



KEY NOTEBOOK

VIII

(Continued from May Supplement)

(Section IX)

[Key, p. 143]

IX.

ON THE KAMA-LOKA AND DEVACHAN.

ON THE FATE OF THE LOWER "PRINCIPLES."

— Kama-loka, What is it? —

When the man dies, his lower three principles leave him forever; *i.e.*, body, life, and the vehicle of the latter, the astral body or the double of the **living man**. And then, his four principles — the central or middle principle, the animal soul or **Kama-rupa**, with what it has assimilated from the lower Manas, and the higher triad find themselves in **Kama-loka**. **The latter is an astral locality, the limbus** of scholastic theology, the **Hades** of the ancients, and, strictly speaking, a **locality** only in a relative sense. It has neither a definite area nor boundary, but exists **within** subjective space; *i.e.*, is beyond our sensuous perceptions. Still it exists, and it is there that the **astral eidolons** of all the beings that have lived, animals included, await their **second death**. For the animals it comes with the disintegration and the entire fading out of their **astral** particles to the last. For the human **eidolon** it begins when **the Atma-Buddha-Manasic** triad is said to "separate" itself from its lower principles, or the **reflection of the ex-personality**, by falling into the Devachanic state.

Then the **Kama-rupic** phantom, remaining bereft of its informing thinking principle, the higher **Manas**, and the lower aspect of the latter, the animal intelligence, no longer receiving light from the higher mind, and no longer having a

physical brain to work through, collapses.

It falls into the state of the frog when certain portions of its brain are taken out by the vivisector. It can think no more, even on the lowest animal plane. Henceforth it is no longer even the lower Manas, since this "lower" is nothing without the "higher." And it is this nonentity which we find materializing in Seance rooms with Mediums. It is, however, a true nonentity, only as to reasoning or cogitating powers; still an astral and fluidic **Entity** as shown in certain cases when, having been magnetically and unconsciously drawn toward a medium, it is revived for a time and lives in him by **proxy**, so to speak. This "spook," or the Kama-rupa, may be compared with the jelly-fish, which has an ethereal gelatinous appearance so long as it is in its own element, or water (the **medium's specific AURA**), but which, no sooner is it thrown out of it, than it dissolves in the hand or on the sand, especially in sunlight. In the medium's Aura, it lives a kind of vicarious life and reasons and speaks either through the medium's brain or those of other persons present.

Key, p. 145

As to the Devachanic state, the length of the Ego's stay there depends on the degree of spirituality and the merit or demerit of the last incarnation. The average time is from ten to fifteen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Key Notebook — VIII	1
<u>The Power of Mindfulness — III</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Time</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>The Sun King</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Seven Years Before the ULT</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>The New Slavery</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Gravity and Motion</u>	<u>17</u>

centuries. Devachan is a "place of bliss and of supreme felicity; and if it is such a place (or say **state**), logic tells us that no sorrow or even a shade of pain can be experienced therein. Its bliss consists in that blessed ignorance of all the woes it left behind. In fact, we say that the bliss of the **Devachanee** consists in its complete conviction that it has never left the earth, and that there is no such thing as death at all; that the **postmortem** spiritual consciousness of the mother will represent to her that she lives surrounded by her children and all those whom she loved; that no gap, no link, will be missing to make her disembodied state the most perfect and absolute happiness.

Key, p. 147

During every Devachanic period the Ego, omniscient as it is **per se**, clothes itself, so to say, with the **reflection** of the "personality" that was. The **ideal** efflorescence of all the abstract, therefore undying and eternal qualities or attributes, such as love and mercy, *the* love of the good, the true and the beautiful, that ever spoke in the heart of the living "personality," clung after death to the Ego, and therefore followed it to Devachan. For the time being, then, the Ego becomes the ideal reflection of the human being it was when last on earth, and **that** is not omniscient. Were it that, it would never be in the state we call Devachan at all.

On the strict lines of our philosophy everything is **illusion (Maya)** outside of eternal truth, which has neither form, colour, nor limitation. He who has placed himself beyond the veil of maya — and such are the highest Adepts and Initiates — can have no Devachan. As to the ordinary mortal, his bliss in it is complete. It is an **absolute** oblivion of all that gave it pain or sorrow in the past incarnation, and even oblivion of the fact that such things as pain or sorrow exist at all. The **Devachanee** lives its intermediate cycle between two incarnations surrounded by everything it had aspired to in vain, and in the companionship of everyone it loved on

earth. It has reached the fulfilment of all its soul-yearnings. And thus it lives throughout long centuries¹ an existence of **unalloyed** happiness, which is the reward for its sufferings in earth-life. In short, it bathes in a sea of uninterrupted felicity spanned only by events of still greater felicity in degree.

In Devachan we are with those whom we have lost in material form, and far, far nearer to them now, than when they were alive. And it is not only in the fancy of the Devachanee, as some may imagine, but in reality. For pure divine love is not merely the blossom of a human heart, but has its roots in eternity. Spiritual holy love is immortal, and Karma brings sooner or later all those who loved each other with such a spiritual affection to incarnate once more in the same family group. Again we say that love beyond the grave, illusion though you may call it, has a magic and divine potency which reacts on the living. A mother's Ego filled with love for the imaginary children it sees near itself, living a life of happiness, as real to it as when on earth — that love will always be felt by the children in flesh. It will manifest in their dreams, and often in various events — in providential protections

¹ "It has been asked why the activity exhibited by a human monad in Devachan should last through a longer period of time than that same monad's activity on the present plane of existence?"

From our present stand-point the difference is a great one, but this is not so from the standpoint of the Devachanee. When a Yogi is in a state of samadhi, years may pass and seem only months or days to him. Energy exerted on the astral plane produces effects which last for a longer period of time than those produced by an equal amount of energy on the material plane, for the reason that less friction or opposition is encountered on the astral plane.

On the objective plane, the metallic sound produced by the striking of a bell will not last more than five or six minutes, however finely the bell be made; but after the sound seems dead to the ordinary man, a chela can hear it on the astral plane for one or two hours longer. So we say that the momentum being the same, the period of time occupied by effects differs on the material and on the astral plane." [T. Subba Row, *Theosophist* Vol. VI, pp. 110-11.]

and escapes, for love is a strong shield, and is not limited by space or time. As with this Devachanic "mother," so with the rest of human relationships and attachments, save the purely selfish or material. Analogy will suggest to you the rest.

Key, p. 151

There are two exceptions to the rule that the living cannot communicate with the *disembodied* spirit. The first exception is during the few days that follow immediately the death of a person and before the Ego passes into the Devachanic state. Whether any living mortal, save a few exceptional cases — (when the intensity of the desire in the dying person to return for some purpose forced the higher consciousness **to remain awake**, and therefore it was really the **individuality**, the "Spirit" that communicated) — has derived much benefit from the return of the spirit into the **objective** plane is another question. The spirit is dazed after death and falls very soon into what we call "**pre-devachanic** unconsciousness."

The second exception is found in the **Nirmanakayas**. It is the name given to those who, though they have won the right to Nirvana and cyclic rest — (not "Devachan," as the latter is an illusion of our consciousness, a happy dream, and as those who are fit for Nirvana must have lost entirely every desire or possibility of the world's illusions) — have out of pity for mankind and those they left on earth renounced the Nirvanic state. Such an adept, or Saint, or whatever you may call him, believing it a selfish act to rest in bliss while mankind groans under the burden of misery produced by ignorance, renounces Nirvana, and determines to remain invisible **in spirit** on this earth. They have no material body, as they have left it behind; but otherwise they remain with all their principles even **in astral life** in our sphere. And such **can and do communicate** with a few elect ones, only surely not with ordinary mediums.

As to the word "Nirmanakaya," the Orientalists have confused this terrestrial body by understanding it to be **objective and physical** instead of purely astral and

subjective. These holy sacrificial agents are severely limited as to what aid they can give individuals, as they have no right to interfere with Karma, and can only **advise and inspire** mortals for the general good. Yet they do more beneficent actions than you imagine.

As to our differences with the Spiritualists, everything depends on the views we take of Spirit and Soul, or **Individuality and Personality**. Spiritualists confuse the two "into one;" we separate them, and say that, with the exceptions above enumerated, no **Spirit** will revisit the earth, though the animal Soul may. But let us return to our direct subject, the Skandhas.

It is the Spirit, so to say, of those Skandhas which are the most ennobling, which, attaching themselves to the incarnating Ego, survive, and are added to the stock of its angelic experiences. And it is the attributes connected with the material Skandhas, with selfish and personal motives, which, disappearing from the field of action between two incarnations, reappear at the subsequent incarnation as Karmic results to be atoned for; and therefore the Spirit will not leave Devachan. And one might add to this that the law of retribution, or Karma, rewarding the highest and most spiritual in Devachan, **never fails to reward them again on earth by giving them a further development, and furnishing the Ego with a body fitted for it.**

Key, p. 154

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE SKANDHAS.

The lower Skandhas of the personality, after the death of the body? Are they quite destroyed? They are and yet they are not — a fresh metaphysical and occult mystery for you. They are destroyed as the working stock in hand of the personality; they remain as **Karmic effects**, as germs, hanging in the atmosphere of the terrestrial plane, ready to come to life, as so many avenging fiends, to attach themselves to the new personality of the Ego when it reincarnates.

While this teaching may seem difficult and obscure, it is not so once we have assimilated the details. For then one will see that for logic, consistency, profound philosophy, divine mercy and equity, this doctrine of Reincarnation has not its equal on earth. It is a belief in a perpetual progress for each incarnating Ego, or divine soul, **in an evolution from outward into the inward, from the material to the Spiritual**, arriving at the end of each stage at absolute unity with the divine Principle. From strength to strength, from the beauty and perfection of one plane to the greater beauty and perfection of another, with accessions of new glory, of fresh knowledge and power in each cycle, such is the destiny of every Ego, which thus becomes its own Saviour in each world and incarnation.

While Christianity teaches the same, it makes the fatal addition and perversion of truth in teaching the **impossibility** of attaining Salvation without the aid of a miraculous Saviour, and therefore dooms to perdition all those who will not accept the dogma. This is just the difference between Christian theology and Theosophy. The former enforces belief in the Descent of the Spiritual Ego into the **Lower Self**; the latter inculcates the necessity of endeavouring to elevate oneself to the Christos, or Buddhi state.

But to return to the subject of the consciousness which survives death. Persons often ask, "Do we possess more knowledge in Devachan than we do in Earth life?"

In one sense, we can acquire more knowledge; that is, we can develop further any faculty which we loved and strove after during life, **provided it is concerned with abstract and ideal things, such as music, painting, poetry**, etc., since Devachan is merely an idealized and subjective continuation of earth-life. The Ego is, so to say, wedded to the memory of its last incarnation, and is thus not omniscient, but is experiencing a transcendental continuation of the personal life just

terminated. It is the **rest** of the soul from the toils of life.

Woe, to that man who asserts that after the death of man nothing remains; that the human body simply disintegrates into its component elements; and that what we call soul is merely a temporary self-consciousness produced as a bye-product of organic action, which will evaporate like steam. For, if they say that self-consciousness ceases with the body, then in their case they simply utter an unconscious prophecy, for **once they are firmly convinced of what they assert**, no conscious after-life is possible for them. For there are exceptions to every rule.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS

An Inquiry into the Scope of Bare Attention and the Principal Sources of its Strength

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Part III

[Continued from page 17 of Issue #8]

We have said before that the occurrence of the three disturbing elements cannot always be prevented. They are parts of our world, and their coming and going follows its own laws irrespective of our approval or disapproval. But by applying Bare Attention we can well prevent our being swept away or dislodged by them. By taking a firm and calm stand on the secure ground of Mindfulness, we shall repeat in a modest degree, but in an essentially identical way, the historic situation under the Bodhi Tree when Mara¹ at the head of

¹ The personification of the forces antagonistic to Enlightenment.

his army claimed in vain possession of the soil on which the seat of Enlightenment rested (as he will claim every inch of the world's surface). Trusting in the power of mindfulness, we may confidently repeat the Master's aspiration before his Enlightenment: *Ma mam thana acavayi!* "May he (Mara) not dislodge me from this place" (*Padhana Sutta*).

Let the intruders come and go, like any other members of that vast, unceasing procession of mental and physical events that passes along before our observant eyes, in the practice of Bare Attention.

Our advantage here is the quite obvious fact that two thought moments cannot be present at one and the same time. Attention refers, strictly spoken, not to the present but to the moment that has just passed away. Thus, as long as mindfulness holds sway, there will be no 'disturbance' or 'defiled thought'. This gives us the chance to hold on to that secure ground of an 'observer's post,' to the potential 'throne of enlightenment'.

By the quietening and neutralizing influence of detached observation as applied in our three devices, the interruptions of meditation will increasingly lose the sting of irritation, and, thereby, their disturbing effect. This will prove to be an act of true Virāga ('dispassion') which literally means 'decoloring'. That is to say, these experiences will lose their emotional tinge that excites towards lust, aversion, etc., and they will appear as 'bare phenomena' (*suddha-dhammā*).

The non-violent procedure of Bare Attention endows the meditator with a "light but sure touch" that is so essential for handling the sensitive, evasive and refractory nature of our mind, as well as for dealing with various difficult situations and obstacles in life. When speaking of the even quality of energy required for

attaining to the meditative absorptions. the "Path of Purification" (*Visuddhi-magga*) illustrates it by describing a test which the ancient students of the art of surgery had to undergo as a proof of their skill. A lotus leaf was placed in a bowl of water, and the pupil had to make an incision through the length of the leaf, without cutting it entirely or submerging it. He who applied an excess of force, either cut it into two or pressed it into the water, while the timid one did not even dare to scratch it. In fact, it is something like the gentle but firm hand of the surgeon that is required in mental training and this skilful and well-balanced touch will be the natural outcome of the non-violent procedure in the practice of Bare Attention.

3. STOPPING AND SLOWING DOWN

For a full and unobstructed unfoldment of the mind's capacities, the influence of two complimentary forces is needed: of *activating* and *restraining*. That two-fold need was recognized by the Buddha, the great knower of mind. He advised that the Faculties of Energy (*viriy'indriya*) and of tranquil Concentration (*samādh'indriya*) should be kept equally strong and well balanced.¹ Furthermore, He recommended three of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhanga*) as suitable for rousing the mind², and another three for calming it³. In both cases, among the Spiritual Faculties and the Enlightenment Factors, it is Mindfulness (*sati*) that not only watches

¹ For the teaching on the Balance of the Spiritual Faculties see Anguttara — Nik. VI, 55; Visuddhi — Magga Ch. IV — Comy. to Satipatthanā Sutta (in "Way of Mindfulness," by Bhikkhu Soma p. 134).

² These three are: the Enlightenment Factors of Truth-investigation, Energy and Rapture. See Samy, — Nik. 46, No. 53, quoted in Vis. Magga, Ch. IV.

³ These three are: the Enlightenment Factors of Tranquillity, Concentration and Equanimity. See Samy, — Nik. 46, No. 51.

over their equilibrium, but actively stimulates the growth of their activating as well as their restraining power.

Mindfulness, though seemingly of a passive nature, is in fact also an activating force. It makes the mind alert, and alertness is indispensable for all purposeful activity. In the present inquiry, however, we shall be mainly concerned with the *restraining* power of mindfulness. We shall examine how it makes for disentanglement and detachment, and how it positively helps in the development of the mental qualities required for the work of Deliverance.

In practising Bare Attention, we *keep still* at the mental and spatial place of observation, amidst the loud demands of the inner and outer world. There is in it the strength of tranquillity, the capacity of deferring action and applying the brake, of stopping rash interference, of suspending judgment while pausing for observation of facts and wise reflection on them. There is also a wholesome *slowing down* in the impetuosity of thought, speech and action. Keeping still and stopping, pausing and slowing down — these will be our keywords when speaking now of the restraining effect of Bare Attention.

An ancient Chinese book says:

“In making things end,
and in making things start,
there is nothing more glorious
than *keeping still*.”

In the light of the Buddha’s teaching, the true “end of things” is Nibbāna which is called the “*stilling* of formations” (*sankhārānam vūpasamo*), that is their final end or cessation. It is also called “the Stopping” (*nirodha*). The “things” or “formations” meant here, are the conditioned and impersonal phenomena rooted in their twofold cause, craving and ignorance. The end of formations comes to be by the end of “forming,” *i.e.*, by the

end of world-creating kammic activities. It is the “end of the world” and of suffering, which, as proclaimed by the Buddha, cannot be reached by walking, by migrating or transmigrating, but is to be found only within ourselves. That “end of the world” is heralded by each deliberate act of *keeping still*, *stopping* or *pausing*. “Keeping still,” in that highest sense, means: stopping the accumulation of Kamma. It means: refraining from perpetually adding to our entanglements in Samsāra abstaining from our unceasing concern with evanescent things. By following the Way of Mindfulness, and training ourselves to keep still, or pause, in the attitude of Bare Attention, we refuse to take up the world’s persistent challenge to our dispositions for greed or hatred. We protect ourselves against rash and delusive judgements; we refrain from blindly plunging into the labyrinths of interfering action with all its inherent dangers.

“ He who abstains from interfering,
is everywhere in security.”
(Sutta-nipāta, verse 953)

“He who keeps still (or: knows where to
stop) will not meet danger.”
(Tao-Te-King, Chapter 44)

The Chinese saying quoted earlier, says in its second part that there is nothing more glorious in making things start than keeping still. Explained in the Buddhist sense, these things effectively started by keeping still, are “the things (or qualities) making for decrease of kammic accumulation” (*apacayagāmino dhammā*), and, in dealing with them, we may follow the traditional division of mental training into Morality (or Conduct), Concentration (or Tranquillity) and Wisdom (or Insight). All three are decisively helped by the attitude of *keeping still*, as cultivated by Bare Attention.

1. *Conduct*. How can we improve our conduct, its moral quality and its skill in

taking right decisions? If we earnestly desire such an improvement, it will generally be the wisest to choose the line of least resistance. We might suffer discouraging defeat if we turn too early against those short-comings which have deep roots in old habits or in powerful impulses. We shall be better advised to pay attention first to those blemishes of our actions or speech and to those errors of judgment which are caused by thoughtlessness and rashness, and there are many of them. There are numerous instances in the lives of most of us where one short moment of reflection may have prevented a false step, and thereby warded off a long chain of misery or moral guilt that started with a single moment of thoughtlessness. But how can we curb our rash reactions and replace them by moments of mindfulness and reflection? This will depend on our capacity to *stop and pause*, to apply the brakes at the right time, and that we can learn well by practising Bare Attention. In that practice we shall train ourselves "to look and wait," to suspend, or slow down, reactions. We shall learn it "in the easy way," in situations of our own choice, within the limited field of experiences met with during the periods of meditative practice. When facing again and again the incidental sense-impressions, feelings or stray thoughts which interrupt our concentration; when curbing again and again our desire to respond to them in some way or other; when succeeding again and again in keeping still in face of them, we shall be prepared for preserving that inner stillness in the wider and unprotected field of everyday life. We shall have acquired a presence of mind that will enable us to pause and stop, even if we are taken by surprise, or are suddenly provoked or tempted.

Our present remarks refer to those blemishes of conduct which are liable to arise through thoughtlessness and rashness, but might more or less easily be checked

through mindfulness. Dexterity in dealing with them will, however, also affect those more obstinate deviations from moral conduct which are rooted in strong passionate impulses or in deeply ingrained bad habits. The increased tranquillity of mind achieved in keeping still for Bare Attention, will restrain the impetuosity of passions, and the acquired habit of "pausing and stopping" will act as a brake to the unquestioned repetition of bad habits.

By being able to keep still for Bare Attention, or to pause for wise reflection, very often the first temptation to lust, the first wave of anger, the first mist of delusion will disappear without causing serious entanglement. At which point the current of unwholesome thought-processes is stopped, will depend on the quality of mindfulness. If mindfulness is keen, it will succeed in calling a stop at a very early point of a series of dolled thoughts or actions, before we are carried along by them too far. Consequently, the respective defilements will not grow beyond their initial strength, less effort will be required to check them, and less kammic entanglements, or none, will follow.

Let us take the example of a pleasant visual object which has aroused our liking. At first that liking might not be very active and insistent. If already here the mind is able to keep still for detached observation or reflection, it will be easily possible to divest the visual perception of its still very slight admixture of lust, and to register it as "just something seen that has caused a pleasant feeling"; or the effect of the attraction felt is sublimated into quiet aesthetic pleasure. If that earliest chance has been missed, the liking will grow into attachment and into desire to possess. If now a stop is called, the thought of desire may gradually lose its strength; it will not easily turn into an insistent craving, and no actual attempts to get possession of the object of desire will follow. But if the

current of lust is still unchecked, the thought of desire (*akusala-mano-kamma*,” “unwholesome mental kamma”) may express itself by speech (*akusala-vacī-kamma*¹, “unwholesome verbal kamma”): one asks for the desired object, or even demands it with impetuous words. A refusal will cause the original current of lust to branch out into additional streams of mental defilements, either of sadness or of anger. But if even at that late stage one can stop for quiet reflection or Bare Attention and, accepting the refusal, renounce wish-fulfilment, further complications will be avoided. But if clamouring words are followed by action (*akusala-kāya-kamma*, “unwholesome bodily kamma”): if, driven by craving, one tries to get possession of the object of one’s desire by stealth or force, then the kammic entanglement is complete, and the full impact of its consequences will be experienced by the doer. Still, if even after the completion of the evil act, the doer stops for reflection, *e.g.*, if mindfulness takes the form of remorseful retrospection, it will not be in vain: it will preclude a hardening of character and may prevent a repetition of the same course of action.

The Exalted One said once to His son Rāhula

Whatever action you *intend* to perform, by body, speech or mind, you should consider that action. If, in considering it, you realise: ‘This action which I intend to perform will be harmful to myself, or harmful to others, or harmful to both; it will be an unwholesome action, producing suffering,’ — then you should not perform that action.

“Also *while* you are performing an action, by body, speech or mind, you should consider that action. If, in considering it, you realize: ‘This action which I am performing, is harmful to myself, or harmful to others, or harmful to both; it is an

unwholesome action, producing suffering,’ — then you should desist.

Also *after* you have performed an action, by body, speech or mind, you should consider that action. If, in considering it, you realize: ‘This action which I have performed, has been harmful to myself, or harmful to others, or harmful to both; it was an unwholesome action, producing suffering, — then you should in future refrain from it. (*Majjh. 61*)

2. *Tranquillity* — We shall now consider how the stopping, for Bare Attention is also a helper in attaining or strengthening Tranquillity (*samatha*) in its double sense: of peace of mind in general, and of meditative concentration and calm.

By growing a habit of pausing and stopping for Bare Attention, it will become increasingly easier to withdraw into one’s own stillness when unable to escape bodily from the loud and insistent noises of the outer world; it will be easier to forego useless reaction to foolish speech or deeds of others. Also when the blows of fate are particularly hard and incessant, a mind trained in Bare Attention will find it easier to take refuge in the haven of apparent passivity, or watchful non-action, and to wait patiently until the storms have passed. There are situations in life when it is best to allow things to come to their natural end. He who is able to keep still and wait will often succeed where aggressiveness or busy activity is vanquished. Not only in critical situations, but also in the normal course of life, the experience won by observant Keeping Still will convince us that it is not at all necessary to make an active response to every impression received, or to regard every encounter with people or things as a challenge to our interfering activity.

By refraining from busying ourselves unnecessarily, external frictions and, thereby, internal tensions will be reduced. Greater harmony and peace will pervade the life of every-day, and the sometimes

¹ [*Kamma* or *Kammic*=*Karma* or *Karmic* — EDS.]

considerable contrast of normal life to the tranquility of meditation will be reduced. Then there will be less of those disturbing inner reverberations of everyday restlessness which, in a coarse or subtle form, invade the hours of meditation and produce bodily and mental unrest. Consequently, the Hindrance of Agitation (*uddhacca-nivarana*), which is a chief obstacle of concentration will be less often evident, or it will be easier to overcome it.

By cultivating the attitude of Bare Attention as often as opportunity offers the centrifugal forces of mind making for mental distraction, will be reduced, and the centripetal tendency, turning the mind inward and making for concentration, will be strengthened. The craving for a variety of changing objects of thought, or objects of desire, will be effectively checked.

Furthermore, regular practice of sustained attention to a continuous series of events will prepare for sustained concentration on a *single* object or a limited number of objects in the strict practice of meditation. Firmness, or steadiness, of mind, being another important factor in concentration, will likewise be cultivated in that way.

Thus, by keeping still, pausing and stopping for Bare Attention, several salient components of meditative tranquility are fostered: — calmness, concentration, firmness, reduction of the multiplicity of objects. The average level of normal consciousness is raised and brought closer to the level of the meditative mind. This is an important point, because it happens often that too wide a gap between these two levels of mind will frustrate again and again attempts of mental concentration or the achieving of smooth continuity in meditative practice.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

TIME

H.P.B. has subtle ways of constantly reminding us that the only place we can call “home” is “eternity,” whose great rolling wheels of NOW offer the constant chance to serve:

The future lies in the present and both include the Past. With a rare occult insight Rohel made quite an *esoterically* true remark, in saying that “the future does not come from before to meet us, but comes streaming up from behind over our heads.” For the Occultist and average Theosophist the Future and the Past are both included in each moment of their lives, hence in the eternal PRESENT. The Past is a torrent madly rushing by, that we face incessantly, without one second of interval; every wave of it, and every drop of it, being an event, whether great or small. Yet, no sooner have we faced it, and whether it brings joy or sorrow, whether it elevates us or knocks us off our feet, than it is carried away and disappears behind us, to be lost sooner or later in the great Sea of Oblivion. It depends on us to make every such event nonexistent to ourselves by obliterating it from our memory; or else to create of our past sorrows Promethean Vultures — those “dark-winged birds, the embodied memories of the Past,” which, in Sala’s graphic fancy “wheel and shriek over the Lethean lake.”

In the first case, we are real philosophers; in the second — but timid and even cowardly soldiers of the army called mankind, and commanded in the great battle of Life by “King Karma.” (“On the New Year’s Morrow”)

The sun king

Photo: Robert Yager

IF, AS GREENS suggest, the 21st century becomes the solar century, we will have Ishaq Shahryar to thank. Thirty years ago, as a young émigré from Afghanistan in the US, he virtually invented solar power as a serious energy source. He helped develop it for space satellites, slashed costs a hundredfold and then, in a bid to bring it to the people, he designed the first solar-powered Ferris wheel and brought solar panels to motorway call boxes and billboards. Now events back home lure him. He played a key role in setting up the interim government in Afghanistan late last year. But he refused cabinet posts, wanting the freedom to pursue his latest dream--reinventing Afghan villages as solar-powered, Internet-connected powerhouses for the modernisation of one of the least industrialised countries on Earth. Now, as he tells Fred Pearce, he has been nominated as Afghanistan's top ambassador—to the United States.

Tell me about your early life in Afghanistan.

I am from a family of intellectuals: scientists, doctors, lots of writers and poets, a few advisers to the old government when the king was on the throne. When

we lived in Kabul in the 1950s, there were four major high schools. One was American, one French, one German and one British. The government sent the top three students from each school on scholarships abroad. In 1956 I was top of the list from the American school, so I went to the US to study physical chemistry. I expected to go back after my six-year scholarship.

Then in 1961 President Kennedy set the US on course to put a man on the Moon. Did that inspire you?

Yes. I was one of three people who were hired to develop silicon technology for solar cells for spacecraft. I developed the idea of printing solar cells onto silicon wafers. And I came up with a system using alkali to etch the wafers, instead of acid. This substantially reduced the cost and increased the efficiency of solar cells. Instead of 20 or 30 steps to make a space solar cell I ended up with four steps, and a cell with a 9 to 10 per cent efficiency.

So then you decided to stay in America?

I just never got round to going home. Instead, Spectrolab, a division of Hughes Aircraft, hired me to develop solar cells for terrestrial applications. This was during the oil crisis of the early 1970s. The push was on to develop alternative sources of energy to end the US's reliance on oil imports, and to make them cheaper. Solar cells used to cost NASA \$1000 a watt, but at Spectrolab we got it down to \$30.

At what point did you begin to think you were onto something very big here--that solar could be the power source of the 21st century?

The oil embargo was the start of it. Hughes sent me round the world to sell the new technology. I thought there would be a tremendous market in the Middle East, where they had lots of oil money and lots of remote villages that needed power. I

spent a lot of time in Iran when the Shah was in charge, and set up a joint venture with a prominent company very close to the Shah. I also worked for the Saudis and India and went to South-East Asia and Japan. I was committed to selling solar power for terrestrial uses.

I took a small solar panel that powered a radio on these journeys. Wherever I went, people were delighted and amazed by it. I told them I was a "photovoltaic fundamentalist".

But that revolution never happened. Oil prices went back down and everybody forgot about solar energy.

Yes, but even before then, Hughes decided they wanted to concentrate on winning government contracts for solar cells in space. So I started my own company, Solec International, in 1976 to see whether I could make terrestrial solar cells more efficient. We did — by 1993 we had got the efficiency of solar cells up to 20 per cent and prices below \$5 a watt. Today it's around \$3.50 a watt. When we got the patent for that, I sold my company to Sumitomo Sanyo of Japan. I ran the company for them for another two years. But then I quit and started a systems design company called Solar Utility.

I thought that while we solar pioneers had made tremendous technological breakthroughs, we did a horrible job of educating people about solar power. We spent billions on research and development, when we should have focused on public relations, to make solar power visible. So in the past five years I have designed a solar-powered Ferris wheel for Santa Monica pier, and solar-powered billboards, bus shelters and telephone call boxes for freeways.

Your home is solar powered, I suppose?

I don't know how to tell you this. I have solar lighting on my drive. But when I

started putting solar panels on the roof of my house by the ocean in Pacific Palisades the neighbours raised hell, lawsuits and all. I backed off, but one day I'll do it.

So you haven't persuaded your neighbours yet. What about the President? What do you think of George Bush's energy policies and his opposition to the Kyoto Protocol?

Unfortunately this administration is turning the clock back to the 60s and 70s, with its emphasis on oil, gas and nuclear. I'm very upset about that — especially after President Clinton promoted the idea that a million roofs should be solar powered. It's very dangerous for our environment and our future, especially nuclear for God's sake. I hope Bush will eventually see things our way.

But in fact there is tremendous demand for solar energy now in California, and I am glad to have lived to see that. All the manufacturing companies here have their order books full for nine months.

You failed with "solar fundamentalism" in the developing world. Can these countries now skip the age of carbon in a leapfrog jump to post-industrial technologies like solar power, or is that pie in the sky?

I think if they can see some success stories many of them will be willing to try. My idea is to create a model solar village. In Afghanistan right now, I am hoping to get funding from the agencies involved in reconstruction to set up such a model village. We'd build about 500 prefabricated houses, each with two bedrooms, living room, shower and so on, with 500 kilowatts of panels on the roof. The village would have a school with a satellite dish and modems, and a clinic. If you want to build a city like that then you can put 10-15 of these villages together. I

think if I can build one, the idea would take off throughout the Middle East.

What did you think when the US was bombing your homeland?

The bombing probably killed 200 to 300 people, but if it hadn't happened, one million Afghans would have died of starvation this winter. I am a Pashtun, but I had a tremendous desire to get rid of these terrorists and the Taliban. So God bless America. Thank God it happened. It was tragic that 3000 to 4000 were killed in America. But they liberated 26 million poor, starving people.

You returned to Afghanistan in March. How did you find it?

There was total devastation. All these beautiful towns and cities were just bombed to bits. But the morale of the people was high. Shops and restaurants were open and everybody smiled.

What do you think about the political situation now?

I think the Bonn conference in December, which set up the interim government, was a good example of how we Afghans can solve problems if we can sit down together and talk about things. For the first time in the history of Afghanistan a government was formed by consensus. It was just amazing.

How were you involved?

I have been an adviser to the former king for the past five years. Fourteen of us, including Hamid Karzai, now the leader of the country, set up the Rome Group to advise him and work towards a new government in Afghanistan. We were one of the four groups meeting in Bonn. At the conference, I was offered the ministry of planning but I rejected it. It was announced that I had been made minister

of transport, but I went to the UN office and withdrew my name.

Why did you do that?

I have personal obligations--I have children in America aged 10 and 15. I felt that as a minister in a cabinet my hands would be tied. And I thought that for the moment I could best serve Afghanistan from outside. For example, I can talk to you and everyone about these dreams I have.

What role do you now see for yourself?

I have been asked to become Afghanistan's ambassador to Washington. It will mean giving up my US citizenship, but it will allow me to play a big part in the economic revolution that we need now in Afghanistan.

What is your vision for Afghanistan?

Start with my model village idea. But I also want to change Afghanistan from an agricultural to an industrial society. It's tremendously rich in oil and gas, copper, iron and precious metals, all kinds of things. I want to get the green light to bring in US companies to explore for and develop oil and gas reserves and mines. It would be very easy to industrialise Afghanistan. And the people are very entrepreneurial.

But it is a very rural and backward country. How long would that take?

I'd say in 10 or 15 years we could do a lot. But it's like what President Kennedy said about going to the Moon. We have to take the first step even if the journey takes a thousand years. Another crazy dream I have is for the one million orphans in Afghanistan. Why not bring them all to the industrialised world, put them into families, send them to school and train them in technical skills? Then they could go back and help transform Afghanistan.

So, the American way. How would you make that happen?

I made a proposal to the UN that the reconstruction money should be handled by an executive committee of seven or eight Afghan-Americans and Europeans with advisers and subcommittees for each field, such as agriculture, energy, housing and so on. Each committee should have an Afghan-American chair. There are so many with real expertise in different fields. They would be responsible for forwarding requests for funding to the donor countries. It would be a corporate structure. And every company that goes there should set up a partnership to develop entrepreneurship in Afghanistan.

But will the country be stable enough?

Afghans lived very peacefully for 40 years under the king. What went wrong was foreign interference. When we wanted to get oil or other materials out, the Soviets interfered. Now the Soviet Union is gone and we have a different world. If someone else like Iran tries to destabilise the government I think they should be punished for it. I think Bush is already warning them. They should stay away.

What do you think Afghanistan will look like 10 years from now?

It will be a successful industrialised country, a model democratic Islamic country. Islam teaches democracy.

Seven Years Before the U.S.T.

The year is 1902, one hundred years ago ... what a difference a century makes. Here are the U.S. statistics for 1902.

The average life expectancy in the US was forty-seven (47).

Only 14 Percent of the homes in the US had a bathtub.

Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone. A three-minute call from Denver to New York City cost eleven dollars.

There were only 8,000 cars in the US and only 144 miles of paved roads. The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.

Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa, and Tennessee were each more heavily populated than California. With a mere 1.4 million residents, California was only the 21st most populous state in the Union.

The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower.

The average wage in the US was 22 cents an hour. The average US worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year. A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2000 per year, a dentist \$2,500 per year, a veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year.

More than 95 percent of all births in the US took place at home.

Ninety percent of all US physicians had no college education. Instead, they attended medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press and by the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost four cents a pound. Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen. Coffee cost fifteen cents a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once a month and used borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law prohibiting poor people from entering the country for any reason.

The five leading causes of death in the US were:

1. Pneumonia and influenza
2. Tuberculosis
3. Diarrhea
4. Heart disease
5. Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars. Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Hawaii and Alaska hadn't been admitted to the Union yet.

The population of Las Vegas, Nevada was 30.

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented.

There were no Mother's Day or Father's Day.

One in ten US adults couldn't read or write. Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at corner drugstores. According to one pharmacist, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and the bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health."

Eighteen percent of households in the US had at least one full-time servant or domestic.

The New Slavery: An Interview With Kevin Bales

DERRICK JENSEN

When you hear the word slavery, chances are you think of the past. You think of a black field hand in the antebellum South, picking cotton, wearing rags, a bandanna wrapped around his or her head. You don't think of the chocolate bar you ate yesterday afternoon, or the sugar you swirled into your coffee on the way to work this morning. But these items may be as much a product of slavery today as cotton was in the nineteenth century.

In his book **Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy** (University of California Press), Kevin Bales asserts that slavery is alive and well in the world today. Through products produced in the global economy, he says, slavery touches all our lives.

"Slaves in Pakistan may have made the shoes you are wearing and the carpet you stand on. Slaves in the Caribbean may have put sugar in your kitchen and toys in the hands of your children. In India they may have sewn the shirt on your back and polished the ring on your finger. . . . In Brazil slaves made the charcoal that tempered the steel that made the springs in your car and the blade on your lawn mower. Slaves grew the rice that fed the woman that wove the lovely cloth you've put up as curtains. Your investment portfolio and your mutual-fund pension own stock in companies using slave labor in the developing world. Slaves keep your costs low and returns on your investments high."

To research his book, Bales traveled to Thailand, Mauritania, Brazil, Pakistan, and India, where he interviewed local activists and the slaves themselves. Because slavery is almost always linked to government corruption, Bales risked being arrested. In Mauritania, the country with the highest proportion of its population in slavery, he posed as a zoologist (using his membership card in the Royal Zoological Society) and photographed slaves with a camera hidden in his backpack.

Slavery is illegal in Mauritania, and everywhere else in the world. But, as Bales points out, making slavery illegal doesn't make it disappear. As long as people are controlled by violence and exploited for economic purposes, they are slaves, regardless of whether or not a country's laws recognize the legal ownership of human beings.

Bales is careful, however, to distinguish genuine slavery from mere poverty, paid child labor, and prison labor. And he objects to the use of slavery to describe other heinous practices such as incest, Third World debt, inequality in marriage, and even the traffic in human organs. "These things are bad enough as they are," he says. "They don't need to be described as slavery." Even by Bales's rigorous definition, the number of slaves in the world today is around 27 million - greater than the population of Canada.

Growing up in the American South in the 1950s, Bales encountered the remnants of the old slavery system in the form of segregation, but he believed that slavery itself was a thing of the past. As an adult, he became a social researcher and studied such race-related issues as housing and integration, but he didn't become aware of slavery's continued existence until he moved to England in the 1980s. There, he came across some pamphlets published by Anti-Slavery International, the world's oldest human-rights organization, founded in 1839. Horrified at the reality of modern slavery - and at the lack of attention given to the subject - Bales began using his skills as a researcher to amass as much information as he could on slavery practices around the globe. As a result, he has become the world's foremost authority on modern slavery.

Disposable People has been translated into six languages and was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize and the C. Wright Mills Award. Bishop Desmond Tutu called the book "a well-researched, scholarly, and deeply disturbing exposé of modern-day slavery with well-thought-out strategies for what to do to combat this scourge. None of us is allowed the luxury of imagined impotence. We can do something about it." Bales's most recent book is *New Slavery: A Reference Handbook* (ABC-

CLIO). His next book will explore the liberation and rehabilitation of modern slaves.

Bales has long been a professor at the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Surrey Roehampton, in England. Just this year, however, he moved to Oxford, Mississippi, to begin establishing an American branch of Anti-Slavery International, under the name Free the Slaves. The new organization can be reached at Suite 320 - CIP, 1755 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 244-1865, www.freetheslaves.net.

Jensen: It may surprise some people to learn that slavery is a horror not confined to the past. What is modern slavery?

Bales: In many ways, it's exactly the same as the slavery of two or three hundred years ago. People are still controlled by violence, allowed no free will, paid nothing for their labor, and economically exploited. And the coercive power of the slaveholder is, as always, intimately tied to the coercive power of the state. That definition of slavery applies whether we're talking about ancient Greece, Mississippi in 1850, or Los Angeles in 2000.

But modern slavery is different, too. We live in a global economy, so slavery is more globalized than ever before. It also tends to be more temporary - slavery for a limited amount of time, as opposed to slavery over generations. And it used to be that ethnic differences were important: whites enslaved blacks, for example. Now ethnic differences are secondary to economic considerations.

Perhaps most importantly, there are now many more people enslaved. In fact, there are more slaves alive today than were brought over from Africa on the middle passage. The population explosion, combined with the economic and social vulnerability of large numbers of people in the Third World, means that there is a glut of slaves on the market. The result is that slaves have become cheap - far cheaper than at any other time in history.

Jensen: You use the word slaveholder as opposed to slave owner.

Bales: In the past, slavery entailed one person legally owning another. Today, there is

no place in the world that allows legal ownership of human beings. Yet many millions of people are still slaves, meaning they're controlled by violence, economically exploited, and so on. In many cases, nonownership turns out to be in the interest of slaveholders, who now enjoy all the benefits of ownership without the obligations and legal responsibilities.

Jensen: Wasn't slavery "globalized" in the past?

Bales: Yes, slavery was one of the first globalized industries. The middle passage, for example, tied together the economies of Africa, Europe, and the Americas. And some slave-produced crops, such as cotton and sugar, were widely exported. But in the past, most slaves produced foods and other products for local markets. It's far more likely today that a product of slavery is sold on the global market. For example, there is a significant use of slave labor on the cocoa plantations of West Africa, and the chocolate made from that cocoa is eaten all over the planet. Maybe 40 percent of the world's chocolate is tainted with slavery. The same is true of steel, sugar, tobacco products, jewelry - the list goes on and on. Thanks to the global economy, these slave-produced products move smoothly around the globe.

Jensen: Does everyone in the industrialized world have slave products in his or her home?

Bales: Probably. It's difficult to be sure, however, because the global market in commodities functions as a money-laundering machine. Cocoa coming out of West Africa and entering the world market almost immediately loses its "label." If you're a buyer for a candy maker, you don't say, "I'd like to buy six tons of Ghanaian cocoa." You just say you want six tons of cocoa. When the cocoa is delivered to your factory, you can't tell where it's from, so you may be passing on a slave-tainted product without knowing, and consumers will buy it without knowing.

I should point out that the recent public and political awareness of slavery in cocoa production has moved both the government and the chocolate industry to action. American

chocolate companies have taken the lead in a positive response to the problem. We still have a long way to go, but progress is being made for the first time in years.

Slavery has become globalized in another way, as well. It used to be that slavery was distinct in every culture: the form of slavery you found in Pakistan wasn't the same as what you found in Thailand. But since World War II, slavery has become more and more alike in different countries. We're seeing a new, global form of slavery.

Jensen: You said earlier that slaves have become very cheap. How cheap, exactly?

Bales: In the United States before the Civil War, the average slave cost the equivalent of about fifty thousand dollars. I'm not sure what the average price of a slave is today, but it can't be more than fifty or sixty dollars. Such low prices influence how the slaves are treated. Slave owners used to maintain long relationships with their slaves, but slaveholders no longer have any reason to do so. If you pay just a hundred dollars for someone, that person is disposable, as far as you are concerned.

In gold-mining towns in the Amazon, for example, a young girl might cost \$150. She's recruited to "work in the mining offices," but when she gets there, she's beaten, raped, and put out to prostitution. She can be sold up to ten times a night, and can bring in ten thousand dollars per month. The slaveholder's only expenses are payments to the police and a pittance for food. And if the girl becomes a troublemaker, or runs away, or gets sick, it's easy enough to replace her with someone else. It's not uncommon, in some villages along the Amazon, to wake up in the morning and see the body of a young girl floating by on the river. Nobody bothers to bury them. They just throw their bodies into the river to be eaten by the fish. Antonia Pinta, a mining-camp worker quoted in Alison Sutton's *Slavery in Brazil*, described what happened to an eleven-year-old girl who refused to have sex with a miner: he cut off her head with a machete, then drove around in his speedboat showing off her head to the other miners, who shouted their approval.

Slaves are so cheap that they're not even seen as a capital investment anymore: you don't have to take care of them; you can just use them up and throw them away. Human beings have become disposable tools for doing business, the same as a box of ballpoint pens.

And while the price of slaves has gone down, the return on the slaveholder's investment has skyrocketed. In the antebellum South, slaves brought an average return of about 5 percent. Now bonded agricultural laborers in India generate more than a 50 percent profit per year for their slaveholders, and a return of 800 percent is not at all uncommon for holders of sex slaves.

Jensen: You've said there are around 27 million slaves in the world today. I've seen far higher estimates from groups such as the International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor.

Bales: My definition of slavery - which is very rigorous - excludes a lot of really terrible practices. I agree they're terrible; I just don't call them slavery. Receiving wages that barely keep you alive may make you a "wage slave," but it's not slavery. Sharecroppers have a hard life, but they're not slaves. Child labor is awful, but it's not necessarily slavery. The United Nations considers some forms of marriage to be a kind of slavery. I can agree with that in principle, but because I define slavery as an economic activity, I exclude such marriage from my definition for the time being.

As for those higher estimates, I've been unable to find any solid underpinnings for those numbers. Many organizations, such as Anti-Slavery International, have now adopted my numbers.

Jensen: Your hardheaded economic analysis is one thing I found compelling about your book *Disposable People*.

Bales: I was inspired to write that book because the works I'd found on contemporary slavery were long on outrage but short on analysis. I felt there was a hole there; although we should be outraged by slavery, of course, we also have to analyze it carefully before we can figure out how to put an end to it.

GRAVITY & MOTION

[Keynote for Sunday Class, June 2, 2002]

In the science section of the Los Angeles Times there is an article by K. C. Cole about our never static universe. "Indeed, Einstein's equations describing gravity revealed that the universe could not remain static even if it wanted to. It has to expand or contract. Currently, it seems delicately balanced between the collapsing and expanding; and cosmologists would like to know why. Even nothing itself is not neutral. The vacuum of empty space jitters with continual uncertainty; particles of matter are coming into existence all the time, exactly balanced by an equal number of particles of antimatter. Indeed, this energy of emptiness may well account for most of the energy in the universe. Scientists know that it is a lot easier to "neutralize" a problem than to eliminate it completely. For example, astronomers would see the stars a lot more clearly if they could eliminate distortions caused by turbulence in the air. But it's hard to get the atmosphere to stand still, so instead, a technique called "adaptive optics" keeps track of the wiggles in the atmosphere, then exactly counters the wiggles to make them go away. It is like adding minus one to one, to make zero. Equilibrium is always dynamic. (Reference: *Los Angeles Times* March 4, 2002.)

some S.D. extracts:

[taken from section entitled: "Life, Force, or Gravity?" I,529-540]

Bird's Eye View: As I understand the section:

- (a) We are all in orbit whether we realize it or not — some are swallowed by a sun, some by a black-hole.
- (b) Planets in our Solar system are drawn toward the Sun, but due to difference in their natures an *opposing force* is set up which eventually equalizes with the attractive force. **When this happens**, that determines the orbit.
- (c) The solar systems are orbiting about the center of our Galaxy. Astronomically it is probably the *Pleiades*.
- (d) The Galaxies are orbiting about a center. Oddly enough Occultism and science tend to agree on this, but neither is very talkative on the subject.

The important orbit for humans is the spiritual orbit, or as the Occult Commentary puts it:

The latter [the Absolute] must never be mentioned in words or speech lest it take away some of our spiritual energies that aspire towards its state, gravitating ever onward unto it spiritually, as the whole **physical universe** gravitates towards its **manifested center** cosmically. (SDI, pp

Mother Earth is journeying onward toward the perfection of form, while humans are Pilgrims on the path of consciousness.

Attraction alone will never fill all the gaps, unless a special impulse is admitted for every sidereal body, and the rotation of every planet with its satellites is shown to be due to some *one cause* combined with attraction. (I,529)

The "extra cosmic" God has killed every possibility of belief in *intra* cosmic intelligent Forces, yet who, or what is the original *pusher* in that motion? "When we have learned the cause, *unique et speciale*, that pushes, we will be ready to combine it with the one which attracts," says Francoeur. And again — "Attraction between the celestial bodies is only repulsion: it is *the Sun that drives them incessantly onward*; for otherwise, their motion would stop."....

It is the Sun-fluids or Emanations that impart all motion and awaken all into life, in the Solar System. It is attraction and repulsion, but not as understood by modern physics and according to the law of gravity; but in harmony with *the laws of Manvantaric motion* designed from the early *Sandhya*, the Dawn of the rebuilding and higher *reformation* of the System. These laws are immutable; but the motion of all the bodies, which motion is diverse and alters with every *minor Kalpa* — is regulated by the *Movers*, the Intelligences within the Cosmic Soul. (Ibid., 530)

[Occultism regards] Vital Force as a power far more exalted than either light, heat, or electricity, and indeed *capable of exerting a controlling power over them all.... the photosphere is the primary seat of vital power,*

Thus, we have an important scientific corroboration for one of our fundamental **dogmas** — namely, that

- (a) the Sun is the store-house of Vital Force, which *is* the *Noumenon* [Cause] of Electricity; and
- (b) that it is from its mysterious, never-to-be-fathomed depths, that issue those life currents which thrill through Space, as through the organisms of every living thing on Earth. (531)

The **spiritual senses**, those that act on a higher plane of consciousness are rejected *a priori* by physiology because the latter is ignorant of the sacred science. It limits the action of ether to vibrations, and, dividing it from air — though **air is simply differentiated and compound ether** — makes it assume functions to fit in with the special theories of the physiologist. But there is more real science in the teachings of the Upanishads when these are correctly understood, than the Orientalists, who do not understand them at all, are ready to admit.

Mental as well as physical correlations of the seven senses (seven on the physical and seven on the mental planes) are clearly explained and defined in the Vedas, and especially in the Upanishad called *Anugîtâ*:

“The indestructible and the destructible, such is the double manifestation of the Self. Of these the indestructible is the existent (the true essence or nature of Self, the underlying principles). The manifestation as an individual (or entity) is called the destructible.” Thus speaks the ASCETIC in *Anugîtâ*; and also: “Every one who is twice-born (initiated) knows such is the

teaching of the ancients. . . . Space is the first entity. . . . Now Space (*Akâsa*, or the noumenon of ether) has one quality . . . and that is sound only . . . and the qualities of sound are Shadga, Rishabha, Gândhâra, Madhyama, Panchama, and beyond these five Nishâda and Dhaivata;” (the Hindu gamut). These seven notes of the scale are the principles of sound. (*Vide* ch. xxxvi. of *Anugîta*.) The qualities of every Element, as of every sense, are septenary, and to judge and dogmatize on them from their manifestation (likewise sevenfold in itself) on the material or objective plane above is quite arbitrary. For it is only by the SELF emancipating itself from these (seven) causes of illusion that one acquires the knowledge (secret wisdom) of the qualities of objects of sense on their dual plane of manifestation — the visible and the invisible. Thus is said —

“State this wonderful mystery Hear the assignment of causes exhaustively. The nose, and the tongue, and the eye, and the skin, and the ear as the fifth (organ of sense) Mind and Understanding¹ these seven (senses) should be understood to be the causes of (the knowledge of their) qualities. Smell, and taste, and colour, sound, and touch as the fifth, the object of the mental operation, and the object of the Understanding (the highest spiritual sense or perception), **these seven are cause of action**. He who smells, he who eats, he who sees, he who speaks, and he who hears as the fifth, he who thinks, and he who understands, these seven should be regarded as the **causes of the**

¹ The division of the physical senses into five, comes to us from great antiquity. But while adopting the number, no modern philosopher has asked himself how these senses could exist, *i.e.*, be perceived and used in a self-conscious way, unless there was the *sixth* sense, **mental perception** to register and record them; and (this for the Metaphysicians and Occultists) the SEVENTH to preserve the spiritual fruition and remembrance thereof, as in a **Book of Life** which belongs to Karma. The ancients divided the senses into five, simply because their teachers (the Initiates) stopped at the *hearing*, as being that sense which developed in the *physical plane* (got dwarfed rather, limited to this plane) only at the beginning of the Fifth Race. (The Fourth Race already had begun to lose the *spiritual* condition, so pre-eminently developed in the Third Race.)

agents.¹ These (the agents) being possessed of qualities (*sattwa, rajas, tamas*), enjoy their own qualities, agreeable and disagreeable" (*Anugita*).

Then one reads in the Bhagavadgîtâ (chap. vii.) the Deity (or Krishna) saying: —

“ . . . Only some know me truly. Earth, water, Fire, Air, Space (or *Akâsa*, Æther), Mind, Understanding and Egoism (or the perception of all the former on the illusive plane). . . This is a **lower** form of my nature. Know (that there is) another (form of my) nature, and higher than this, which is animate, O you of mighty arms! and by which this Universe is upheld. . . All this is woven upon me, like numbers of pearls upon a thread (*Mundakopanishad*, p. 298). . . I **am the taste** in the water, O son of Kunti! I am the light of the sun and moon. I am . . . sound (i.e., the Occult essence which underlies all these and the other qualities of the various things mentioned, *Transl.*), in space . . . the fragrant smell in the earth, refulgence in the fire . . . etc., etc.”

Truly, then, one should study Occult philosophy before one begins to verify and seek the mysteries of nature on its surface alone, as he alone “who knows the truth about the qualities of nature, who understands the

¹ The modern commentators, failing to comprehend the subtle meaning of the ancient Scholiasts, take this sentence, “causes of the agents.” to mean “that the powers of smelling, etc., when attributed to the Self, make him appear as an agent, as an active principle” (!), which is entirely fanciful. These “seven” are understood to be the causes of the Agents, because “the objects are causes, as their enjoyment causes an impression.” It means esoterically that they, these seven senses, **are caused by the AGENTS**, which are the “deities,” for what does, or can, the sentence which follows this one mean? “Thus,” it is said, “these seven (senses) are the causes of emancipation” (i.e., when these causes are made ineffectual). “And among the learned (the wise Initiates) who understand the qualities **which are in the position** (in the nature, rather) **of the deities**, each in its place,” means simply that the “learned” understand the **nature of the noumenoi of the various phenomena;**” and that “qualities,” in this instance, mean the qualities of the high planetary or Elementary gods or Intelligences, which rule the elements and their products, and not at all “the senses to have aught to do with them, any more than with their SELF.” (*Vide* pp. 278 and 279, Vol. viii, SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST, *Anugita*.)

creation of all entities . . . is emancipated” from error.

Says the “preceptor”: “Accurately understanding the great tree of which the unperceived (Occult nature, the root of all) is the sprout from the seed (Parabrahmam) which consists of the understanding (*Mahat*, or the universal intelligent Soul) as its trunk, the branches of which are the great egoism,² in the holes of which are the sprouts, namely the senses, of which the great (Occult, or invisible) elements are the flower-bunches,³ the gross elements (the gross objective matter), the smaller boughs, which are always possessed of leaves, always possessed of flowers . . . which is eternal and the seed of which is the Brahman (the deity); and cutting it with that excellent sword — knowledge (secret wisdom) — one attains immortality and casts off birth and death.”

This is the Tree of Life, the *Asvattha* tree, only **after** the cutting of which the slave of life and death, MAN, can be emancipated.

The whole range of physical phenomena proceed from the **Primary** of Ether — *Akâsa*. Dual-natured *Akâsa* proceeds from undifferentiated *Chaos*, so-called, the latter being the primary **aspect** of **Mulaprakriti**, the root-matter and the first abstract Idea one can form of Parabrahmam.

... The real Æther of Space has its seven principles, as all the rest of nature has, and where there was no Ether **there would be no sound**, as it is the vibrating sound-board in nature in all of its seven differentiations.

Our present normal physical senses were (from our present point of view) abnormal in those days of slow and progressive downward evolution and fall into matter. And there was a day when all that which puzzles the physiologist, such as thought transference, clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc.; in short, all that which is called now “wonderful and abnormal” — all that and much more belonged to the senses and faculties common to all humanity. We are, however, cycling back and cycling forward; i.e., having lost in spirituality that which we acquired in physical development until almost the end of the Fourth Race, we (mankind) are as gradually and imperceptibly losing now in the physical all that we regain once more in the spiritual **re**-evolution. This process must go on until the period which will bring the Sixth Root Race on a parallel line with the spirituality of the Second, long extinct mankind.

² *Ahamkara*, I suppose, that *Ego*ship (or Ahamship) which leads to every error.

³ The elements are the five tanmatras of earth, water, fire, air and ether, the producers of the grosser elements.