have nearly become immortal as a truism. "Gentlemen", he said, "you throw into our teeth the reproach that we teach mysteries. But imagine whatever science you will; follow the magnificent sweep of its deductions and when you arrive at its parent source you come face to face with the unknown!"

Now to lay at rest once for all in the minds of theosophists this vexed question, we intend to prove that modern science, owing to physiology, is itself on the eve of

discovering that consciousness is universal—thus justifying Edison's "dreams". But before we do this, we mean also to show that though many a man of science is soaked through and through with such belief, very few are brave enough to openly admit it, as the late Dr. Pirogoff of St. Petersburg has done in his posthumous *Memoirs*. Indeed that great surgeon and pathologist raised by their publication quite a howl of indignation among his colleagues. How then? the public asked: He, Dr. Pirogoff, whom we regarded as almost the embodiment of European learning, believing in the superstitions of crazy alchemists? He, who in the words of a contemporary:—

was the very incarnation of exact science and methods of thought; who had dissected hundreds and thousands of human organs, making himself as acquainted with all the mysteries of surgery and anatomy as we are with our familiar furniture; the savant for whom physiology had no secrets and who, above all men, was one to whom Voltaire might have ironically asked whether he had not found immortal soul between the bladder and the blind gut,—that same Pirogoff is found after his death devot-

ing whole chapters in his literary Will to the scientific demonstration. . . .

Novoye Vremya of 1887.

—of what? Why, of the existence in every organism of a *distinct* 'VITAL FORCE' independent of any physical or chemical process. Like Liebig he accepted the derided and tabooed homogeneity of nature—a life principle—that persecuted and hapless teleology, or the science of the final causes of things, which is as philosophical as it is *unscientific*, if we have to believe imperial and royal academies. His unpardonable sin in the eyes of dogmatic modern science, however, was this: The great anatomist and surgeon had the 'hardihood' to declare in his *Memoirs*, that:—

"We have no cause to reject the possibility of the existence of organisms endowed with such properties that would make of them—the *direct embodiment of the universal mind*—a perfection inaccessible to our own (human) mind, because we have no right to maintain that man is the last expression of the divine creative thought."

Such are the chief features of the heresy of one who ranked high among the men of

exact science of this age. His *Memoirs* show plainly that not only he believed in universal deity, divine ideation, or the Hermetic 'thought divine', and a vital principle, but taught all this, and tried to demonstrate it scientifically. Thus he argues that Universal Mind needs no physico-chemical, or mechanical brain as an organ of transmission. He even goes so far as to admit it in these suggestive words:—

“Our reason must accept *in all necessity* an infinite and eternal Mind which rules and governs the ocean of life. . . . *Thought and creative ideation, in full agreement with the laws of unity and causation, manifest themselves plainly enough in universal life without the participation of brain-slush. . . .* Directing the forces and elements toward the formation of organisms, this *organizing life-principle* becomes *self-sentient, self-conscious, racial or individual*. Substance, ruled and directed by the life-principle, is organised according to a general defined plan into certain types.”

He explains this belief by confessing that never, during his long life so full of study, observation, and experiments, could he—

“acquire the conviction, that our brain could be the only organ of thought in the whole universe;

that everything in this world, save *that* organ, should be unconditioned and senseless, and that human thought alone should impart to the universe a meaning and a reasonable harmony in its integrity."

And he adds *à propos* of Moleschott's materialism :—

"Howsoever much fish and peas I may eat, never shall I consent to give away my *Ego* into durance vile of a product casually extracted by modern *alchemy* from the urine. If, in our conceptions of the universe it be our fate to fall into illusions, then my 'illusion' has, at least, the advantage of being very consoling. For it shows to me an intelligent universe and the activity of forces working in it harmoniously and intelligently; and that my 'I' is not the product of chemical and histological elements but *an embodiment of a common universal Mind*. The latter, I sense and represent to myself as acting in free-will and consciousness in accordance with the same laws which are traced for the guidance of my own mind, but only exempt from that restraint which trammels our human conscious individuality."

For, as remarks elsewhere this great and philosophic man of Science:—

"*The limitless and the eternal, is not only a postulate of our mind and reason, but also a gigantic* .

fact, in itself. What would become of our ethical or moral principle were not the everlasting and integral truth to serve it as a foundation !”

The above selections, translated *verbatim* from the confessions of one who was during his long life a star of the first magnitude in the fields of pathology and surgery, show him imbued and soaked through with the philosophy of a reasoned and scientific mysticism. In reading the *Memoirs* of that man of scientific fame, we feel proud of finding him accepting, almost wholesale, the fundamental doctrines and beliefs of Theosophy. With such an exceptionally scientific mind in the ranks of mystics, the idiotic grins, the cheap satires and flings at our great Philosophy by some European and American ‘Freethinkers’, become almost a compliment. More than ever do they appear to us like the frightened discordant cry of the night-owl hurrying to hide in its dark ruins before the light of the morning Sun.

The progress of physiology itself, as we have just said, is a sure warrant that the dawn of that day when a full recognition of a universally diffused mind will be an ac-

complished fact, is not far off. It is *only* a question of time.

For, notwithstanding the boast of physiology, that the aim of its researches is only the summing up of every vital function in order to bring them into a definite order by showing their mutual relations to, and connection with, the laws of physics and chemistry, hence, in their final form with mechanical laws—we fear there is a good deal of contradiction between the confessed object and the speculations of some of the best of our modern physiologists. While few of them would dare to return as openly as did Dr. Pirogoff to the ‘exploded superstition’ of *vitalism* and the severely exiled life-principle, the *principium vitæ* of Paracelsus—yet physiology stands sorely perplexed in the face of its ablest representatives before certain facts. Unfortunately for us, this age of ours is not conducive to the development of moral courage. The time for most to act on the noble idea of ‘*principia non homines*’, has not yet come. And yet there are exceptions to the general rule, and physiology—whose destiny it is to

become the hand-maiden of Occult truths—has not let the latter remain without their witnesses. There are those who are already stoutly protesting against certain hitherto favorite propositions. For instance, some physiologists are already denying that it is the forces and substances of so-called ‘inanimate’ nature, which are acting exclusively in living beings. For, as they well argue:—

“The fact that we reject the interference of other forces in living things, *depends entirely on the limitations of our senses*. We use, indeed, the same organs for our observations of both animate and inanimate nature; and these organs can receive manifestations of only a limited realm of motion. Vibrations passed along the fibres of our optic nerves to the brain reach our perceptions through our consciousness as sensations of light and color; vibrations affecting our consciousness through our auditory organs strike us as sounds; all our feelings, through whichever of our senses, are due to nothing but motions.”

Such are the teachings of physical Science, and such were in their roughest outlines those of Occultism, æons and millenniums back. The difference, however, and most vital distinction between the two teachings,

is this: official science sees in motion simply a blind, unreasoning force or law; Occultism, tracing motion to its origin, identifies it with the Universal Deity, and calls this eternal ceaseless motion—the ‘Great Breath’.*

Nevertheless, however limited the conception of modern science about the said Force, still it is suggestive enough to have forced the following remark from a great scientist, the present professor of physiology at the University of Basle, † who speaks like an occultist.

“It would be folly in us to expect to be ever able to discover, with the assistance only of our external senses, in animate nature that something which we are unable to find in the inanimate.”

And forthwith the lecturer adds that man being endowed “in addition to his physical senses with an *inner sense*”, a perception which gives him the possibility of observing the states and phenomena of his own consciousness, “he has to use *that* in dealing

* *Vide Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, pp. 2 and 3.

† From a paper read by him some time ago at a public lecture.

with animate nature"—a profession of faith verging suspiciously on the borders of Occultism. He denies, moreover, the assumption, that the states and phenomena of consciousness represent in substance the same manifestations of motion as in the external world, and bases his denial by the reminder that not all of such states and manifestations have necessarily a spatial extension. According to him that only is connected with our conception of space which has reached our consciousness through sight, touch, and the muscular sense, while all the other senses, all the *affects*, tendencies, as all the interminable series of representations, have no extension in space but only in time.

Thus he asks :—

“Where then is there room in this for a mechanical theory? Objectors might argue that this is so only in appearance, while in reality all these have a spatial extension. But such an argument would be entirely erroneous. Our sole reason for believing that objects perceived by the senses have such extension in the external world, rests on the idea that they seem to do so, as far as they can be watched and observed through the senses of sight and touch. With regard,

however, to the realm of our *inner* senses even that supposed foundation loses its force and there is no ground for admitting it."

The winding up argument of the lecturer is most interesting to theosophists. Says this physiologist of the modern school of Materialism :—

" Thus, a deeper and more direct acquaintance with *our inner nature* unveils to us a world *entirely unlike the world represented to us by our external senses*, and reveals the most heterogeneous faculties, shows objects having naught to do with spatial extension, and phenomena absolutely disconnected with those that fall under mechanical laws."

Hitherto, the opponents of vitalism and 'life-principle', as well as the followers of the mechanical theory of life, based their views on the supposed fact, that, as physiology was progressing forward, its students succeeded more and more in connecting its functions with the laws of *blind matter*. All those manifestations that used to be attributed to a 'mystical life-force', they said, may be brought now under physical and chemical laws. And they were, and still are

loudly clamoring for the recognition of the fact that it is only a question of time when it will be triumphantly demonstrated that the whole vital process, in its grand totality, represents nothing more mysterious than a very complicated phenomenon of motion, exclusively governed by the forces of inanimate nature.

But here we have a professor of physiology who asserts that the history of physiology proves, unfortunately for them, quite the contrary; and he pronounces these ominous words:—

“I maintain that the more our experiments and observations are exact and many-sided, the deeper we penetrate into facts, the more we try to fathom and speculate on the phenomena of life, the more we acquire the conviction that even those phenomena that we had hoped to be already able to explain by physical and chemical laws, *are in reality unfathomable*. They are vastly more complicated, in fact; and as we stand at present, *they will not yield to any mechanical explanation.*”

This is a terrible blow at the puffed-up bladder known as Materialism, which is as empty as it is dilated. A Judas in the camp of the

apostles of negation—the ‘animalists’! But the Basle professor is no solitary exception, as we have just shown; and there are several physiologists who are of his way of thinking; indeed some of them going so far as to almost accept *free-will* and *consciousness*, in the simplest monadic protoplasms!

One discovery after the other tends in this direction. The works of some German physiologists are especially interesting with regard to cases of consciousness and positive discrimination—one is almost inclined to say *thought*—in the *Amœbæ*. Now the *Amœbæ* or animalculæ are, as all know, microscopical protoplasms—as the *Vampyrella Spirogyra* for instance, a most simple elementary cell, a protoplasmic drop, formless and almost structureless. And yet it shows in its behavior something for which zoologists, if they do not call it mind and power of reasoning, will have to find some other qualification, and coin a new term. For see what Cienkowsky* says of it. Speaking of this microscopical, bare, reddish

* L. Cienkowsky. See his work *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Monaden*, Archiv. f. mikroskop, Anatomie.

cell he describes the way in which it hunts for and finds among a number of other aquatic plants one called *Spirogyra*, rejecting every other food. Examining its perigrinations under a powerful microscope, he found it when moved by hunger, first projecting its *pseudopodiæ* (false feet) by the help of which it crawls. Then it commences moving about until among a great variety of plants it comes across a *Spirogyra*, after which it proceeds toward the cellulated portion of one of the cells of the latter, and placing itself on it, it bursts the tissue, sucks the contents of one cell and then passes on to another, repeating the same process. This naturalist never saw it take any other food, and it never touched any of the numerous plants placed by Cienkowsky in its way. Mentioning another Amœba—the *Colpadella Pugnax*—he says that he found it showing the same predilection for the *Chlamydomonas* on which it feeds exclusively; “having made a puncture in the body of the *Chlamydomonas* it sucks its chlorophyl and then goes away”, he writes, adding these significant words: “The way of acting of these

monads during their search for and reception of food, is so amazing that one is almost inclined to see in them *consciously acting beings!*”

Not less suggestive are the observations of Th. W. Engelman (*Beiträge zur Physiologie des Protoplasma*), on the *Arcella*, another unicellular organism only a trifle more complex than the *Vampyrella*. He shows them in a drop of water under a microscope on a piece of glass, lying so to speak, on their backs, *i.e.*, on their convex side, so that the *pseudopodiæ*, projected from the edge of the shell, find no hold in space and leave the *Amœba* helpless. Under these circumstances the following curious fact is observed. Under the very edge of one of the sides of the protoplasm gas-bubbles begin immediately to form, which, making that side lighter, allow it to be raised, bringing at the same time the opposite side of the creature into contact with the glass, thus furnishing its *pseudo* or false feet means to get hold of the surface and thereby turning over its body to raise itself on all its *pseudopodiæ*. After this, the *Amœba* proceeds to suck back into

itself the gas bubbles and begins to move. If a like drop of water is placed on the lower extremity of the glass, then following the law of gravity the *Amœbæ* will find themselves at first at the lower end of the drop of water. Failing to find there a point of support, they proceed to generate large bubbles of gas, when, becoming lighter than the water, they are raised up to the surface of the drop.

In the words of Engelman :—

“ If having reached the surface of the glass they find no more support for their feet than before, forthwith one sees the gas-globules diminishing on one side and increasing in size and number on the other, or both, until the creatures touch with the edge of their shell the surface of the glass, and are enabled to turn over. No sooner is this done than the glass-globules disappear and the *Arcellæ* begin crawling. Detach them carefully by means of a fine needle from the surface of the glass and thus bring them down once more to the lower surface of the drop of water; and forthwith they will repeat the same process, varying its details according to necessity and devising new means to reach their desired aim. Try as much as you will to place them in uncomfortable positions, and they find means to extri-

cate themselves from them, each time, by one device or the other; and no sooner have they succeeded than the gas-bubbles disappear! It is impossible not to admit that such facts as these point to the presence of some PSYCHIC process in the protoplasm.”*

Among hundreds of accusations against Asiatic nations of degrading *superstitions*, based on ‘crass ignorance’, there exists no more serious denunciation than that which accuses and convicts them of personifying and *even deifying* the chief organs *of*, and *in*, the human body. Indeed, do not we hear these ‘benighted fools’ of Hindus speaking of the small-pox as a goddess—thus personifying the microbes of the variolic virus? Do we not read about *Tantrikas*, a sect of mystics, giving proper names to nerves, cells and arteries, connecting and identifying various parts of the body with deities, endowing functions and physiological processes with intelligence, and what not? The vertebræ, fibres, ganglia, the cord, etc., of the spinal column; the heart, its four chambers, auricle and ventricle, valves and the rest; stomach, liver, lungs,

* *Loc. cit.*, Pflüger’s Archiv. Bd. II, S. 387.

and spleen, everything has its special deific name, is believed to *act consciously* and to act under the potent will of the Yogi, whose head and heart are the seats of Brahmâ and the various parts of whose body are all the pleasure grounds of this or another deity!

This is indeed *ignorance*. Especially when we think that the said organs, and the whole body of man are composed of cells, and these cells are now being recognized as individual organisms and—*quien sabe*—will come perhaps to be recognized some day as *an independent race of thinkers* inhabiting the globe, called man! It really looks like it. For was it not hitherto believed that all the phenomena of assimilation and sucking in of food by the intestinal canal, could be explained by the laws of diffusion and endosmosis? And now, alas, physiologists have come to learn that the action of the intestinal canal during the act of absorbing, is not identical with the action of the non-living membrane in the dialyser. It is now well demonstrated that—

“this wall is covered with epithelium cells, each of which is an organism *per se*, a living being,

and with very complex functions. We know further, that such a cell assimilates food—by means of active contractions of its protoplasmic body—in a manner as mysterious as that which we notice in the independent *Amœbæ* and *animalculæ*. We can observe on the intestinal epithelium of the cold-blooded animals how these cells project shoots—*pseudopodiæ*—out of their contractive, bare, protoplasmic bodies—which *pseudopodiæ*, or false feet, fish out of the food drops of fat, suck them into their protoplasm and send it further, toward the lymph-duct. . . . The lymphatic cells issuing from the nests of the adipose tissue, and squeezing themselves through the epithelium cells up to the surface of the intestines, absorb therein the drops of fat and loaded with their prey, travel homeward to the lymphatic canals. So long as this active work of the cells remained unknown to us, the fact that while the globules of fat penetrated through the walls of the intestines into lymphatic channels, the smallest of pigmental grains introduced into the intestines did not do so,—remained unexplained. But today we know, that this faculty of selecting their special food—of assimilating the useful and rejecting the useless and the harmful—is common to all the unicellular organisms. ”*

*From the paper read by the Professor of Physiology at the University of Basle, previously quoted.

And the lecturer queries, why, if this *discrimination* in the selection of food exists in the simplest and most elementary of the cells, in the formless and structureless protoplasmic *drops*—why it should not exist also in the epithelium cells of our intestinal canal. Indeed, if the *Vampyrella* recognizes its much beloved *Spirogyra*, among hundreds of other plants as shown above, why should not the epithelium cell, *sense, choose and select* its favorite drop of fat from a pigmental grain? But we will be told that ‘sensing, choosing and selecting’ pertain only to reasoning beings, at least to the *instinct* of more structural animals than is the protoplasmic cell outside or inside man. Agreed; but as we translate from the lecture of a learned physiologist and the works of other learned naturalists, we can only say, that these learned gentlemen must know what they are talking about; though they are probably ignorant of the fact that their *scientific* prose is but one degree removed from the *ignorant, superstitious*, but rather poetical ‘twaddle’ of the Hindu Yogis and Tantrikas.

Anyhow, our professor of physiology falls foul of the materialistic theories of diffusion and endosmosis. Armed with the facts of the evident discrimination and *a mind* in the cells, he demonstrates by numerous instances the fallacy of trying to explain certain physiological processes by mechanical theories; such for instance as the passing of sugar from the liver (where it is transformed into glucose) into the blood. Physiologists find great difficulty in explaining this process, and regard it as an impossibility to bring it under the endosmotic laws. In all probability the lymphatic cells play just as active a part during the absorption of alimentary substances dissolved in water, as the peptics do, a process well demonstrated by F. Hofmeister.* Generally speaking, poor convenient endosmosis is dethroned and exiled from among the active functionaries of the human body as a useless sinecurist. It has lost its voice in the matter of glands and other agents of secretion, in the action of

* *Untersuchungen über Resorption u. Assimilation der Nährstoffe* (Archiv f. Experimentelle Pathologie und Pharmakologie, Bd. XIX, 1885).

which the same epithelium cells have replaced it. The mysterious faculties of selection, of extracting from the blood one kind of substance and rejecting another, of transforming the former by means of decomposition and synthesis, of directing some of the products into passages which will throw them out of the body and redirecting others into the lymphatic and blood vessels—such is the work of the cells. “*It is evident that in all this there is not the slightest hint at diffusion or endosmose*”, says the Basle physiologist. “*It becomes entirely useless to try and explain these phenomena by chemical laws.*”

But perhaps physiology is luckier in some other department? Failing in the laws of alimentation it may have found some consolation for its mechanical theories in the question of the activity of muscles and nerves, which it sought to explain by electric laws? Alas, save in a few fishes—in no other living organisms, least of all in the human body, could it find any possibility of pointing out electric currents as the chief ruling agency. Electro-biology on the lines

of pure dynamic electricity has egregiously failed. Ignorant of 'Fohat' no electrical currents suffice to explain to it either muscular or nervous activity!

But there is such a thing as the physiology of external sensations. Here we are no longer on *terra incognita*, and all such phenomena have already found purely *physical* explanations. No doubt there is the phenomenon of sight, the eye with its optical apparatus, its camera obscura. But the fact of the sameness of the reproduction of things in the eye, according to the same laws of refraction as on the plate of a photographic machine, is *no vital phenomenon*. The same may be reproduced *on a dead eye*. The phenomenon of life consists *in the evolution and development of the eye itself*. How is this marvellous and complicated work produced? To this physiology replies, "We do not know"; for, toward the solution of this great problem—

"Physiology has not yet made one single step. True, we can follow the sequence of the stages of the development and formation of the eye, but *why* it is so and *what* is the causal connection, we

have absolutely no idea. The second vital phenomenon of the eye is its accommodating activity. And here we are again face to face with the functions of nerves and muscles—our old insoluble riddles. The same may be said of all the organs of sense. The same also relates to other departments of physiology. We had hoped to explain the phenomena of the circulation of the blood by the laws of hydrostatics or hydrodynamics. Of course the blood moves in accordance with the hydrodynamical laws; but its relation to them remains utterly *passive*. As to the *active* functions of the heart and the muscles of its vessels, *no one, so far, has ever been able to explain them by physical laws.*”

The underlined words in the concluding portion of the able Professor's lecture are worthy of an Occultist. Indeed, he seems to be repeating an aphorism from the “Elementary Instructions” of the esoteric physiology of *practical* Occultism:—

“*The riddle of life is found in the active functions of a living organism,* the real perception of which*

* *Life and activity* are but the two different names for the same idea, or, what is still more correct, they are two words with which the men of science connect no definite idea whatever. Nevertheless, and perhaps just for that, they are obliged to use them, for they contain the point of contact between the most difficult problems over which, in fact, the greatest thinkers of the materialistic school have ever tripped.

*activity we can get only through self-observation, and not owing to our external senses; by observation on our will, so far as it penetrates our consciousness, thus revealing itself to our inner sense. Therefore, when the same phenomenon acts only on our external senses, we recognize it no longer. We see everything that takes place around and near the phenomenon of motion, but the essence of that phenomenon we do not see at all, because we lack for it a special organ of receptivity. We can accept that esse in a mere hypothetical way, and do so, in fact, when we speak of 'active functions'. Thus does every physiologist, for he cannot go on without such hypothesis; and this is a first experiment of a *psychological explanation* of all vital phenomena.*

. . . . And if it is demonstrated to us that we are unable with the help only of physics and chemistry to explain the phenomena of life, what may we expect from other adjuncts of physiology, from the sciences of morphology, anatomy, and histology? I maintain that these can never help us to unriddle the problem of any of the mysterious phenomena of life. For after we have succeeded with the help of scalpel and microscope in dividing the organisms into their most elementary compounds, and reached the simplest of cells, it is just here that we find ourselves face to face with the greatest problem of all. The simplest monad, a microscopical point of protoplasm, formless and structureless, exhibits yet all the

essential vital functions, alimentation, growth, breeding, motion, feeling and sensuous perception, and even such functions which replace 'consciousness'—the soul of the higher animals! "

The problem—for materialism—is a terrible one, indeed! Shall our cells, and infinitesimal monads in nature, do for us that which the arguments of the greatest Pantheistic philosophers have hitherto failed to do? Let us hope so. And if they do, then the 'superstitious and ignorant' Eastern Yogis, and even their exoteric followers, will find themselves vindicated. For we hear from the same physiologist that—

"A large number of poisons are prevented by the epithelium *cells* from penetrating into lymphatic spaces, though we know that they are easily decomposed in the abdominal and intestinal juices. More than this. Physiology is aware that by injecting these poisons directly into the blood, they will separate from, and reappear through the intestinal walls, and that in this process the *lymphatic cells* take a most active part."

If the reader turns to *Webster's Dictionary* he will find therein a curious explanation at the words "lymphatic" and "lymph". Etymologists think that the

Latin word *lymp̄ha* is derived from the Greek *nymphē*, "a nymph or inferior Goddess", they say. "The Muses were sometimes called *nymphs* by the poets. Hence (according to Webster) all persons in a state of rapture, as seers, poets, madmen, etc., were said to be caught by the nymphs (*νυμφόληπτοι*)."

The Goddess of Moisture (the Greek and Latin *nymph* or *lymph*, then) is fabled in India as being born from the pores of one of the Gods, whether the Ocean God, Varuna, or a minor 'River God' is left to the particular sect and fancy of the believers. But the main question is, that the ancient Greeks and Latins are thus admittedly known to have shared in the same 'superstitions' as the Hindus. This superstition is shown in their maintaining to this day that every atom of matter in the four (or five) Elements is an emanation from an inferior God or Goddess, himself or herself an earlier emanation from a superior deity; and, moreover, that each of these atoms—being Brahmâ, one of whose names is *Anu*, or atom—no sooner is it emanated than it *becomes endowed with*

consciousness, each of its kind, and free-will, acting within the limits of law. Now, he who knows that the *kosmic trimurti* (trinity) composed of Brahmâ, the Creator; Vishnu, the Preserver; and Siva, the Destroyer, is a most magnificent and scientific symbol of the *material* Universe and its gradual evolution; and who finds a proof of this, in the etymology of the names of these deities,* plus the doctrines of *Gupta Vidya*, or esoteric knowledge—knows also how to correctly understand this ‘superstition’. The five fundamental titles of Vishnu—added to that of *Anu* (atom), common to all the trimurtic personages—which are, *Bhutâtman*, one with the created or emanated materials of the world; *Pradhanâtman*, ‘one with the senses’; *Paramâtman*, ‘Supreme Soul’; and *Atman*, Kosmic Soul, or the Universal Mind—show sufficiently what the ancient Hindus meant by endowing with mind and consciousness every atom and giving it a dis-

**Brahmâ* comes from the root *brih*, ‘to expand’ to ‘scatter’; *Vishnu* from the root *vis* or *vish* (phonetically) ‘to enter into’, ‘to pervade’ the universe, of matter. As to Siva—the patron of the Yogis, the etymology of his name would remain *incomprehensible* to the casual reader.

tinct name of a God or a Goddess. Place their Pantheon, composed of 30 crores (or 300 millions) of deities within the macrocosm (the Universe), or inside the microcosm (man), and the number will not be found overrated, since they relate to the atoms, cells, and molecules of everything that is.

This, no doubt, is too poetical and abstruse for our generation, but it seems decidedly as scientific, if not more so, than the teachings derived from the latest discoveries of *Physiology* and *Natural History*.

THE DUAL ASPECT OF WISDOM.

“No doubt but ye are the people and wisdom shall die with you.”

JOB xii. 2.

“But wisdom is justified of her children.”

MATTHEW xi. 19.

IT is the privilege—as also occasionally the curse—of editors to receive numerous letters of advice, and the conductors of **LUCIFER** have not escaped the common lot. Reared in the aphorisms of the ages they are aware that “he who can take advice is superior to him who gives it”, and are therefore ready to accept with gratitude any sound and practical suggestions offered by friends; but the last letter received does not fulfill the condition. It is not even his own wisdom, but that of the age we live in, which is asserted by our adviser, who thus seriously risks his reputation for keen ob-

servation by such acts of devotion on the altar of modern pretensions. It is in defence of the 'wisdom' of our century that we are taken to task, and charged with "preferring barbarous antiquity to our modern civilization and its inestimable boons", with forgetting that "our own-day wisdom compared with the awakening instincts of the Past is in no way inferior in *philosophic wisdom* even to the age of Plato". We are lastly told that we, theosophists, are "too fond of the dim yesterday, and as unjust to our glorious (?) present-day, the bright noon-hour of the highest civilization and culture"!!

Well, all this is a question of taste. Our correspondent is welcome to his own views, but so are we to ours. Let him imagine that the Eiffel Tower dwarfs the Pyramid of Ghizeh into a mole-hill, and the Crystal Palace grounds transform the hanging gardens of Semiramis into a kitchen-garden—if he likes. But if we are seriously 'challenged' by him to show "in what respect our age of hourly progress and gigantic thought"—a progress a trifle marred, how-

ever, by our Huxleys being denounced by our Spurgeons, and the University ladies, senior classics and wranglers, by the 'hallelujah lasses'—is inferior to the ages of, say, a hen-pecked "Socrates and a cross-legged Buddha", then we will answer him, giving him, of course, our own personal opinion.

Our age, we say, is inferior in wisdom to any other, because it professes, more visibly every day, *contempt for truth and justice, without which there can be no wisdom*. Because our civilization, built up of shams and appearances, is at best like a beautiful green morass, a bog, spread over a deadly quagmire. Because this century of culture and worship of matter, while offering prizes and premiums for every 'best thing' under the sun, from the biggest baby and the largest orchid down to the strongest pugilist and the fattest pig, has no encouragement to offer to morality; no prize to give for any moral virtue. Because it has societies for the prevention of physical cruelty to animals, and none with the object of preventing the moral cruelty practiced on human beings. Because it encourages, legally and tacitly, vice under

every form, from the sale of whisky down to forced prostitution and theft brought on by starvation wages, Shylock-like exactions, rents, and other comforts of our cultured period. Because, finally, this is the age which, although proclaimed as one of physical and moral freedom, is in truth the age of the most ferocious moral and mental slavery, the like of which was never known before. Slavery to State and *men* has disappeared only to make room for slavery to *things* and *Self*, to one's own vices and idiotic social customs and ways. Rapid civilization, adapted to the needs of the higher and middle classes, has doomed by contrast to only greater wretchedness the starving masses. Having levelled the two former it has made them the more to disregard the substance in favor of form and appearance, thus forcing modern man into duress vile, a slavish dependence on things inanimate, to use and to serve which is the first bounden duty of every *cultured* man.

Where then is the Wisdom of our modern age?

In truth, it requires but a very few lines to show why we bow before ancient Wisdom, while refusing absolutely to see any in our modern civilization. But to begin with, what does our critic mean by the word 'wisdom'? Though we have never too unreasonably admired Lactantius, yet we must recognize that even that innocent Church Father, with all his cutting insults anent the heliocentric system, defined the term very correctly when saying that "the first point of Wisdom is to discern that which is false, and the second, to know that which is true". And if so, what chance is there for our century of falsification, from the revised Bible texts down to natural butter, to put forth a claim to 'Wisdom'? But before we cross lances on this subject we may do well, perchance, to define the term ourselves.

Let us premise by saying that Wisdom is, at best, an elastic word—at any rate as used in European tongues. That it yields no clear idea of its meaning, unless preceded or followed by some qualifying adjective. In the Bible, indeed, the Hebrew equivalent *Chok-*

mah (in Greek, *Sophia*) is applied to the most dissimilar things—abstract and concrete. Thus we find ‘Wisdom’ as the characteristic both of divine inspiration and also of terrestrial cunning and craft; as meaning the Secret Knowledge of the Esoteric Sciences, and also blind faith; the “fear of the Lord”, and Pharaoh’s magicians. The noun is indifferently applied to Christ and to sorcery, for the witch Sedecla is also referred to as the “*wise woman* of En-Dor”. From the earliest Christian antiquity, beginning with St. James (iii, 13-17), down to the last Calvinist preacher, who sees in hell and eternal damnation a proof of “the Almighty’s *wisdom*”, the term has been used with the most varied meanings. But St. James teaches two kinds of wisdom; a teaching with which we fully concur. He draws a strong line of separation between the divine or *noëtic* ‘Sophia’—the Wisdom from above—and the terrestrial, psychic, and devilish wisdom—the *Sophia ἐπιγεια, ψυχικη, δαιμονιώδης* (iii, 15). For the true theosophist there is no wisdom save the former. Would that such an one could declare with

Paul, that he speaks that wisdom exclusively only among them "that are perfect", *i.e.*, those initiated into its mysteries, or familiar, at least, with the A B C of the sacred sciences. But, however great was his mistake, however premature his attempt to sow the seeds of the *true and eternal gnosis* on unprepared soil, his motives were yet good and his intention unselfish, and *therefore* has he been stoned. For had he only attempted to preach some particular fiction of his own, or done it for gain, who would have ever singled him out or tried to crush him, amid the hundreds of other false sects, daily 'collections' and crazy 'societies'? But his case was different. However cautiously, still he spoke "not the wisdom of this world" but *truth* or the "hidden wisdom which none of the Princes of this world know" (1 Corinth. ii.) least of all the *archons* of our modern science. With regard to 'psychic' wisdom, however, which James defines as terrestrial and devilish, it has existed in all ages, from the days of Pythagoras and Plato, when for one *philosophus* there were nine *sophistæ*,

down to our modern era. To such wisdom our century is welcome, and indeed fully entitled, to lay a claim. Moreover, it is an attire easy to put on; there never was a period when crows refused to array themselves in peacocks' feathers, if the opportunity was offered.

But now as then, we have a right to analyze the terms used and enquire in the words of the book of Job, that suggestive allegory of Karmic purification and initiatory rites: "Where shall (true) wisdom be found? where is the place of understanding?" and to answer again in his words: "With the ancient is wisdom and in the length of days understanding" (Job xxviii, 12, and xii, 12).

Here we have to qualify once more a dubious term, viz: the word 'ancient', and to explain it. As interpreted by the orthodox churches, it has in the mouth of Job one meaning; but with the Kabbalist, quite another; while in the Gnosis of the Occultist and Theosophist it has distinctly a third signification, the same which it had in the original *Book of Job*, a pre-Mosaic work

and a recognized treatise on Initiation. Thus, the kabalist applies the adjective 'ancient' to the manifested WORD OR LOGOS (*Dabar*) of the forever concealed and uncognizable deity. Daniel, in one of his visions, also uses it when speaking of Jahve—the androgynous Adam Kadmon. The Churchman connects it with his anthropomorphic Jehovah, the 'Lord God' of the *translated* Bible. But the Eastern Occultist employs the mystic term only when referring to the re-incarnating higher Ego. For, divine Wisdom being diffused throughout the infinite Universe, and our impersonal HIGHER SELF being an integral part of it, the *atmic* light of the latter can be centered only in that which though eternal is still individualized—*i.e.* the noëtic Principle, the manifested God within each rational being, or our Higher *Manas* at one with *Buddhi*. It is this collective light which is the "Wisdom that is from above", and which whenever it descends on the personal Ego, is found "pure, peaceable, gentle". Hence, Job's assertion that "Wisdom is with the Ancient", or *Buddhi-Manas*. For the Divine

Spiritual 'I', is alone eternal, and the same throughout all births; whereas the 'personalities' it informs in succession are evanescent, changing like the shadows of a kaleidoscopic series of forms in a magic lantern. It is the 'Ancient', because, whether it be called Sophia, Krishna, Buddhi-Manas, or Christos, it is ever the 'first-born' of *Alaya-Mahat*, the Universal Soul and the Intelligence of the Universe. Esoterically then, Job's statement must read: "With the Ancient (Man's Higher Ego) is Wisdom, and in the length of days (or the number of its re-incarnations) is understanding". No man can learn true and final wisdom in one birth; and every new rebirth, whether we be re-incarnated for weal or for woe, is one more lesson we receive at the hands of the stern yet ever just schoolmaster—**KARMIC LIFE.**

But the world—the Western world, at any rate—knows nothing of this, and refuses to learn anything. For it, any notion of the Divine Ego or the plurality of its births is "heathen foolishness". The West-

ern world rejects these truths, and will recognize no *wise* men except those of its own making, created in its own image, born within its own Christian era and teachings. The only 'wisdom' it understands and practises is the psychic, the "terrestrial and devilish" wisdom spoken of by James, thus making of the *real* Wisdom a misnomer and a degradation. Yet, without considering her multiplied varieties, there are two kinds of even 'terrestrial' wisdom on our globe of mud—the real and the apparent. Between the two, there is even for the superficial observer of this busy, wicked world, a wide chasm, and yet how very few people will consent to see it! The reason for this is quite natural. So strong is human selfishness, that wherever there is the slightest personal interest at stake, there men become deaf and blind to the truth, as often consciously as not. Nor are many people capable of recognizing as speedily as is advisable the difference between men who are wise and those who only *seem* wise, the latter being chiefly regarded as such because they are very clever at blowing their own

trumpet. So much for 'wisdom' in the profane world.

As to the world of the students in mystic lore, it is almost worse. Things have strangely altered since the days of antiquity, when the truly wise made it their first duty to conceal their knowledge, deeming it too sacred to even mention before the *hoi polloi*. While the mediæval *Rosecroix*, the true philosopher, keeping old Socrates in mind, repeated daily that all he knew was that he knew nothing, his modern self-styled successor announces in our day, through press and public, that those mysteries in Nature and her occult laws of which he knows nothing, have never existed at all. There was a time when the acquirement of Divine Wisdom (*Sapientia*) required the sacrifice and devotion of a man's whole life. It depended on such things as the purity of the candidate's motives, on his fearlessness and independence of spirit; but now, to receive a patent for wisdom and adeptship requires only unblushing impudence. A certificate of divine wisdom is now decreed and delivered to a self-styled "*Adeptus*" by a

regular majority of votes of profane and easily-caught gulls, while a host of magpies driven away from the roof of the Temple of Science will herald it to the world in every market-place and fair. Tell the public that now, even as of old, the genuine and sincere observer of life and its underlying phenomena, the intelligent co-worker with nature, may, by becoming an expert in her mysteries thereby become a 'wise' man, in the terrestrial sense of the word, but that never will a *materialist* wrench from nature any secret on a higher plane—and you will be laughed to scorn. Add, that no "wisdom from above" descends on any one save on the *sine quâ non* condition of leaving at the threshold of the occult every atom of selfishness, or desire for personal ends and benefit—and you will be speedily declared by your audience a candidate for the lunatic asylum. Nevertheless, this is an old, very old truism. Nature gives up her innermost secrets and imparts *true wisdom* only to him, who seeks truth for its own sake, and who craves for knowledge in order to confer benefits on others, not on his

own unimportant personality. And, as it is precisely to this *personal benefit* that nearly every candidate for adeptship and magic looks, and that few are they, who consent to learn at such a heavy price and so small a benefit for themselves in prospect—the really wise occultists become with every century fewer and rarer. How many are there, indeed, who would not prefer the will-o'-the-wisp of even passing fame to the steady and ever-growing light of eternal, *divine* knowledge, if the latter has to remain, for all but oneself—a light under a bushel?

The same is the case in the world of materialistic science, where we see a great paucity of really learned men and a host of skin-deep scientists, who yet demand each and all to be regarded as Archimedes and Newtons. As above so below. Scholars who pursue knowledge for the sake of truth and fact, and give these out, however unpalatable, and not for the dubious glory of enforcing on the world their respective personal hobbies—may be counted on the fingers of one hand; while legion is the name of the pretenders. In our day, reputations

for learning seem to be built by suggestion on the hypnotic principle, rather than by real merit. The masses cower before him who imposes himself upon them; hence such a galaxy of men regarded as eminent in science, arts, and literature; and if they are so easily accepted, it is precisely because of the gigantic self-opinionatedness and self-assertion of, at any rate, the majority of them. Once thoroughly analyzed, however, how many of such would remain who truly deserve the application of 'wise' even in terrestrial wisdom? How many, we ask, of the so-called 'authorities' and 'leaders of men' prove much better than those of whom it was said—by one 'wise' indeed—"they be blind leaders of the blind"? That the teachings of neither our modern teachers nor preachers are "wisdom from above" is fully demonstrated. It is proved not by any personal incorrectness in their statements or mistakes in life, for to "err is but human", but by incontrovertible facts, *Wisdom* and *Truth* are synonymous terms, and that which is false or pernicious cannot be *wise*. Therefore, if it is true, as we are

told by a well-known representative of the Church of England, that the *Sermon on the Mount* would, in its practical application, mean utter ruin for his country in less than three weeks; and if it is no less true, as asserted by a literary critic of science, that “the knell of Charles Darwinism is rung in Mr. A. R. Wallace’s present book”,* an event already predicted by Quatrefages—then we are left to choose between two courses. We have either to take both Theology and Science on blind faith and trust, or, to proclaim both untrue and untrustworthy. There is, however, a third course open: to *pretend that we believe in both at the same time*, and say nothing, as many do; but this would be sinning against Theosophy and pandering to the prejudices of society—and that we refuse to do. More than this: we declare openly, *quand même*, that not one of the two, neither theologian nor scientist, has the right in the face of this to claim, the one that he preaches that which is divine inspiration, and the other—exact

* See *The Deadlock of Darwinism*, by Samuel Butler, in the *Universal Review* for April, 1890.

science; since the former enforces that which is, on his own recognition, pernicious to men and states—*i.e.*, the ethics of Christ; and the other (in the person of the eminent naturalist, Mr. A. R. Wallace, as shown by Mr. Samuel Butler) teaches Darwinian evolution, in which he believes no longer; a scheme, moreover, *which has never existed in nature*, if the opponents of Darwinism are correct.

Nevertheless, if anyone would presume to call 'unwise' or 'false' the world-chosen authorities, or declare their respective policies dishonest, he would find himself promptly reduced to silence. To doubt the exalted wisdom of the religion of the late Cardinal Newman, or of the Church of England, or again of our great modern scientists, is to sin against the Holy Ghost and Culture. Woe unto him who refuses to recognize the world's 'Elect'. He has to bow before one or the other, though, if one *is* true, the other *must* be false; and if the 'wisdom' of neither Bishop nor Scientist is "from above"—which is pretty fairly demonstrated by

this time—then their ‘wisdom’ is at best—
“terrestrial, psychic, devilish”.

Now, our readers have to bear in mind that naught of the above is meant as a sign of disrespect for the *true* teachings of Christ, or *true* Science; nor do we judge personalities, but only the systems of our civilized world. Valuing freedom of thought above all things, as the only way of reaching at some future time that Wisdom, of which every theosophist ought to be enamored, we recognize the right to the same freedom in our foes as in our friends. All we contend for is their claim to Wisdom—as we understand this term. Nor do we blame, but rather pity, in our innermost heart, the “wise men” of our age for trying to carry out the only policy that will keep them on the pinnacle of their ‘authority’; as they could not, even if they would, act otherwise and preserve their *prestige* with the masses, or escape from being speedily outcasted by their colleagues. The party spirit is so strong with regard to the old tracks and ruts, that to turn on a side path means deliberate treachery to it. Thus, to be regard-

ed now-a-days as an authority in some particular subject, the scientist has to reject *nolens volens* the metaphysical, and the theologian to show contempt for the materialistic teachings. All this is worldly policy and practical common sense, but it is not the *Wisdom* of either Job or James.

Shall it be then regarded as too far fetched, if, basing our words on a life-long observation and experience, we venture to offer our ideas as to the quickest and most efficient means of obtaining our present world's universal respect and becoming an 'authority'? Show the tenderest regard for the corns of every party's hobbies, and offer yourself as the chief executioner, the hangman, of the reputations of men and things regarded as unpopular. Learn, that the great secret of power consists in the art of pandering to popular prejudices, to the World's likes and dislikes. Once this principal condition complied with, he who practices it is certain of attracting to himself the educated and their satellites—the less educated—they whose rule it is to place themselves invariably on the safe side of

public opinion. This will lead to a perfect harmony of simultaneous action. For, while the favorite attitude of the cultured is to hide behind the intellectual bulwarks of the favorite leaders of scientific thought, and, *jurare in verba magistri*, that of the less cultured is to transform themselves into the faithful, mechanical telephones of their superiors, and to repeat, like well-trained parrots the *dicta* of their immediate leaders. The now aphoristical precept of Mr. Artemus Ward, the showman of famous memory—"Scratch my back, Mr. Editor, and I will scratch yours"—proves immortally true. The "rising Star", whether he be a theologian, a politician, an author, a scientist, or a journalist—has to begin by scratching the back of public tastes and prejudices—a hypnotic method as old as human vanity. Gradually the hypnotized masses begin to purr, they are ready for 'suggestion'. Suggest whatever you want them to believe, and forthwith they will begin to return your caresses, and purr now to your hobbies, and pander in their turn to anything suggested by theologian, politician,

author, scientist or journalist. Such is the simple secret of blossoming into an 'authority' or a 'leader of men'; and such is the secret of our modern-day wisdom.

And this is also the 'secret' and the true reason of the *unpopularity* of LUCIFER and of the ostracism practiced by this same modern world on the Theosophical Society; for neither LUCIFER nor the Society it belongs to has ever followed Mr. Artemus Ward's golden precept. No true Theosophist, in fact, would consent to become the fetish of a fashionable doctrine, any more than he would make himself the slave of a decaying dead-letter system, the spirit from which has disappeared for ever. Neither would he pander to anyone or anything, and therefore would always decline to show belief in that in which he does not, nor can he believe, which is lying to his own soul. Therefore there, where others see "the beauty and graces of modern culture", the Theosophist sees only moral ugliness and the somersaults of the clowns of the so-called cultured centers. For him nothing applies better to modern fashionable society

than Sydney Smith's description of Popish ritualism: "Posture and imposture, flections and genuflections, bowing to the right, courtesying to the left, and an immense amount of male (and especially female) millinery". There may be, no doubt, for some worldly minds, a great charm in modern civilization; but for the Theosophist, all its bounties can hardly repay for the evils it has brought on the world. These are so many, that it is not within the limits of this article to enumerate these offsprings of culture and of the progress of physical science, whose latest achievements begin with vivisection and end in improved murder by electricity.

Our answer, we have no doubt, is not calculated to make us more friends than enemies, but this can be hardly helped. Our magazine may be looked upon as 'pessimistic' but no one can charge it with publishing slanders or lies, or, in fact, anything but that which we honestly believe to be true. Be it as it may, however, we hope never to lack moral courage in the expression of our opinions or in defense of

Theosophy and its society. Let then nine-tenths of every population arise in arms against the Theosophical Society wherever it appears—they will never be able to suppress the truths it utters. Let the masses of growing Materialism, the hosts of Spiritualism, all the Church-going congregations, bigots and iconoclasts, Grundy-worshippers, aping-followers and blind disciples, let them slander, abuse, lie, denounce, and publish every falsehood about us under the sun—they will not uproot Theosophy, nor even upset her Society, if only its members hold together. Let even such friends and *advisers* as he who is now answered, turn away in disgust from those whom he addresses in vain—it matters not, for our two paths in life run diametrically opposite. Let him keep to his ‘terrestrial’ wisdom; we will keep to that pure ray “that comes from above”, from the light of the “Ancient”.

What indeed, has WISDOM, *Theosophia*—the Wisdom “full of mercy and good fruits, without wrangling or partiality, and without hypocrisy” (James iii, 17)—to do with our cruel, selfish, crafty, and hypocritical

world? What is there in common between divine Sophia and the improvements of modern civilization and science; between spirit and the letter that killeth? The more so as at this stage of evolution the wisest man on earth, according to the wise Carlyle, is "but a clever infant spelling letters from a hieroglyphical, prophetic book, the lexicon of which lies in *eternity*".



THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

INFORMATION FOR ENQUIRERS.

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood without any distinction whatever. The subsidiary objects are; the study of ancient and modern Religions, Philosophies, and Sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

This Society is an integral part of the international Theosophical Movement which began at New York in the year 1875.

Any person declaring sympathy with the first object of the Society may be admitted to membership, as provided in the By-laws.

Every member has the right to believe or disbelieve in any religious system or philosophy, and to declare such belief or disbelief, without affecting his standing as a member of the Society, each being required to show that tolerance of the opinions of others which he expects for his own.

Five or more persons applying in writing to the President, and complying with conditions of membership, or who are already members, may receive a Charter to form a Branch, with consent of the Executive Committee; and the number of Branches which may be formed at any place is not limited.

Members not belonging to Branches are known as Members-at-large.

Each Branch may make its own By-laws and manage its own local affairs in any manner consistent with the provisions of the Constitution.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create a nucleus for such a body, and believes that a careful study of the religions and philosophies of the past as well as of the present day will reveal the common basis upon which all rest, and therefore the truth underlying them all. The organization is, therefore, wholly unsectarian, with no creed or dogma to enforce or impose.

Hence in its ranks, and co-operating in its work, are to be found professors of *every* faith,

as well as those who have none whatever. No restriction is placed on its members save that of loyalty to its one fundamental principle—Universal Brotherhood. Nor is it, as a Society, to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who all have a right to hold their own views and to receive for them, from their fellow-members, the respect which they in turn should show for the views of others. This toleration and respect is asked from all members as a duty, since it is believed that dogmatism and intolerance have always been the greatest foes to human progress. The Society therefore represents all creeds and all branches of science, opposing bigotry, superstition, credulity, and dogmatism wherever found, and by whomsoever taught. It asks of its members an unflinching condemnation of vice in every form, and of all that tends to feed or propagate it, and expects every one who joins its ranks to avoid doing what will be likely to throw discredit upon the Society or dishonor upon his fellow-members.

THEOSOPHY.

The mystical system which gives its name to the Society, and is vaguely known under the general title "Theosophy", is put forward by certain members as at once the result of, and an incentive to that particular line of study described in the "subsidiary objects". They believe that the doctrines, or leading ideas of Theosophy, both Eastern and Western, are especially worthy of attention at the present time, as suggesting the probable solution of many of the most vexed religious, social, and scientific questions of the day. An extensive literature has sprung up in connection with the Theosophical Movement, in which many of these ideas are explained and discussed.

It must be borne in mind, however, that these doctrines are not advanced as dogmas, but merely as reasonable hypotheses, throwing light upon many phases and conditions of life which otherwise appear incomprehensible or inconsistent. The Theosophical Society aims at assisting its members by the spread of literature and by all other methods within its power, in their searchings after truth, and, as above said, it places no restrictions upon its members beyond that of loyalty to its one fundamental principle of thought and action—

Universal Brotherhood. It may, however, be stated that the majority of the members, as individuals, believe that the realization of this first object of the Theosophical Society can best be attained by a thorough grasp of the principles of Theosophy, which, in their opinion, place universal brotherhood on a scientific and logical basis.

Further information may be had on application to WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, President of the Theosophical Society in America, 144 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y., or N. E. THEOSOPHICAL CORPORATION, 24 Mt. Vernon St., Boston, Mass.

LIST OF BOOKS,

Which may be obtained post-paid from the NEW ENGLAND THEOSOPHICAL CORPORATION, 24 Mt. Vernon St., Boston, Mass.

Experience indicates the following as a good series of books in a preliminary course: 1st, Wilkesbarre Letters on Theosophy; 2d, Simple Theosophy; 3d, Modern Theosophy; 4th, Ocean of Theosophy; 5th, Occult World; 6th, Echoes from the Orient; 7th, Esoteric Buddhism; 8th,

Seven Principles of Man, Besant; 9th, Reincarnation, Besant; 10th, Death—and After, Besant; 11th, Key to Theosophy; 12th, Letters that have Helped Me.

The following are for deeper study: 1st, Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms; 2d, Magic, White and Black; 3d, Isis Unveiled; 4th, The Secret Doctrine.

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