



To H.P.B.

(By Srikantha Prasanna)

Like the Sun of HOPE , here she came,
To sanctify the world, even by her name.
When she came to earth, it was desolate and dark,
She left the world, leaving on History, a Divine
mark.

She bravely fought against caste, prejudice and
creed,
Rousing hatred of materialism and science.
She caused in every human, sprouting of sacred
seed,
And for coming mankind, left teachings and lines

She proclaimed in every human heart, a Divine
Spark,
Encouraging which you merge with all nature.
Shun sin and pride, if you, to it hark,
Obtain it by devoted work, not by yoga of
posture.

She showed the existence of Divine Beings ; and
they to
Uplift mankind work, and in spirit merge matter.
She came too, to her Humanity's sake do,
As some come centuries before, and centuries
after.

Let us propagate humbly the Message, and
preserve its true beauty
Trying to be an example by doing our whole
duty.
Let us all work, stand, wait and seek,
A brother ours who may perhaps be more weak.

We know that SHE always lives,
Her last life being just a part.
For those who deserve HER help, and do not
work shuns
To them, she herself says, SHE always comes...

Note: My seventeen-year-old friend in India sent us our poem for the month. It was a touch too late for the May issue, but not for June. While Srikantha Prasanna is a friend whom I have yet to meet, still he became such the moment I heard of his devotion to Theosophy in general and HPB in particular — and this in spite of great difficulties and obstacles set in his Path!! — jw

AN INTERVIEW ON NON-VIOLENCE

A Theosophist is one who gives you a theory of the works of God, which has not a revelation, but an inspiration of his own for its basis.

THOMAS VAUGHAN

A man once abandoning the old pathway of routine and entering on the solitary pathway of independent thought — Godward — he is a Theosophist, an original thinker, a seeker after the Eternal Truth, with an inspiration of his own to solve the Eternal problems.

Such a one as this is...Count Tolstoy, the Russian novelist,... and his words... are taken from an interview with him by Mr. George Kennan (Century, June 1887). The interview first describes the surroundings amidst which Count Tolstoy lives, and gives also a description of the Count's appearance.



Srikantha Prasanna

TABLE OF CONTENTS

To H. P. B.	1
An Interview on Non-Violence	1
HPB Commentary on Tolstoy	6
The American Transcendentalists	7
The Seed and The Tree	8
Tacking into the Wind	9
Cycles and Their Cause	9
The Coffee Klatch	12
Dnyaneshvari — VII	14
The Global Village	15
The Big Blue Umbrella [First Fundamental]	16
Point Out the Way — VII	16
Homeopathy Revisited [Bugbears of Science]	18
Reductionism in Science	24

Apparently the first thing which impressed Mr. Kennan was the sight of "a wealthy Russian noble, and the greatest of living novelists, shaking hands upon terms of perfect equality with a poor, ragged, and not over clean droshky driver," who had been engaged in the streets.

Then follows a description of the rooms, the furniture, etc., which was observed during the time that Mr. Kennan's host had retired — not, indeed, to change his coat, but to put one on after a morning's labor in the fields. Mr. Kennan, it seems, had journeyed through Siberia, and had there promised several of the exiles to visit Count Tolstoy on his return, and to tell him of their condition.

In the course of conversation on these matters, Mr. Kennan asked Count Tolstoy whether he did not think that resistance to such oppression as the exiles had experienced was justifiable.

"That depends," he replied, "upon what you mean by resistance; if you mean persuasion, argument, protest, I answer yes; if you mean violence — no. I do not believe that violent resistance to evil is ever justifiable under any circumstances."

He then set forth clearly, eloquently, and with more feeling than he had yet shown, the views with regard to man's duty as a member of society which are contained in his book entitled *My Religion*....

He laid particular stress upon the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, which, he said, is in accordance with both the teachings of Christ and the result of human experience. He declared that violence, as a means of redressing wrongs, is not only futile, but an aggravation of the original evil, since it is

the nature of violence to multiply and reproduce itself in all directions. "The Revolutionists," he said, "whom you have seen in Siberia, undertook to resist evil by violence, and what has been the result? Bitterness, and misery, and hatred, and bloodshed! The evils against which they took up arms still exist, and to them has been added a mass of previously non-existent human suffering. It is not in that way that the kingdom of God is to be realized on earth."

For a long time I did not suggest any difficulties or raise any objections. It is one thing to ask a man in a general way whether he would use violence to resist evil, and quite another thing to ask him specifically whether he would knock down a burglar who was about to cut the throat of his mother. Many men would say "no" to the first question but would hesitate at the second. Count Tolstoy, however, was consistent.

I related to him many cases of cruelty, brutality, and oppression which had come to my knowledge in Siberia, and at the end of every recital I said to him, "Count Tolstoy, if you had been there and had witnessed that transaction, would you not have interfered with violence?" He invariably answered, "No." I asked him the direct question whether he would kill a highwayman who was about to murder an innocent traveller, provided there were no other way to save the traveller's life. He replied, "If I should see a bear about to kill a peasant — in the forest, I would sink an axe in the bear's head but I would not kill a man who was about to do the same thing."

There finally came into my mind a case which, although really not worse than many that I had already presented to him, would, I thought, appeal with peculiar force to a brave, sensitive, chivalrous man.³

This was a case of most brutal treatment of a young girl who was exiled to Siberia. At a certain town on her journey the governor ordered that she was to put on the clothing of an ordinary convict. This she declined to do on the ground that administrative exiles had the right to wear their own clothing. Furthermore, the clothing supplied to convicts is not always new, and it is quite possible that it is of the filthiest description and full of vermin: She argued that she would have been compelled to change at Moscow had it been necessary, and again declined. The local governor persisted and ordered that force should be used to effect the change. Accordingly, in the presence of nine or ten men, the change of clothing was effected — she was stripped naked, forcibly re clothed, and left bleeding and exhausted after ineffectual resistance.

“Now,” I said, “suppose all this had occurred in your presence; suppose that this bleeding, defenseless, half-naked girl had appealed to you for protection, and had thrown herself into your arms; suppose that it had been your daughter, would you still have refused to interfere by an act of violence?”

He was silent. Finally, ignoring my direct question as to what he personally would have done in such a case, Count Tolstoy said, “Even under such circumstances violence would not be justifiable. Let us analyze that situation carefully. I will grant, for the sake of argument, that the local governor who ordered the act of violence was an ignorant man, a cruel man, a brutal man — what you will; but he probably had an idea that he was doing his duty; he probably believed that he was enforcing a law of the Government to which he owed obedience and service. You suddenly appear and set yourself up as a

judge in the case; you assume that he is not doing his duty — that he is committing an act of unjustifiable violence — and then, with strange inconsistency, you proceed to aggravate and complicate the evil by yourself committing another act of unjustifiable violence. One wrong added to another wrong does not make a right; it merely extends the area of wrong. Furthermore, your resistance, in order to be effective — in order to accomplish anything — must be directed against the soldiers who are committing the assault. But those soldiers are not free agents; they are subject to military discipline and are acting under orders which they dare not disobey. To prevent the execution of the orders you must kill or maim two or three of the soldiers — that is, kill or wound the only parties to the transaction who are certainly innocent, who are manifestly acting without malice and without evil intention. Is that just? Is it rational? But go a step further. Suppose that you do kill or wound two or three of the soldiers. You may or may not thus succeed in preventing the completion of the act against which your violence is a protest. But one thing you certainly will do, and that is, extend the area of enmity, injustice and misery. Every one of the soldiers whom you kill or maim has a family, and upon every such family you bring grief and suffering which would not have come to it but for your act. In the hearts of perhaps a score of people you rouse the anti-Christian and anti-social emotions of hatred and revenge, and thus sow broadcast the seeds of further violence and strife. At the time when you interposed there was only one center of evil and suffering. By your violent interference you have created half a dozen such centers. It does not seem to me, Mr. Kennan, that is the way to bring

about the reign of peace and goodwill on earth.”

Mr. Kennan had a manuscript written by one of those prisoners who took part in the desperate 'hunger-strike' of 1884, which he had been entrusted to hand on to Count Tolstoy. He read two or three pages of it, and then, alluding to the Nihilists, condemned their methods most heartily. Mr. Kennan appeared rather to sympathize with their motives. Count Tolstoy appears only to do so partially, and, while he earnestly desires a revolution, declines to have anything to do with one brought about by violence. Mr. Kennan objected that violence might close the mouth of the peaceable revolutionist and prevent his teaching and thoughts from ever becoming public.

“But do you not see,” replied the Count, “that if you claim and exercise the right to resist by an act of violence what you regard as evil, every other man will insist upon his right to resist in the same way what he regards as evil, and the world will continue to be filled with violence? It is your duty to show that there is a better way.”

“But,” I objected, “you cannot show anything if somebody smites you on the mouth every time you open it to speak the truth.”

“You can at least refrain from striking back,” replied the Count; “you can show by your peaceable behavior that you are not governed by the barbarous law of retaliation, and your adversary will not continue to strike a man who neither resists nor tries to defend himself. It is by those who have suffered, not by those who have inflicted suffering, that the world has been advanced.”

I said it seemed to me that the advancement of the world had been promoted not a little by the protests — and often the violent and bloody protests — of its inhabitants against wrong and outrage, and that all history goes to show that a people which tamely submits to oppression never acquires either liberty or happiness.

“The whole history of the world,” replied the Count, “is a history of violence, and you can of course cite violence in support of violence; but do you not see that there is in human society an endless variety of opinions as to what constitutes wrong and oppression, and that if you once concede the right of any man to resort to violence to resist what he regards as wrong, he being the judge, you authorize every other man to enforce his opinion in the same way, and you have a universal reign of violence?”

Count Tolstoy considers it necessary to labor for and help the poor by whom he is surrounded. But he is keenly alive to the danger of pauperizing them. In doing this he runs counter to the ideas of organized society and the existing traits of human character. He declines to regard these as sacred and immutable, and is doing what he can to change them....

Count Tolstoy's views as to his own action and practice have been... published in an authorized interview which appeared in a Russian journal. He said:

“People say to me, 'Well, Lef Nikolaivitch, as far as preaching goes, you preach; but how about your practice?' The question is a perfectly natural one; it is always put to me, and it

always shuts my mouth. 'You preach,' it is said, 'but how do you live?' I can only reply that I do not preach — passionately as I desire to do so. I might preach through my actions, but my actions are bad. That which I say is not preaching; it is only an attempt to find out the meaning and the significance of life. People often say to me, 'If you think that there is no reasonable life outside the teaching of Christ, and if you love a reasonable life, why do you not fulfill the Christian precepts?' I am guilty and blameworthy and contemptible because I do not fulfil them; but at the same time I say — not in justification, but in explanation, of my inconsistency: Compare my previous life with the life I am now living, and you will see that I am trying to fulfil. I have not, it is true, fulfilled one eighty-thousandth part, and I am to blame for it. But it is not because I do not wish to fulfil all, but because I am unable. Teach me how to extricate myself from the meshes of temptation in which I am entangled — help me — and I will fulfil all. I wish and hope to do it even without help. Condemn me if you choose — I do that myself — but condemn me, and not the path which I am following, and which I point out to those who ask me where, in my opinion, the path is. If I know the road home, and if I go along it drunk, and staggering from side to side, does that prove that the road is not the right one? If it is not the right one, show me another. If I stagger and wander, come to my help, and support and guide me in the right path. Do not yourselves confuse and mislead me, and then rejoice over it and cry, 'Look at him! He says he is going home, and he is floundering into the swamp!' You are not evil spirits from the swamp; you are also human beings, and you also are going home. You know that I am alone — you know that I cannot wish or

intend to go into the swamp — then help me! My heart is breaking with despair because we have all lost the road; and while I struggle with all my strength to find it and keep in it, you, instead of pitying me when I go astray, cry triumphantly, 'See! He is in the swamp with us!'"

In this report of Count Tolstoy it is impossible not to recognize the generous, just, and sympathetic man — the true Theosophist.... He is endeavoring to carry out the precepts of Christ. Not indeed, doctrinal Christianity, but to put in practice the actual precepts of the Master he follows. He does this as far as he can; and even with this little (as he says) he is accused of quixotism, and is obliged to stay his hand in order to keep up the example he affords.

Why is this? For fear of interested relatives and the lunatic asylum. Here we have a man endeavoring to carry out "under an inspiration of his own" the precepts laid down by the last of the world's great teachers. What is the result of his endeavors? That he is in danger of... the lunatic asylum. Nothing is so intolerable to modern minds as an example of what they (unconsciously to themselves) recognize as that which they ought to follow, but do not. Therefore it has to be put out of sight. Since madness has been defined as a mental state which is in contradiction to the average mental state, it is evident that all religious reformers ought to be put away in a lunatic asylum....

There is a power which impels Count Tolstoy to protest against the reign of violence, and he truly replies that the readiest means of continuing this reign is to meet violence by violence. Therefore he, by his writings, and his words and life, endeavors to place before men the noblest philosophy of life that he recognizes, in answer to the appeal which is silently uttered from the hearts of many men and

women in the world. [From “A True Theosophist,” by A.I.R. *Lucifer*, September 1887.]

¹ This is what the Theosophists call “living the life” — in a nut-shell. — H.P.B.

² Emphasis added. The Count must have read that jewel of Theosophical literature “Love With an Object”! *Fohat*, Universal Love, or the “electric power of affinity and sympathy,” is the key to making Theosophy a *living* power in one’s life. — L.O.S.

³ Count Tolstoy was not only the world’s most famous living novelist, but a father of five children, and a distinguished military officer. He was, for the Russian intelligentsia of that period, what Albert Einstein was for the scientific world of the West. He has had an enormous influence on the Non-Violence movement. The Count saw clearly that teachings like “The Sermon on the Mount” in the West and the *Asvamedha Sacrifice* in the East were essential if Compassion were to grow and each of us enjoy “that blissful state of love” springing from the heart.

H.P.B. Commentary on Tolstoy

[HPB comments on a remark of Tolstoy’s about the disappearance of his childhood faith.]

As he says himself, his faith vanished, he knew not how. But his youthful striving after ethical perfection survived for some ten years, to die out by degrees, finally disappearing utterly. Seeing everywhere around him ambition, love of power, selfishness and sensuality triumphant; seeing all that is called virtue, goodness, purity, altruism, scorned and flouted, failing to give either inward happiness and content or outward success; Tolstoy went the way of the world, did as he saw others do, practising all the vices and meannesses of the “polite world.” Then he turned to literature, became a great poet, a most successful author, seeking ever, he tells us, to hide his own ignorance from himself by teaching others. For some years he succeeded in thus stifling his inner discontent, but ever more frequently, more poignantly, the question forced itself upon him: What am I living for? What do I know? And daily he saw more clearly that he had no answer to give. He was fifty years old when

his despair reached its height. At the summit of his fame, a happy husband and father, author of many splendid poems full of the deepest knowledge of man and of the wisdom of life, Tolstoy realized the utter impossibility of going on living. “Man cannot imagine life, without the desire for well-being. To *desire* and attain that well-being — is to *live*. Man probes life only that he may improve it.” Our science, on the contrary, investigates only the *shadows* of things, not their realities; and under the delusion that this unimportant secondary is the essential, science distorts the idea of life and forgets her true destiny, which is to fathom *this* very secret, *not* what to-day is discovered and to-morrow is forgotten.

You must co-operate in the development of Humanity and in the realizing of its ideals; your life’s goal coincides with that of all other men.” But how does it help me to know that I live for that for which all Humanity lives, when I am *not* told *what it is for which that very Humanity does live?* Why does the world exist? What is the outcome of the fact that it does exist and will exist? Philosophy gives *no* answer....

Studying the Gospels, he came to find the kernel, the essence of Jesus’ teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, understood in its literal, simple sense, “even as a little child would understand it.” He considers as the perfect expression of Christ’s law of Charity and Peace, the command, “Resist not evil,” which to him is the most perfect rendering of *true* Christianity, and this command he describes as “the sole and eternal law of God and of men.” He also points out that long before the appearance of the historical Jesus, this law was known and recognized by all the leaders and benefactors of the human race. “The progress of mankind towards good,” he writes, “is brought about by those who suffer, *not* by those who inflict, martyrdom.”

.... True life, therefore also true happiness, consists — not in the preservation of one’s personality, but — in absorption into the All, into God and Humanity. Since God is Reason, the Christian teaching may be formulated thus: subordinate thy personal life to reason, which demands of thee unconditional love for all beings.¹

The personal life, that which recognizes and wills only one’s own “I,” is the

animal life; the life of reason is the human, the existence proper to man according to his nature as man.... From the remotest times onwards, Humanity has ever been conscious of the torturing inner contradiction, wherein all who seek after personal well-being find themselves. As, unfortunately, there is no other solution of this contradiction except to transfer the center of attraction of one's existence² *from* the personality, which can never be saved from destruction, *to* the everlasting All, it is intelligible that all the sages of the past, and with them also the greatest thinkers of later centuries, have established doctrines and moral laws identical in their general meaning because they saw more clearly than other men both this contradiction and its solution.... It is not discovered by logical deduction, but intuitively. The spiritually awakened or regenerated man suddenly finds himself transported into the eternal, timeless condition of the life of pure "Reason."

The American Transcendentalists

Thoreau pointed out that there are artists in life, persons who can change the color of a day and make it beautiful to those with whom they come in contact. We claim that there are adepts, masters in life who make it divine, as in all other arts. Is it not the greatest art of all, this which affects the very atmosphere in which we live? That it is the most important is seen at once, when we remember that every person who draws the breath of life affects the mental and moral atmosphere of the world, and helps to color the day for those about him. Those who do not help to elevate the thoughts and lives of others must of necessity either paralyze them by indifference, or actively drag them down. When this point is reached, then the art of life is converted into the science of death; we see the black magician at work. And no one can be quite inactive....

If all who have any sympathy with theosophy endeavored to learn the art of making life not only beautiful but divine, and vowed no longer to be hampered by disbelief in the possibility of this miracle, but to commence the Herculean task at once, then the year would become a gleaming star.

Neither happiness nor prosperity are always the best of bedfellows for such undeveloped mortals as most of us are; they seldom bring with them peace, which is the only permanent joy. The idea of peace is usually connected with the close of life and a religious state of mind. That kind of peace will however generally be found to contain the element of expectation. The pleasures of this world have been surrendered, and the soul waits contentedly in expectation of the pleasures of the next. The peace of the philosophic mind is very different from this and can be attained to early in life when pleasure has scarcely been tasted, as well as when it has been fully drunk of.

The American Transcendentalists discovered that life could be made a sublime thing without any assistance from circumstances or outside sources of pleasure and prosperity. Of course this had been discovered many times before, and Emerson only took up again the cry raised by Epictetus. But every man has to discover this fact freshly for himself, and when once he has realized it he knows that he would be a wretch if he did not endeavor to make the possibility a reality in his own life. The stoic became sublime because he recognized his own absolute responsibility and did not try to evade it; the Transcendentalist was even more, because he had faith in the unknown and untried possibilities which lay within himself. The occultist fully recognizes the responsibility and claims his title by having both tried and acquired knowledge of his own possibilities.... Man's life is in his own

hands, his fate is ordered by himself. Why then should this not be a year of greater spiritual development than any we have lived through? It depends on ourselves to make it so. This is an actual fact, not a religious sentiment. In a garden of sunflowers every flower turns towards the light. Why not so with us? [“1888,” H. P. Blavatsky, *Lucifer*, Vol. I, No. 5, January, 1888, pp. 337-338]



The Seed and The Tree

Creation by the road of daily mental effort, seems to be the keynote of the new cycle that is being born amidst all the moral chaos and struggle on the outer plane. Those who study life and death inside themselves seem to develop one trait in common – their unselfishness becomes a habit rather than a garment, a recreation rather than a labor. A kind of *noblesse oblige* regarding other people's living space seems to permeate all they do. Watching these self-created humans show up in the oddest places while the old order continues to crumble can hardly fail to impress one with the mysterious intelligence mixed up in cyclic and karmic law. What strange “precipitating machine” throws these new types into life at a *certain spot* and a *certain time*? Like spirit and matter, fate and freewill seem to always be mixed up with each other. At any rate, to become a co-worker with nature, Madame Blavatsky urges us to take action in the subjective domain of our duality:

It is our decided impression and conviction, that to become a genuine spiritual entity, which that designation implies, man must first *create* himself anew, so to speak – *i.e.*, thoroughly eliminate from his mind and spirit, not only the dominating influence of selfishness and other impurity, but also the infection of superstition and prejudice. The latter is far different from what we commonly term *antipathy* or *sympathy*. We are at first irresistibly or unwittingly drawn within its dark circle by that peculiar influence, that powerful current of magnetism which emanates from ideas as well as from physical bodies. By this we are surrounded, and finally prevented through moral cowardice – fear of public opinion – from stepping out of it. It is rare that men regard a thing in either its true or false light, accepting the conclusion by the free action of their own judgment. Quite the reverse. The conclusion is more commonly reached by blindly adopting the opinion current at the hour among those with whom they associate. (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 39)

Apparently H.P.B. is telling us that between the “free action of our own judgment” and the “opinions of those with whom we associate” – however excellent they may be – there is an abyss, one being *psychic* the other *noetic*.

Question: How are we to know what the phrase “free action of our own judgment” means, how are we to see it as different from the mesh of adopted opinions? What is the difference between the “free action of my own judgment” and some cherished, long-lived prejudice that I have difficulty even seeing as a prejudice?



EXTRACT ON CYCLES AND THEIR CAUSE

The doctrine of Cycles is one of the most important in the whole theosophical system, though the least known and of all the one most infrequently referred to. Western investigators have for some centuries suspected that events move in cycles, and a few of the writers in the field of European literature have dealt with the subject, but all in a very incomplete fashion. This incompleteness and want of accurate knowledge have been due to the lack of belief in spiritual things and the desire to square everything with materialistic science.

A cycle is a ring or turning, as the derivation of the word indicates. The corresponding words in the Sanskrit are *Yuga, Kalpa, Manvantara*, but of these *yuga* comes nearest to cycle, as it is lesser in duration than the others. The beginning of a cycle must be a moment, that added to other moments makes a day, and those added together constitute months, years, decades and centuries. Starting with the moment and proceeding through a day, this theory erects the cycle into a comprehensive ring, which includes all in its limits. The moment being the basis, the question to be settled in respect to the great cycle is, When did the first moment come? This cannot be answered, but it can be said that the truth is held by the ancient theosophists to be that at the first moments of the solidification of this globe the mass of matter involved attained a certain and definite rate of vibration which will hold through all variations in any part of it until its hour for dissolution comes. These rates of vibration are what determine the different cycles, and... the doctrine is that the solar system and the globe we are now on will come to an end

when the force behind the whole mass of seen and unseen matter has reached its limit of duration under cyclic law. That force at work determining the great cycle is that of man himself considered as a spiritual being. When he is done using the globe he leave it, and then with him goes out the force holding all together; the consequence is dissolution by fire or water or what not, these phenomena being simply effects and not causes.

Individuals and nations in definite streams return in regularly recurring periods to the earth, and thus bring back to the globe the arts, the civilization, the very persons who once were on it at work. These souls bring the civilization with them in idea and essence, which being added to what other have done for the development of the human race in its character and knowledge will produce a new and higher state of civilization. This new and better civilization is not due to books, records, mechanics, etc., but to the soul ever retaining in *Manas* the knowledge it once gained and always pushing to completer development the higher principles and powers, the essence of progress remains and will as surely come out as the sun shines. (Taken from Chapter XIV of *The Ocean of Theosophy*)



Tacking I nto The Wind

On Nov. 18, 1995, Itzhak Perlman, the violinist, came on stage to give a concert at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center in New York City.

If you have ever been to a Perlman concert, you know that getting on stage is no small achievement for him. He was stricken with polio as a child, and so he has braces on both legs and walks with the aid of two crutches.

To see him walk across the stage one step at a time, painfully and slowly, is a sight. He walks painfully, yet majestically, until he reaches his chair. Then he sits down, slowly, puts his crutches on the floor, undoes the clasps on his legs, tucks one foot back and extends the other foot forward. Then he bends down and picks up the violin, puts it under his chin, nods to the conductor and proceeds to play.

By now, the audience is used to this ritual. They sit quietly while he makes his way across the stage to his chair. They remain reverently silent while he undoes the clasps on his legs. They wait until he is ready to play.

But this time, something went wrong. Just as he finished the first few bars, one of the strings on his violin broke. You could hear it snap - it went off like gunfire across the room. There was no mistaking what that sound meant. There was no mistaking what he had to do.

People who were there that night thought to themselves: "We figured that he would have to get up, put on the clasps again, pick up the crutches and limp his way off stage - to either find another violin or else find another string for this one."

But he didn't. Instead, he waited a moment, closed his eyes and then signaled the conductor to begin again. The orchestra began, and he played from where he had left off. And he played with such passion and such power and such

purity as they had never heard before. Of course, anyone knows that it is impossible to play a symphonic work with just three strings. I know that, and you know that, but that night Itzhak Perlman refused to know that. You could see him modulating, changing, recomposing the piece in his head. At one point, it sounded like he was de-tuning the strings to get new sounds from them that they had never made before.

When he finished, there was an awesome silence in the room.

And then people rose and cheered. There was an extraordinary outburst of applause from every corner of the auditorium. We were all on our feet, screaming and cheering, doing everything we could to show how much we appreciated what he had done.

He smiled, wiped the sweat from this brow, raised his bow to quiet us, and then he said, not boastfully, but in a quiet, pensive, reverent tone, "You know, sometimes it is the artist's task to find out how much music you can still make with what you have left." What a powerful line that is. It has stayed in my mind ever since I heard it. And who knows? Perhaps that is the way of life - not just for artists but for all of us.

Here is a man who has prepared all his life to make music on a violin of four strings, who, all of a sudden, in the middle of a concert, finds himself with only three strings. So he makes music with three strings, and the music he made that night with just three strings was more beautiful, more sacred, more memorable, than any that he had ever made before, when he had four strings.

So, perhaps our task in this shaky, fast-changing, bewildering world in which we live is to make music, at first

with all that we have, and then, when that is no longer possible, to make music with what we have left.

— JACK RIEMER
— HOUSTON CHRONICLE



CORRESPONDENCE

On the internet an SD class is being conducted under the auspices of Blavatsky.net. Occasionally someone writes an interesting set of questions and perplexities which are good to roll over in our mind. If any wish to discuss specific items of Bill's notes, we will print them provided they are not too long. — EDS.

Page 35 lines 6, 7 and 8 are highlighted. "Spirit is the first differentiation from That, the causeless cause of both Spirit and Matter".

We are to grasp that in pages 35 & 36.

Page 37 lines 1-3. Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel thru eternal duration and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced; but "lies asleep".

The rest of that page should tell us how to think about Time.

Beginning of page 37 and continuing on page 38, we learn about the Mind.

"Mind is a name given to the sum of the states of Consciousness grouped under Thought, Will, and Feeling." Continuing on line 9, "Universal Mind" remains as a permanent possibility of mental action, or as that abstract, absolute thought, of which mind is the concrete relative manifestation.

Bottom of page 39. Nothing is permanent except the one hidden absolute existence which contains within itself the noumena of all realities. "but all things are relatively real, for the cognizer is also a reflection, and the things cognized are as real to him as himself." Page 40 end of section, "and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality;" but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from delusions produced by Maya.

Page 43., lines 6 thru 12 The Secret Doctrine teaches the progressive development of everything, worlds as well as atoms; and this stupendous development has neither conceivable beginning or imaginable end.

Lines 5, 6 and 7 from bottom of page 43. "The past time is the Present time, as also the Future, which though it has not come into existence, still is."

Page 44 lines 5 and 6. "What is Time, for instance, but the panoramic succession of our states of consciousness?"

Page 45. "The idea of Eternal Non-Being which is the One Being"

Further down the paragraph "In our case the One Being is the noumenon of all the noumena which we know must underlie phenomena, etc.

Page 46 lines 10-12 Page 47 lines 6 & 7 Page 49 lines 5,6 & 7 Page 50 lines 16 - 19 Page 51 lines 9 - 11, and the rest of that paragraph.

I thought these topics of discussion were enough to think about for Stanza I without jumping of into other esoteric subjects no matter how interesting. The above I would like to hear discussed in greater detail.

Bill Quinn



THE COFFEE KLATCH

Coffee Maker: As I was ruminating this morning while cleaning the place and wishing my customers were just a touch more thoughtful, it occurred to me that our five senses intensify the outward movement of our consciousness so strongly that education only makes more acute our thirst for power, possessions and appearances. Intuitive or noetic ideation, which teaches us from within-without, is stifled by the onrush of sensation.

Smart Aleck: Wow, if cleaning the tables makes you think like that maybe you should hire a janitor!

Poet buying coffee: We of the masses have no time to think. Our lives are poured out in coffee spoons. "Chained to our previous actions," we try to make our chains as suitable and up-to-date as possible, never stopping to consider that all these chains become **opportunities** when we tack into the wind.

Student buying coffee: Coffee-maker give me one of your less clean tables. When the conversation gets exciting I always slosh my coffee! Your idea of the externalized life we live is pretty good, reminds me of something Mr. Judge said:

"Ten thousand Adepts can do us no great good unless we ourselves are ready, and They act only as suggestors to us of what possibilities there are in every human heart. If we dwell within ourselves, and must live and die by ourselves, it must follow that running here and there to see any thing or person does not in itself give progress.... But the important thing is to develop the Self in the self, and then the possessions of wisdom belonging to all wise men at once belong to us.

Each one would see the Self differently and yet would never see it, for to see it is to *be* it. But for making words we say, "See it." It might be a flash, a blazing wheel, or what not.... The mystery of the ages is man – each one of us. (*Letters That Have Helped me*, Letter XI)

Furtive Bystander: Student have you seen any "flashes" lately, or "balls of fire"?

Mystic: [twisting his handlebar moustache] There may be a law in nature that ethical teachings from within always bring a phenomena concomitant to the mental fulfillment that occurs. This would explain why really great humans tend to have a trail of magic and mystery clustering about their life histories. George Washington Carver and Luther Burbank are interesting examples of the magical aura that sometimes arises around persons who, in their own eyes, think themselves "quite plain."

Burbank, once developed a certain type of pea which was especially good for canning. The man who requested it owned a cannery. He made millions out of the pea developed by Burbank. When someone asked Burbank how much he charged the man for developing the new strain of canning-peas, there was a look of astonishment and a quiet reply, "But he was a friend of mine!"

George Washington Carver could have made millions from his discoveries with peanuts. When asked why he failed to do this, he only remarked, "God didn't charge me for them."

I would suggest that these two had found a Center within that guided their lives, that they were yogis in the sense of being centers of beneficent power in the stream of human evolution, or as James Allen once said:

“A man does not commence to truly live until he finds an immovable center within himself on which to stand, by which to regulate his life, and from which to draw his peace. If he trusts to that which fluctuates he also will fluctuate; if he leans upon that which may be withdrawn he will fall and be bruised; if he looks for satisfaction in perishable accumulations he will starve for happiness in the midst of plenty.

Let a man learn to stand alone, looking to no one for support, expecting no favours, craving no personal advantages, not begging nor complaining, not craving nor regretting, but relying upon the truth within himself, deriving his satisfaction and comfort from the integrity of his own heart.

Lurker: Self-reliant quotes are great, but my “comfort and integrity” were shattered when a friend of mind accosted me with questions like these:

1. How do we live in the face of a mate or a boss.....?
2. How do we live with the entire outer world living in confusion and not trying to see past illusion?
3. How do you proceed when someone lies on you and seriously impedes your life?
4. How do we face reality and work through an entire world of illusion — not from a “quote” or a book but in actual day-to-day living?

For all I know my friend may be leading a more theosophical life than I!! I warned you guys to stop quoting. Look at us now!! Those questions almost catapulted me to the nearest gin-shop!

Egg-Head: Lurker, if you would quit sitting at that back table and scowling, things would get better. Perk up, put on your rose-colored glasses and move on. Besides the Old Lady gave us the perfect antidote for such ques-

tions. If you refuse the “pill” she offers how can you expect a cure? If we be not up and doing for others, how are we to forget our woes?

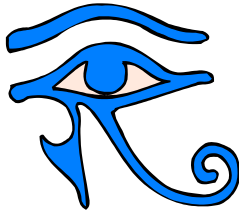
Madame Blavatsky illustrated our **self-evolution** like this:

“How is it that our eyes see a thousand things every hour and still impress our “consciousness” with only a few of these things? How is it that every hour a thousand thoughts pass through our lower mind, while only a few of them we say are “conscious”¹? What does this “consciousness” mean? This “consciousness” is simply our emotional nature, our fourth principle.

Suppose I have *now* a certain set of emotions, a certain portion of my fourth principle is more active than the remaining portion. If at that time my eyes mechanically look at certain things, and if these things do not contain at that time the same set of emotions that are agitating me — that is, if those things that my eyes are set upon are not animated or agitated powerfully by elementals or forces or gods corresponding to my present emotions — then I am said to be not impressed by those things thus seen. I say I am not conscious of them, I am not interested in them, I paid no attention to them. But if those things, on the other hand, be agitated more or less powerfully by some or all of the same emotions, then I more or less become conscious or impressed by what the eyes saw. You see a tree, and yet you say you did not take notice of many things about it. I say I saw you, but did not observe something in or about you. This is the secret of the matter. **This is the law of attraction.**

¹ This word is “Unconscious” in the original but it is probably a typo.

Similarly a number of thoughts *pass now* through my lower mind. If those thoughts have not in them the same emotions that agitate at present in my fourth principle, then I am said not to have cognized these thoughts. How remarkable that the fourth principle, which is just the center of all our nature, the very middle of all our seven principles, three above and three below, should be the keynote to all attractions, pleasures and pain.



DNYANESHVARI

VII

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

Chapter IV

[Continued from Issue 7]

KRISHNA: This system of action (Yoga) was imparted by me to the Lord Vaivaswat (sun). That was a long time ago. He imparted it to Manu, and Manu, having practiced it himself, imparted it to Ikshavaku. In this way it has been handed down. Several royal sages came to know this Yoga later on, but at the present it is lost. When an individual is absorbed in the pursuit of objects of senses in the body, the knowledge of SELF is forgotten, faith is weakened, enjoyment seems to be the supreme

goal and the paraphernalia of worldly existence appears to be attractive. In a country where everybody is naked, clothing is useless. To him, who is blind from birth, the sun can do no service. On an assembly of the deaf, music is wasted. How then can they who have not gone even to the borders of renunciation and when they do not know even the alphabet of reflection, how are they to find the Self? This system of Yoga has been lost to the world on account of the increase of illusion and the subsequent passage of time.

I have now without reservatin conveyed to you what this system is. This is a great secret and as I have affection for you I have imparted it to you.

ARJUNA: Where can there be greater affection than the affection of the mother to the child? You are the oasis in the desert of life. You are the mother of all that are helpless. It is truly your favour, which will carry us forward. Therefore if I say anything, which is not quite sensible, please hear it all the same and don't be angry. What you say with regard to the ancient history of this system of Yoga cannot be reconciled by me for the moment. Even my ancestors did not know, who was Vaivaswat and how did you manage to tell this Yoga to him? The sun is more ancient than any of us and you were only born the other day. I do not know the mystery of your life, but I find what you just said somewhat loose. Will you please, therefore, tell me, when it was that you imparted this system to the Lord Vaivaswat (sun)? (*Dyaneshvari*, pp. 79-80)

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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THE BIG BLUE UMBRELLA

THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL

One feels a serious doubt whether, with all its intellectual acuteness, our age is destined to discover in each western nation even one solitary *uninitiated* scholar or philosopher capable of fully comprehending the spirit of archaic philosophy. Nor can one be expected to do so, before the real meaning of these terms, the *Alpha* and the *Omega* of Eastern esotericism, the words *Sat* and *Asat*,—so freely used in the Rig-Veda, and elsewhere—is thoroughly assimilated. Without this key to the Aryan Wisdom, the Cosmogony of the Rishis and the Arhats is in danger of remaining a dead letter to the average Orientalist. *Asat* is not merely the negation of *Sat*, nor is it the “not yet existing”; for *Sat* is in itself neither the “existent,” nor “being.” *SAT* is the immutable, the ever present, changeless and eternal root, from and through which all proceeds. But it is far more than the potential force in the seed, which propels onward the process of development, or what is now called evolution. It is the ever becoming, though the never manifesting. *Sat* is born from *Asat*, and *ASAT* is begotten by *Sat*: the perpetual motion in a circle, truly; yet a circle that can be squared only at the supreme Initiation, at the threshold of Paranirvana. (*S.D.II*, 449-50)

Point out the Way

VII

[continued from Issue #7]

Question: “The Great Breath goes forth and returns again” (p. 16). What is meant by that term as here used?

Answer: Let us seek an analogy in our own experience: We say., “He gave up the ghost.” That is, he gave up the breath; he breathed his last breath. What does that mean? Dissolution, the death of that which was an active form. We say, “He drew his first breath;” he took breath.

if the newborn babe does not do that, he does not become viable; he is dead at the beginning of the journey instead of at the end. Apply that to the whole universe: there is the birth of a universe: that is, the beginning of the Great Breath; there is the life of the universe or the continuance of the breathing; and then there is the death of the universe, or the dissolution of the Breath, the return of life to its original condition.

Question: What might we denominate the Father and the Mother of the Universe?

Answer: The incoming and the outgoing Breath. All breath consists first of an inception, next of a retention, and, finally of an exhalation; then of a new inception, a new retention and a new exhalation, and so on, over and over again. There is reincarnation, or re-embodiment, or change, applied to everything that is, from a solar system down to the minutest conceivable atom. What causes this? Polarity, attractive and repul-

sive forces, the affinities of Nature, positive and negative attractions; and those are personified as “Father” and “Mother” In every one of us there are positive forces; in every one of us there are negative forces, we are anon active and anon passive — receptive in this that or the other direction. Personify that and you have the “Father” and the “Mother.” They are both in us and may alternate; that which is at this moment positive may at the next become passive.

Question: Might not “giving, up the ghost” refer to the leaving of this body which is impermanent, and the assumption of another body, which is permanent?

Answer: Actually the expression is one coined by the translators of the Bible, the King James version, the common Bible of the Protestant sects: “He gave up the ghost,” it says in one place; “He yielded up the ghost,” in another. All over the world amongst every kind of people there has always existed, and there persists now, the idea that at death something which is the counterpart of the living, visible, physical body, and which ordinarily is invisible, leaves the body. This “invisible” form is often spoken of as the wraith. And so at the departure of the astral body, its separation from the physical, we say “He gave up the ghost.”

Question: Why did the Hebraic tradition become such an apparent drag on the mind of the West?

Answer: It is evident that the egos who are not Jews in religion or nationality or tradition have been tremendously or powerfully affected by the egos who have constituted in the

past the Semitic or Hebraic race. We see that everywhere. In another sense, the answer is that they fastened the personal god on us.

Then the next question is, What is the connection between the Jews and the Egyptians? It is probable that Mr. Judge is referring there to the story in the Old Testament about how the Jews went down into Egypt; his older brothers sold old Jacob's second youngest son — Joseph — into slavery because they were jealous of him. Afterwards, in time of famine, the whole Jacobite clan moved to Egypt where Joseph had become a popular politician, you might say. They multiplied exceedingly, and finally, according to the Old Testament and according to such traditions in history, the Egyptians enslaved and frightfully abused the Jews during many centuries. The Theosophical teaching is that those Egyptian egos are the very ones who form the advance guard of civilization in Europe, and particularly in America; and so the Jews came back. The pendulum reverses and we have been enslaved; we, who enslaved them physically, have been enslaved by them, financially and religiously — the two meaning the same thing.

Question: The Jews are said to have merely had one part of the Secret Doctrine taken from the ancient Egyptians; what is that one part?

Answer: If we were familiar with our Bible, could we not answer that ourselves? The Jews had the idea of a creation, that is, an evolution; then they had the idea of a destruction by flood, fire or whatnot; and then, the renovation. But the doctrine itself is that this process is periodic, without

beginning and without end; in the procession of cycles — that is, of creation, of preservation, of destruction or regeneration, over and over again. So the Jews had only the idea of one particular creation, one particular flood; they had no idea of cyclic law.

Question: What is meant by the term “Universal Mind”?

Answer: What is meant by the term “Universal Matter”? It is that substance of which all bodies are composed, but the bodies are not one thing and the matter something else. So Universal Mind is that which consists of and includes all intelligence of every degree in the manifested universe, high or low, visible or invisible.

Question: What is the difference between Brahma and Brahma?

Answer: The same distinction that there is between man the perceiver and man the creator.

HOMEOPATHY REVISITED

HPB originally printed this article in three parts as “The Bugbears of Science.” [*The Theosophist* for February, April & May, 1883] It presents an occult view of the medical system known as Homeopathy. HPB’s discussion of “Matter,” “Force,” and the waning of gross materialism is complemented by John K. Landré’s article, “Reductionism in Science,” on page 24.

The fanaticism of blank negation is often more tenacious, more dangerous, and always far harder to deal with, and to combat, than that of mere assumption. Hence — as a result justly complained of — the gradual and steady crumbling of old and time-honored ideals; the daily encroachment, and growing supremacy of

the extreme physico-materialistic² thought; and a stubborn opposition to, and ignoring

² The expression “physico-materialism,” as well as its pendant “Spirito” or “metaphysico-materialism,” may be newly coined words, but some such are rigorously necessary in a publication like *The Theosophist* and with its present non-English editor. If they are not clear enough, we hope C.C.M. or some other friend will suggest better. In one sense every Buddhist as well as every Occultist and even most of the educated Spiritualists, are, strictly speaking, Materialists. The whole question lies in the ultimate and scientific decision upon the nature or essence of FORCE. Shall we say that Force is — Spirit, or that Spirit is — a force? Is the latter physical or spiritual, *Matter* or SPIRIT? If the latter is something — it must *be* material, otherwise it is but a pure abstraction, a *no*-thing. Nothing which is capable of producing an effect on any portion of the physical — objective or subjective — Kosmos can be otherwise than material. Mind — whose enormous potentiality is being discovered more and more with every day, could produce *no* effect were it not material; and believers in a personal God, have themselves either to admit that the deity in doing its work has to use material force to produce a physical effect, or — to advocate miracles, which is an absurdity. As A. J. Manley, of Minnesota, very truly observes in a letter:

“It has ever been an impossibility with me to realize or comprehend an effect, which requires motion or force, as being produced by ‘nothing.’ The leaves of the forest are stirred by the gentlest breeze, and yet withhold the breeze, and the leaves cease to move. While gas continues to escape from the tube, apply the match and you will have a brilliant light; cut off the supply and the wonderful phenomenon ceases. Place a magnet near a compass, and the needle is attracted by it; remove the former and the needle will resume its normal condition. By will power the mesmerist compels his subject to perform various feats, but he becomes normal again when the will is withdrawn.

“I have observed in all physical phenomena, that when the propelling force is withdrawn, the phenomena invariably cease. From these facts, I infer that the producing causes must be material, though we do not see them. Again, if these phenomena were produced by ‘nothing,’ it would be impossible to withdraw the producing force, and the manifestations would never cease. Indeed, if such manifestations ever existed, they must of necessity be perpetual.”

Concurring fully with the above reasoning, it thus becomes of the utmost necessity for us, and

by, the major *portion* of Western society, of those psychological facts and phenomena advocated by the minority and proved by them as conclusively as a mathematical equation. Science, we are often told, is the necessary enemy of any and every metaphysical speculation, as a mode of questioning nature, and of occult phenomena under all their Protean forms; hence — of MESMERISM and HOMEOPATHY among the rest.

It is grossly unfair, we think, to lay the blame so sweepingly at the door of genuine science. True science — that is, knowledge without bigotry, prejudice, or egotism — endeavors but to clear away all the rubbish accumulated by generations of false priests and philosophers. Sciolism — that is, superficial learning, vain, narrow-minded and selfishly bigoted — unable to discern fact from false appearances, like a dog barking at the moon, growls at the approach of everything outside the limits of the narrow area of her action. True Science sternly enforces the discrimination of fact from hasty conclusion, and the true man of science will hardly deny that, of which the remotest possibility has once been demonstrated to him. It is but the unworthy votaries of science, those who abuse her name and authority and degrade her by making of her a shield behind which to give free sway to their narrow preconceptions, who alone ought to be

under the penalty of being constantly accused of inconsistency, if not of flat contradictions, to make a well-marked difference between those materialists who, believing that nothing can exist outside of matter in however sublimated a state the latter, yet believe in various subjective forces unknown to, only because as yet undiscovered by, science; rank, sceptics and those *transcendentalists* who, mocking at the majesty of truth and fact, fly into the face of logic by saying that “nothing is impossible to God;” that he is an extra-cosmic deity who created the universe out of nothing, was never subject to law, and can produce a *miracle* outside of all physical law and whenever it pleases him, etc.

held answerable for the *suppressio veri* that is so common. To such it is that applies the pungent remark, recently made by a German physician: “he who rejects anything a priori and refuses it a fair trial, is unworthy of the name of a man of science; nay, *even of that of an honest man.*” (G. Jaeger.)

The remedy best calculated to cure an unprejudiced man of science of a chronic disbelief, is the presentation to him of those same unwelcome facts he had hitherto denied in the name of exact science, as in reconciliation with that science, and supported by the evidence of her own unimpeachable laws. A good proof of this is afforded in the list of eminent men who, if they have not altogether passed “with arms and baggage” to the “enemy's” camp, have yet bravely stood up for, and defended the most phenomenal facts of modern spiritualism, as soon as they had discovered them to be a scientific reality. It needs no close observer, but simply an unbiased mind, to perceive that stubborn, unintellectual scepticism, that knows no middle ground and is utterly unamenable to compromise, is already on the wane. Büchner's and Moleschott's gross conceptions of matter, have found their natural successor in the ultra vagaries of Positivism, so graphically dubbed by Huxley as “Roman Catholicism minus Christianity,” and the extreme Positivists have now made room for the Agnostics. Negation and physico-materialism are the first twin progeny of young exact science. As the matron grows in years and wisdom, Saturn-like, she will find herself compelled to devour her own children. Uncompromising physico-materialism is being driven to its last entrenchments. It sees its own ideal — if an insane desire to convert everything that exists within the area of our limited visible universe into something that can be seen, felt, tasted, measured, weighed, and finally bottled by the aid of our physical senses may be called an “ideal” — vanishing like

a mist be-fore the light of awkward fact, and the daily discoveries made in the domain of invisible and intangible matter, whose veil is more and more rent with every such new discovery. The grim ideal is receding farther and farther; and the explorers into those regions where matter, which had been hitherto made subject to, and within the scope of the mental perceptions of, our physical brain escapes the control of both and loses its name—are also fast losing their footing. Indeed, the high pedestal on which gross matter has hitherto been elevated, is fairly breaking down. Dagon's feet are crumbling under the weight of new facts daily gathered in by our scientific negators; and while the fashionable idol has shown its feet of clay, and its false priests their “faces of brass,” even Huxley and Tyndall, two of the greatest among our great men of physical science, confess that they had dreamed a dream, and found their Daniel (in Mr. Crookes) to explain it by demonstrating “Radiant matter.” Within the last few years a mysterious correlation of words, a scientific legerdemain shuffling and shifting of terms, has occurred so quietly as to have hardly attracted the attention of the uninitiated. If we should personify Matter, we might say that it awoke one fine morning to find itself transformed into FORCE. Thus, the stronghold of gross physical matter was sapped at its very foundation; and were Mr. Tyndall thoroughly and unexceptionally honest, he ought to have paraphrased by this time his celebrated Belfast manifesto, and say: “In FORCE I find the promise and potency of every form of life.” From that time began the reign of Force and the foreshadowing of the gradual oblivion Of MATTER, SO suddenly obliged to abdicate its supremacy. The Materialists have silently and unostentatiously transformed themselves into Energists.

But the old fogies of Conservative Science will not be so easily entreated into new ideas. Having refused for years the name of Force to

Matter, they now refuse to recognize the presence of the former — — even when legitimately recognized by many of their eminent colleagues - in the phenomena known as Hypnotism, Mesmerism, and Homeopathy. The potentiality of Force is sought to be limited in accordance with old prejudices. Without touching that group of manifestations, too mysterious and abnormal to be easily assimilated by the majority of the generally ignorant and always indifferent public (though vouched for by those lights of Science, named Wallace, Crookes, Zollner, etc.), we will only consider a few of the more easily verifiable, though equally rejected, facts. We have in mind the above named branches of psycho-physiological science, and shall see what several savants — outside the Royal Society of London — have to say. We propose to collect in these notes a few of the observations of Dr. Charcot upon Hypnotism the old Mesmerism under its new name; and upon Homeopathy, by the famous Dr. Gustave Jaeger, together with certain arguments and remarks thereupon, by competent and unbiased French, German and Russian observers. Here, one may see Mesmerism and Homeopathy discussed and supported by the best medical and critical authorities, and may find out how far both “sciences” have already become entitled to recognition. To call an old fact by a new name does not change the nature of that fact, any more than a new dress changes an individual. Mesmerism, for being now called “Hypnotism,” and “Electro-biology,” is none the less that same animal magnetism hooted out from all the Academies of Medicine and Science at the beginning of our century. The wonderful experiments, recently produced in the hospitals by the world-famous Dr. Charcot, of Paris, and by Professor Heidenhain, in Germany, must not remain unknown to our readers any more than the new method of testing the efficacy of Homeopathy — called *Neuralanalysis*, invented by Professor G. Jaeger, a distinguished zoologist and physiologist of Stuttgart.

But are any of these sciences and facts strictly new? We think not. Mesmerism, as well as Dr — — — Charcot's Metaloscopia and Xiloscopy were known to the ancients; but later on, with

the first dawn of our civilization and enlightenment, were rejected by the wiseacres of those days as something too mystical and impossible.^{3*} As to

³ To such “impossible” facts belong the phenomena of Hypnotism, which have created such a new stir in Germany, Russia and France, as well as the manifestations (belonging to the same kind) produced and observed by Dr. Charcot upon his hysterical patients. With the latter phenomena we must class those induced by the so-called metaloscopy and xiloscopy. Under the former are meant in medicine the now firmly established facts proving the characteristic influence on the animal organism of various metals and of the magnet, through their simple contact with the skin of the patient: each producing a different effect. As to xiloscopy, it is the name given to the same effects produced by various kinds of woods, especially by the quinine bark. Metaloscopy has already given birth to Metalotherapia — the science of using metals for curative means. The said “impossibilities” begin to be recognized as facts, though a Russian medical *Encyclopaedia* does call them “monstrous.” The same fate awaits other branches of the occult sciences of the ancients. Hitherto rejected, they now begin to be — although still reluctantly — accepted. Prof. Ziggler of Geneva has well-nigh proved the influence of metals, of quinine and of some parts of the living organisms (the ancient fascination of flowers) upon plants and trees. The plant named *Drosera*, the quasi-invisible hairs of which are endowed with partial motion, and which was regarded by Darwin as belonging to the insect-eating plants, is shown by Ziggler as affected even at a distance by animal magnetism as well as by certain metals, by means of various conductors. And a quarter century ago M. Adolphe Didier, the famous French somnambule and author, reports that an acquaintance of his met with much success in the experimental application of the mesmeric aura to flowers and fruits to promote their growth, color, flavor, and perfume. Miss C. L. Hunt, who quotes this fact approvingly in her useful *Compendium of Mesmeric Information*, mentions (p. 180, footnote) that there “are persons who are unable to wear or handle flowers, as they begin to wither and droop directly, as though the vitality of the plant were being appropriated by the wearer, instead of being sustained.” To corroborate which foregoing observations by Western authorities, our Brahmin readers need only to be reminded of the imperative injunction of their ancient *Sutras* that if anyone should even salute a Brahmin when on his way to the river or tank for his morning *pūja* (devotions), he must at once throw away the

Homeopathy, the possible existence of the law of *similia similibus curantur* had already occurred in the earliest days of medicine. Hippocrates speaks of it, and later on Paracelsus, Haller, and even Stahl with several other renowned chemists of his time more than hinted at it, since some of them have absolutely taught it, and cured several patients by its means. As alchemy has become chemistry, so mesmerism and homeopathy with all the rest will ultimately become the legitimate branches of orthodox medicine. The experiments of Dr. Charcot with hysterical patients have almost revolutionized the world of medicine. Hypnotism is a phenomenon that is exercising all the thinking minds of the day, and is expected by many distinguished physicians — now that the keynote has been so loudly struck by that distinguished Parisian physician to become in the near future a *science* of the greatest importance for humanity. The recent observations, in another direction, by Professor Heidenhain, in what he calls the “telephonic experiment,” is another proof of the gradual discovery and acceptance of means hitherto part and parcel of the occult sciences. The Professor shows that by placing one hand upon *the left side* of the brow, and the other upon the occiput of the subject, the latter when sufficiently hypnotized, will repeat words expressed by the experimenter. This is a very old experiment. When the High Lama of a College of *Chelas* in Tibet wants to force a pupil to *speak the truth*, he places his

flowers he is carrying according to the ritualistic custom, return home and procure fresh flowers. This simple explanation being that the magnetic current projected towards him by the saluter taints the floral aura and makes the blossoms no longer fit for the mystical psychic ceremony of which they are necessary accessories.

hand over the left eye of the culprit and the other on his head, and then — no power in the world is able to stop the words from pouring forth from the lad's lips. He has to give it out. Does the Lama hypnotize or mesmerize him? Truly, if all such facts have been — so long rejected, it is but on account of their close connection with occult sciences, with — MAGIC. Still accepted they are, however reluctantly. Dr. Riopel, of the United States, speaking of Hypnotism, and confessing the subject to be “so replete with interest, that metaphysicians have strong grounds for encouragement to continue their researches,” concludes nevertheless his article with the following extraordinary paradox: A subject, first brought to light by Gall, who desired to establish the fact that the organ of speech had a definite position in the brain; then later by Marc Dax, and Bouillaud, and still later by Broca, and many other distinguished observers, has now come forward to brush away the mysteries of spiritualism and its pretended relations to psychology tunder the name of “hypnotism.” (*Phrenol. Journ.*)

The “pretended relations” seems to be a felicitous remark and quite to the point. It is too late in the day to try to exclude transcendental psychology from the field of science, or to separate the phenomena of the spiritualists from it, however erroneous their *orthodox* explanations may appear. The prejudice so widely extant in society against the claims of spiritual phenomena, mesmerism, and homeopathy, is becoming too absurd to give it here a serious notice, for it has fallen into idiotic stubbornness. And the reason of it is simply this; a long established regard for an opinion becomes at last a habit; the latter is as quickly transformed into a conviction of

its infallibility, and very soon it becomes for its advocate a dogma. Let no profane hand dare to touch it!

What reasonable grounds are there, for instance, for disputing the possible influence of the will impulses of one organism over the actions of another organism, without that will being expressed by either word or gestures?

Are not the phenomena of our will [asks a well-known Russian writer] and its constant action upon our own organism as great a puzzle as any to Science? And yet, who has ever thought of disputing or doubting the fact that the action of the will brings on certain changes in the economy of our physical organism, or, that the influence of the nature of certain substances upon that of others at a distance is not a scientifically recognized fact. Iron, in the process of getting magnetized, begins acting at a distance; wires once prepared to conduct electric currents begin to interact at a distance; all bodies heated to luminosity send forth visible and invisible rays to enormous distances, and so on. Why then should not WILL — an impulse and an energy — have as much potentiality as heat or iron? Changes in the state of our organism can thus be proved as scientifically to produce determined changes in another organism.

Still better reasons may be given.

It is a well-known fact that force can be accumulated in a body and form a store, so to say, of what is termed potential energy; to wit, the heat and light given out by the process of combustion of wood, coals, etc., represent simply the emission of energy brought down upon the earth by the solar rays and absorbed, stored up by the plant during the process

of its growth and development. Gas of every kind represents a reservoir of energy, which manifests itself under the form of heat as soon as compressed, and especially during the transformation of the gas into a fluidic state. The so-called "Canton-phosphorus" (to the practical application of which are due the luminous clocks which shine in darkness) has the property of absorbing the light which it emits, later on, in darkness. Mesmerists assure us — and we do not see any valid reason why it should riot be so — that in the same manner their will-impulses may be fixed upon any material object which will absorb and store it until forced by the same will to emit it back from itself.

But there are less intricate and purely scientific phenomena requiring no human organism to experiment upon; experiments which, finding themselves within an easy reach for verification, not only prove very forcibly the existence of the mysterious force claimed by the mesmerists and practically utilized in the production of every occult phenomenon by the adepts, but threaten to upset absolutely and forever to the last stone of that Chinese wall of blank negation erected by physical science against the invasion of the so-called occult phenomena. We mean Messrs. Crookes' and Guitford's experiments with radiant matter, and that very ingenious instrument invented by the former and called the electrical radiometer. Anyone who knows anything of them can see how far' they carry out and corroborate our assertions. Mr. Crookes, in his observations on molecular activity in connection with the radiometer (the molecules being set in motion by means of radiations producing heat effects) makes the following discovery. The electric rays — produced by an induction

spark, the electricity radiating from the negative pole and passing into a space containing extremely rarefied gas — when focused upon a strip of platinum, melted it! The energy of the current is thus transferred to a substance through what may be fairly called a vacuum, and produces therein an intense elevation of temperature, a heat cap able of melting metals. What is the medium that transmits the energy, since there is nought in space but a little gas in its most attenuated condition? And how much, or rather how little, we see, is needed of that substance to make of it a medium and cause it to resist the pressure of such an enormous quantity of force or energy? But here we see quite the reverse of that which we should expect to find. Here, the transmission of force becomes only then possible when the quantity of the substance is reduced to its minimum. Mechanics teach us that the quantity of energy is determined by the weight of the mass of the substance in motion, and the velocity of its motion; and with the decrease of the mass the velocity of the motion must be considerably increased if we want to obtain the same effect. From this point of view, and before this infinitesimally small quantity of attenuated gas, we are forced — to be enabled to explain the immensity of the effect — to realize a velocity of motion which transcends all the limits of our conception. In Mr. Crookes' miniature apparatus we find ourselves face to face with an infinitude as inconceivable to us as that which must exist in the very depths of the Universe. Here we have the infinitude of velocity; there — the infinitude of space. Are these two transcendent things spirit? No; they are both MATTER; only — at the opposite poles of the same Eternity.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

REDUCTIONISM IN SCIENCE

JOHN K. LANDRÉ

(ORIGINALLY submitted to JCS-online@yahoogroups.com)

I recently wrote a small article for JCS (Journal of Consciousness Study) and submitted it for publication. Anthony Freeman suggested that it would be more suited for posting online than for publishing in the magazine. In the article I take issue with the abundant reductionism that can still be found in JCS.

ABSTRACT: Reductionism is bad science. It refuses to look at the effects that sometimes emerge when putting parts together to form a new whole. In Consciousness Studies in particular it eliminates the study of all subjective knowledge.

Let me start with a quote from Ramachandran that, I think, should not remain unchallenged (from an interview by Freeman in the Journal of Consciousness Studies, Volume 8, #1):

People said that living things could never be understood in terms of chemistry because there was a mysterious *Elan vital*, 'entelechy' or vital spirit, but the discovery of DNA's structure changed all this. Likewise it was sidely believed that even though we may someday understand all the functions of the brain, we can never explain the 'soul' or consciousness. This challenge too has been taken up (*e.g.*, Crick and Koch, 1998) and few educated people now believe in a nonmaterial soul.

This is an example of many thoroughly reductionistic statements still being made from time to time in the Journal of Consciousness Studies. By my reckoning about half of the authors publishing in it still declare themselves to be reductionists. Yet reductionism is outdated, dogmatic, and bad science.

The basic premise of reductionism is that once we understand all the parts of a

whole, we have discovered all there is to know about it. The whole is "nothing but" the sum of the parts. Consciousness is nothing but the firing of neurons in the brain. Art appreciation is nothing but events in the outside world causing brain chemistry via our senses. Life is nothing but DNA molecules doing their thing. Of course over the last several centuries scientifically looking at parts of wholes has produced staggering amounts of understanding. Even today the study of component parts still contributes enormously to science. As Ramachandran observes elsewhere in the interview quoted above, reductionism is the most powerful strategy known to science. And indeed his work on art appreciation is meaningful. It brings clarity to parts of art appreciation.

But reductionism is not the only scientific strategy! It is only a very powerful means science uses. Only studying parts of a whole by necessity ignores all elements that may emerge when combining parts into a new, more complex whole. Nuclear physics cannot "explain" biology. Biology is incapable of describing and predicting psychological phenomena. And brain chemistry by itself can never make consciousness completely understandable. As if the structure of DNA can explain the beauty of a sunset! As if there is no difference between a dead cell — a bunch of molecules — and a living cell — a bunch of molecules as well, but with life added! When about four centuries ago Galileo invented the telescope, many of his contemporaries refused to look through it. It was too dangerous to do so because it would have threatened the prevailing worldview. This dogmatism, this fundamentalism, was clearly less than scientific and appreciably slowed down scientific understanding in Galileo's days.

A very similar situation exists in today's scientific community. The refusal of reductionists to look at what happens when parts are assembled into new wholes is

based on the belief that there is nothing to be learned from it. Exclusively studying parts of wholes is allegedly the only way that leads to understanding. How unscientific! Not doing the experiment — not looking in the telescope — because we may discover something that threatens our world-view, runs completely counter to scientific principles. In its refusal to study the effects that sometimes emerge when assembling parts, reductionism forces blinders upon us. It takes on faith that there are no such effects. Therefore reductionism is a form of religion, scientism, not science.

In the particular field of consciousness studies, what is it that reductionism fails to study? And what have those who have looked in their telescope learned? At the very least it has become increasingly clear now that for studying consciousness, only looking at brain chemistry will not do. If we want to explore all aspects of it we need not only be objective but also subjective. For understanding consciousness in toto we have to look at the inner as well as the outer world. Consciousness includes self-consciousness. So apart from neurology we need to incorporate the introspective question of “who am I?” In consciousness studies ignoring this question is bad science. The question then arises what the experience is of people who have done some introspection. What do those find who have added subjectivity to objectivity, who, in Wilbur’s language (1995), have not only looked at the realm of “it’s,” but also at the realms of “I” and “we?” Or phrased a little differently, one could, and should ask what we find when objectively studying people with experience in introspection. Both the study and the practice of introspection lead to the conclusion that there exists a vast realm of consciousness that lies beyond the limits of what the mind can understand. As almost all people who practice some form of contemplation will attest, stilling the mind can bring on ex-

periences that the mind is utterly incapable of grasping but that are nonetheless knowable. The existence of such experiences is a scientific fact. For instance, a sixth sense, as in clairvoyance or precognition, is real. There are many irrational, nonmaterial phenomena like that, that really do exist.

Yet reductionism denies all these because reductionists are by necessity materialists. Anything nonmaterial cannot exist. Consciousness is nothing but firing neurons. This immediately brings up the question of cause and effect. Can parts of a whole cause effects in the whole? Of course they can. Cancer can cause death. Can wholes cause changes in parts? Yes, they can. Mind has power over matter. For instance, a nuclear physicist can, by consciously choosing the way of observing, cause the wave function to collapse. The mind of the physicist thus can create an electron. Not everyone has experienced one or more irrational phenomena. But sufficient people have to make ignoring the field of consciousness beyond the mind thoroughly unscientific. Not investigating irrational phenomena because they do not fit in our worldview, is dogmatic fundamentalism and not science. As a good example of subjective, irrational phenomena take those who have experienced their identity as their soul rather than their mind. There really are people who personally identify with an inner Silent Witness, an aspect-free and utterly nonmaterial entity capable of observing the thinking mind. Through introspection it is possible to become aware of the fact that what we usually think we are — our body/mind — is incomplete. Because what we really are is that which can observe our body/minds, that which can observe our thoughts. This Silent Witness we are includes the body/mind but is fundamentally more.

As Douglas Harding (2000) would say, look for yourself (pun intended)! For many who have done the necessary ex-

periment of intensive, long-term contemplation, the experience of being a Silent Witness becomes indisputable. Those know that they are this nonmaterial Soul. They do not need to “believe,” they know with absolute certainty because they have experienced. Once having gained this experience, being a nonmaterial, aspect-free Witness generally becomes much more real than the outer, objective world. The spiritual literature is chock full of authors who describe this. So, calling people who have had this experience uneducated is not only unscientific but — yes, I will return the compliment — uneducated.

Now, I can hear the howls of protest: “Wwhat you are talking about is highly controversial!” But so were Jupiter’s moons as revealed in Galileo’s telescope. Introspection and its results need not be controversial at all. Anybody who meditates long enough can verify to complete satisfaction that our identity is not our mind because we can learn to observe it, even to still it. As I said, we can experience ourselves as the Silent Observer. This Silent Witness can in principle observe all things material and not so material, not only our brain chemistry but also even our thoughts and our characteristics. So we clearly are more than the sum of our parts, for the simple reason that we can observe them. To those who have had the experience — and I am one of them — it is crystal clear that you cannot be what you can observe. My whole is fundamentally more than the sum of my parts. The seer in seeing cannot be seen. Life is fundamentally more than chemistry, just as chemistry is fundamentally more than nuclear physics.

Tell people who, for instance, have had a premonition or a near-death experience that nonmaterial things do not exist, and they will just look for somebody less dogmatic to talk to. Although impossible to repeat on command, their experience is

just as real to them as burning their fingers on a hot stove, if not more so.

We already know how to verify Witness Consciousness, namely by the experiment of prolonged meditation. That is why I chose it, rather than any other irrational phenomenon, as an example of something fundamentally more than the sum of my material parts. Incidentally, Witness Consciousness is only the first level of spiritual awareness. At least three more exist (see, for instance, Landry, 1999). And spiritual awareness is only part of the realm of consciousness that lies beyond the understanding of the mind. But do not take my word for it; investigate for yourself. If, on the other hand, you are less than motivated to carry out the necessary experiment of prolonged meditation, you have no choice but to believe those who have. If you yourself have never seen the Chinese wall, do you maintain it does not exist? In sum then, looking at the parts of a whole certainly is a powerful scientific tool. Yet believing that the sum of the parts always fully describes the whole is a form of religious dogmatism. It is not time for people who call themselves scientists to realize that reductionism does not fit the facts?

Correction: We mistakenly attributed the “Meditation” section in last month’s issue to workers from London, but we learn they received it from Dallas TenBroeck. Thanks Dallas!

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