



## KEY NOTEBOOK

### XIII

(Continued from November Supplement)

Section XIII

Key, p. 258

### XIII. ON THE MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THEOSOPHY

#### Theosophy and Asceticism

Theosophy does not expect, far less require of **any** of its members that they should be ascetics in any way, except — if you call **that** asceticism — that they should try and benefit other people and be unselfish in their own lives.

However, it may be, some of our members are strict vegetarians, and openly avow their intention of remaining unmarried. This is only natural, because most of these are working members of the Inner Section. But we do not **require** or **enjoin** ascetic practices even in the Inner Section.

Most people who become really earnest students of Theosophy, and active workers in our Society, wish to do more than study theoretically the truths we teach. They wish to **know** the truth by their own direct personal experience, and to study Occultism with the object of acquiring the wisdom and powers, effectually and judiciously, instead of blindly and at haphazard. Therefore, sooner or later, they join the Inner Section.

The first thing which the members learn there is a true conception of the relation of the body, or physical heath, to the inner, the true man. The relation and mutual interaction between these two aspects of human nature are explained and demonstrated to them, so that they soon become imbued with the

supreme importance of the inner man over the outer case or body. They are taught that blind unintelligent asceticism is mere folly; that such conduct as that of St. Labro which I spoke of before, or that of the Indian Fakirs and jungle ascetics, who cut, burn and macerate their bodies in the most cruel and horrible manner, is simply self-torture for selfish ends, *i.e.*, to develop will-power, but is perfectly useless for the purpose of assisting true spiritual, or Theosophic, development.

Thus we regard only **moral** asceticism as necessary. It is as a means to an end, that end being the perfect equilibrium of the **inner** nature of man, and the attainment of complete mastery over the body with all its passions and desires. But these means must be used intelligently and wisely, not blindly and foolishly; like an athlete who is training and preparing for a great contest, not like the miser who starves himself into illness that he may gratify his passion for gold.

Take vegetarianism, for example. Science shows us that every kind of animal tissue, however you may cook it, still retains certain marked characteristics of the animal which it belonged to, which characteristics can be recognized. And apart from that, every one knows by the taste what

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meat he is eating. We go a step farther, and prove that when the flesh of animals is assimilated by man as food, it imparts to him, physiologically, some of the characteristics of the animal it came from. Moreover, occult science teaches and proves this to its students by ocular demonstration, showing also that this "coarsening" or "animalizing" effect on man is greatest from the flesh of the larger animals, less for birds, still less for fish and other cold-blooded animals, and least of all when he eats only vegetables.

It would be best if he could live without eating at all. But as the matter stands, he must eat to live, and so we advise really earnest students to eat such food as will least clog and weight their brains and bodies, and will have the smallest effect in hampering and retarding the development of their intuition, their inner faculties and powers.

We do not adopt all the arguments which vegetarians in general are in the habit of using, for some of their arguments are very weak, and often based on assumptions which are quite false. But, on the other hand, many of the things they say are quite true. For instance, we believe that much disease, and especially the great predisposition to disease which is becoming so marked a feature in our time, is very largely due to the eating of meat, and especially of tinned meats.

The point to remember is that we never impose any hard-and-fast obligations in this respect, for in such questions we take a rational, and never a fanatical, view of things. If from illness or long habit a man cannot go without meat, why, by all means let him eat it. It is no crime; it will only retard his progress a little; for after all is said and done, the purely bodily actions and functions are of far less importance than what a man **thinks** and **feels**, what desires he encourages in his mind, and allows to take root and grow there.

With regard to the use of wine and spirits, we do not advise people to drink

them. They are worse for his moral and spiritual growth than meat, for alcohol in all its forms has a direct, marked, and very deleterious influence on man's psychic condition. Wine and spirit drinking is only less destructive to the development of the inner powers, than the habitual use of hashish, opium, and similar drugs.

### Theosophy and Marriage.

As to whether a man should marry or remain a celibate, it all depends on the kind of man you mean. If you refer to one who intends to live **in** the world, one who, even though a good, earnest Theosophist, and an ardent worker for our cause, still has ties and wishes which bind him to the world, who, in short, does not feel that he has done for ever with what men call life, and that he desires one thing and one thing only — to know the truth, and to be able to help others — then for such a one I say there is no reason why he should not marry, if he likes to take the risks of that lottery where there are so many more blanks than prizes. Surely you cannot believe us so absurd and fanatical as to preach against marriage altogether? On the contrary, save in a few exceptional cases of practical Occultism, marriage is the only remedy against immorality.

Practical Occultism excludes marriage both for physiological and moral reasons. The physiological is considered elsewhere; but I can give you an obvious and, I think, a sufficient answer, which will explain to you the moral reasons we give for it. Can a man serve two masters? No! Then it is equally impossible for him to divide his attention between the pursuit of Occultism and a wife. If he tries to, he will assuredly fail in doing either properly; and, let me remind you, practical Occultism is far too serious and dangerous a study for a man to take up, unless he is in the most deadly earnest, and ready to sacrifice **all, himself first of all**, to gain his end. But this does not apply to the members of our Inner Section. I am only referring to those who are determined to tread that path of discipleship which leads to the highest goal. Most, if not all of those who join our Inner Section, are only beginners,

preparing themselves in this life to enter in reality upon that path in lives to come.

### Theosophy and Education.

Let us consider this question of *education* from a broad standpoint, and one will see that we are doing harm not good, with *many* of our boasted improvements.

I quite agree that certain schools erected for the poorer children (*e.g.*, Franklin School in Santa Barbara), though far less useful than they ought to be, are good in contrast with the vile surroundings to which they are doomed by modern Society. There is, indeed, a great advantage to a small child bred in the slums, having the gutter for playground, and living amid continued coarseness of gesture and word, in being placed daily in a bright, clean school-room hung with pictures, and often gay with flowers. There it is taught to be clean, gentle, orderly; there it learns to sing and to play; has toys that awaken its intelligence; learns to use its fingers deftly; is spoken to with a smile instead of a frown; is gently rebuked or coaxed instead of cursed. All this humanizes the children, arouses their brains, and renders them susceptible to intellectual and moral influences. The schools are not all they might be and ought to be; but compared with the homes, they are paradises; and they slowly are reacting on the homes. But while this is true of some special and non-public schools, the strictly **public** system deserves the worst that can be said of it.

The **infusion** of a little practical Theosophy would help a hundred times more in life the poor suffering masses than all this infusion of (useless) intelligence. For, what is the **real** object of modern education? Is it to cultivate and develop the mind in the right direction; to teach the disinherited and hapless people to carry with fortitude the burden of life (allotted them by Karma); to strengthen their will; to inculcate in them the love of one's neighbor and the feeling of mutual interdependence and brotherhood; and thus to train and form the character for

practical life? Not a bit of it. And yet, **these are undeniably the objects of all true education.** No one denies it; all your educationalists admit it, and talk very big indeed on the subject. But what is the practical result of their action? Every young man and boy, nay, every one of the younger generation of schoolmasters will answer: "The object of modern education is to pass examinations," a system not to develop right emulation, but to generate and breed jealousy, envy, hatred almost, in young people for one another, and thus train them for a life of ferocious selfishness and struggle for honors and emoluments instead of kindly feeling.

And what are these examinations? They are simply a method of classification by which the results of your school teaching are tabulated. In other words, they form the practical application of the modern science method to the **genus homo, qua** intellection. Now "science" teaches that intellect is a result of the mechanical interaction of the brain-stuff; therefore it is only logical that modern education should be almost entirely mechanical — a sort of automatic machine for the fabrication of intellect by the ton. Very little experience of examinations is enough to show that the education they produce is simply a training of the physical memory, and, sooner or later, all your schools will **sink to this level.** As to any real, sound cultivation of the **thinking and reasoning power**, it is simply **impossible** while everything has to be judged by the results as tested by **competitive examinations.** Again, school training is of the very greatest importance in **forming character**, especially in its **moral bearing.** Now, from first to last, your modern system is based on the so-called scientific revelations: "The struggle for existence" and the "survival of the fittest." All through his early life, every man has these driven into him by practical example and experience, as well as by direct teaching, till it is impossible to eradicate from his mind the idea that "self," the lower, personal, animal self, is the end-all, and be-all, of life. Here you get the great source of all the after-misery, crime, and heartless

selfishness. Selfishness, as said over and over again, is the curse of humanity, and the prolific parent of all the evils and crimes in this life; and it is your schools which are the hotbeds of such selfishness.

There are three great divisions of scholastic establishments running up the scale from the most grossly commercial to the idealistic classical, with many permutations and combinations. The practical commercial begets the modern side, and the ancient and orthodox classical reflects its heavy respectability. Here we plainly see the scientific and material commercial supplanting the effete orthodox and classical. Neither is the reason very far to seek. The objects of this branch of education are, then, pounds, shillings, and pence. The energies generated by the brain molecules of its adherents are all concentrated on one point, thus making of them, an organized army of **educated** and speculative intellects of the minority of men, trained against the hosts of the ignorant, simpleminded masses doomed to be vampirised, lived and sat upon by their intellectually stronger brethren. Such training is not only **untheosophical**, it is simply **UNCHRISTIAN**. Result. The direct outcome of this branch of education is an overflowing of the market with money-making machines, with heartless selfish men — animals — who have been most carefully trained to prey on their fellows and take advantage of the ignorance of their weaker brethren! Even the orthodox classical schools present a similar spirit though the form is different. All this is owing to the perniciousness of a system which turns out goods to order, irrespective of the natural proclivities and talents of the youth.

Of history, our students attain only sufficient knowledge of their own particular nation to fit them with a steel armor of prejudice against all other peoples, and be steeped in the foul cess-pools of chronicled national hate and blood-thirstiness; and surely, you would not call that — **Theosophy?**

As to religion, it is most often a memory lesson of selected Biblical

facts; the "Why" of the teacher being a "Why" of circumstances and not of reason. The increasing number of Agnostics and Atheists in our day is rather owing to a healthy reaction from that system than due to it. We prefer immeasurably more in our Society Agnostics, and even rank Atheists, to bigots of whatever religion. The best — *i.e.*, the most truth-loving, philanthropic, and honest — of our Fellows were, and are, Agnostics and Atheists (disbelievers in a **personal** God). But there are no **free**-thinking boys and girls, and generally early training will leave its mark behind in the shape of a cramped and distorted mind. A proper and sane system of education should produce the most vigorous and liberal mind, strictly trained in logical and accurate thought, and not in blind faith.

If we had money, we would found schools which would turn out something else than reading and writing candidates for starvation. Children should above all be taught self-reliance, love for all men, altruism, mutual charity, and more than anything else, to think and reason for themselves. We would reduce the purely mechanical work of the memory to an absolute minimum, and **devote the time to the development and training of the inner senses, faculties and latent capacities**. We would endeavor to deal with each child as a unit, and to educate it so as to produce the most harmonious and equal unfoldment of its powers, in order that its special aptitudes should find their full natural development. We should aim at creating free men and women, free intellectually, free morally, unprejudiced in all respects, and above all things, **unselfish**. And we believe that much if not all of this could be obtained by **proper and truly theosophical** education.

#### **WHY IS THERE SO MUCH PREJUDICE AGAINST THEOSOLOGY?**

If the Theosophical movement were one of those numerous modern crazes, as harmless at the end as they are evanescent, it would be simply laughed at-as it is now by those who still do not understand its real purport — and left severely alone. But it is nothing of the kind. **Intrinsically, Theosophy is the**

**most serious movement of this age; and one, moreover, which threatens the very life of most of the time-honored humbugs, prejudices, and social evils of the day** — those evils which fatten and make happy the upper ten and their imitators and sycophants, the wealthy dozens of the middle classes, while they positively crush and starve out of existence the millions of the poor. Think of this, and you will easily understand the reason of such a relentless persecution by those others who, more observant and perspicacious, do see the true nature of Theosophy, and therefore dread it.

As to the hidden and unseen opponents of Theosophy, these neither speak, write nor preach against Theosophy, but work in silence and behind the backs of the foolish puppets who act as their visible **marionettes**. Yet if **invisible** to most, they are well known to the true "Founders" and protectors of Theosophy. But they must remain for certain reasons unnamed at present. They may achieve great mischief and throw confusion into our ranks, especially among the fainthearted, and those who can judge only by appearances. **They will not crush the Society**, do what they may. Apart from these truly dangerous enemies — "dangerous," however, only to those Theosophists who are unworthy of the name, and whose place is rather **outside** than within the T.S. — the number of our opponents is more than considerable.

The Clergy of all great exoteric religions who "pose" as guardians of the spiritual oppose us on the general principle that "He who is not with me is against me." Since Theosophy does not agree with any one Sect or Creed, it is considered the enemy of all alike, because it teaches that they are all, more or less mistaken.

Unfortunately, Mr. Sinnett's "**Ocult World**," with its emphasis on phenomena, did much to stir up the malevolence of the appearance worshipping, sense-enslaved public. Their mode of life begets in them a blind belief in the senses as the only mode of growth. All that falls outside that arena, is either miraculous or fraudulent.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

## THE WOES OF TURKEY

Some forty-two years ago<sup>1</sup> there appeared a strange letter containing strange ideas on the subject of Turkey in Europe and Christian influence on Islam.

That was in January, 1880, in Blackwood's Magazine, published at Edinburgh. The letter was written to a prospective English Member of Parliament and was subscribed:

"Yours very sincerely,  
"A Turkish Effendi."

It is a great document.

Its philosophic calm is superb. Its searching analysis of the historic evolution of the country and people which, more than any other tried to stretch Asia into Europe, is, to say the least, novel and striking. Its judgment of Christian influence on Asia and Islam is straight and scathing. It sweeps like a wind that clears the roads of dust, and explains, in a masterly fashion, why the Turk and the Christian did not assimilate each other in psychic and moral consanguinity. Much is said and more is implied. Not he who runs may read the true message contained in the letter, but he whose measured pace is the outer symbol of an observant and co-ordinating mind, within the hollow of the brain.

Forty-two years have made a great change. The events which are taking place today in Turkey have a more than economic and political significance. To the careful student of world politics, they unveil racial and religious forces which cause them. In this short note we can only

<sup>1</sup> The article referred to, "A Turkish Effendi on Christendom and Islam," was reprinted in *The Aquarian Theosophist*, November issue (Vol. III, #1 pp. 24-32). "The Woes of Turkey," first appeared in *Theosophy Magazine*, Jan. 1923, pp. 106-111.

indicate briefly the meaning of recent happenings from three points of view:

- (1) that of the Muslim;
- (2) that of the Christian; and
- (3) that of the humanitarian and altruist who works for spiritual verities.

The political and economic aspects, which loom so large in the public eye, are apt to cloud the vision and aggravate the future difficulties into a greater complexity. We further maintain that the politico-economic problems of the situation will never be adequately or finally solved until the real, though hidden, springs of race culture and religious sentiment are noted and their subtle influence acknowledged.

The point of view of the Muslim cannot be better presented than by applying the spirit of the words of the "Turkish Effendi," written in 1880, to the Treaty of Sevres of 1920. The treatment meted out to Albania some 40 years ago by what are called in the letter "*anti-Christian nations*" can be well compared to that which the Supreme Council doled out to Turkey and the Muslim World — for the two are one, as Turkey has been the symbol of Islamic glory. The Peace Conference of Paris (January to May, 1919), which forged the Treaty in August of that year, was guilty of "sitting in solemn congress" for "a prostitution of the most sacred principles in the name of morality, and [to] construct an international code of ethics to be applicable to Turkey alone, and which they would one and all refuse to admit or be controlled by, themselves," as the "Effendi" wrote. The Muslim world perforce refused to be party to "this most transparent humbug" and said that, "We neither admit their pretensions, covet their civilization, believe in their good faith, nor respect their morality."

We must, however, briefly write about some developments in the Islamic world, not largely known to Christendom. The "Effendi" referred to the Turks "paying the penalty for that lust of dominion and power, which tempted them in the first instance to cross the Bosphorus;" and this penalty can best be described in his own words as the "gradual assimilation" of "all the vices of Anti-Christendom" and "the attractions of a civilization based upon enlightened selfishness."

The western world knows naught of the silent labors of Muslim religious fraternities. The Zawias headed by Mokkadem are like Masonic lodges headed by R. W. Masters who exercise great power over the brethren — only, these "Masters" have greater religious knowledge, and the influence and authority they wield is substantial and yields tangible results. Since the middle of the last century their mystic knowledge and religious zeal have been systematically directed in the propaganda of Pan-Islamism. To the mind of the European politician, the revolution of Pan-Islamism takes place round the sun of the Constantinople-Khaliphate. While the latter *is* a very important factor, since 1880 a new force has been at work.

How many Europeans know the full details of the strange and fascinating tale of the origin and growth of the White Monastery in the mountains near Derna, in the vicinity of Tripoli? How many are aware of the new turn given to the Sennusi Order by the wisdom and piety of El-Mahadi, which brought into being a kind of an occult government which several colonial authorities prefer not to know the existence of? The above-mentioned Zawias are more than ritualistic Lodges or debating societies. Their influence and power manifests in the freedom of action of the Fraternity which at one time would not recognize even Sultan Abdul Hamid at

the height of his power. The aim of this and similar fraternities (among which are schools whose inheritance of knowledge and influence is similar to that of the Neo-Platonists in an earlier era) is to use the arms of teaching and discipline in the service of the cause which is sacred and holy in their eyes — the revival and establishment of Imamatus of the early days of Islam. These bodies are convinced that Islam's conquest of Anti-Christendom must proceed on strict spiritual lines. They are not averse to the true doctrines of Christ, for He and His mother and disciples are acknowledged characters in the gospel of Al Quran. These secret and semi-secret organizations were strengthened in their view and belief by the action of the French in Algeria, the behavior of the Russians in Trans-Caucasia, by the joint activity of the Russians and British in Persia, and of the British for a long term of years before the war, in Afghanistan. These religious fraternities engaged on a spiritual and cultural vocation were repeatedly awakened to the serious danger which the noble Effendi's frank letter refers to. With remarkable patience, however, they held themselves to their religious labors and dreamt more of spiritual than temporal Pan-Islamism, and therefore kept themselves aloof from the courts of the Sultan of Turkey, the Shah of Persia and the Amir of Afghanistan.

While this was going on, European powers and their short-sighted spokesmen were earnestly and seriously endeavoring to bring the blessings of scientific civilization in the way the Effendi letter speaks of. It was Lord Cromer, if we are not mistaken, who said, also in the eighties of the last century, in reference to the backwardness of Islamic countries — "Islam cannot be reformed; that is to say, reformed Islam is Islam no longer; it is something else." This Britisher and his like had neither the knowledge, nor the faculty to obtain it, to see that the progress,

may the very safety of the world, lay in a steady infusion of Asiatic culture into Europe and her "Anti-Christendom." To the fire of unrest among Muslims, caused by forces which the Effendi examines and reveals, the "Christian statesmen" added the fuel of the glittering greatness of the modern West. This combination produced the flare in the person in the person of Djemal-ed-din-el-Afghani. This man, neither devout nor religious, was a fanatic all the same. He pictured the futility and the ultimate failure of spiritual Idealism of the Fraternities, which he mistook for theological dogmatism and priestcraft. He embodied the forces of the militant Islam of the sword, disregarding the teaching of the Prophet that the pen was a mightier weapon. The career of this warrior in a more manly age would have been the subject of an epic. After the failure of the movement of Arabi Pasha, in which he figured prominently, when the British became masters of Egypt they expelled him from Cairo and he went to Constantinople.

In earnest enthusiasm began the new phase of Pan-Islamism, the political and warlike one; the political doctors of Europe have now to deal with some of its aspects. Sultan Abdul Hamid, who was given a cold shoulder by shoulder by the religious fraternities, opened his arms of welcome to Djemal. The latter, with the help of the Bureau of the Sultan, indulged in showing to Asia the greed of Europe and to Islam the hatred of Christianity.

If Europe failed to understand the movement of spiritual Pan-Islamism, the Islamic world was unable to see the underlying danger of political and militant Pan-Islamism. If the latter had cared to study the similar currents which manifested in the activities of Arya and Brahma Samajis in India, to which once again our Effendi makes a passing reference, they would have perceived the dangers ahead. Who would accept as

correct the verdict that in establishing his Bureau of Militant Pan-Islamism Abdul Hamid erected the gallows on which the Young Turks hung the temporal majesty of the Sultan himself in 1908? Djemal's movement was part of a wider one which extended from Tokyo to Teheran and from Constantinople to Cordova. The victory of Asiatic Japan over the Czar of all the Russias strengthened the militancy. The Persian Revolution followed the Young Turk Revolution and Italy's barefaced raid on Tripoli fed further that militant spirit.

The European world failed even to take note of the strange phenomenon of Islam appealing to Asia against Christian Europe. Muhammad the Prophet revered the Old and the New Testaments and spoke of his predecessors Musa (Moses) and Isu (Jesus). His early followers attacked not the followers of the Nazarene, but those infidels who worshipped the Fire in Iran or the Idols in Hindustan. And now in the early years of this century his followers were appealing to Japan, to China, to Hindus in India to join hands with Muslims for the protection of Hoary Asia and Her Priceless Culture. During the Balkan War, Mussalmans in India appealed to their Hindu "brethren." We have not the exact text of this appeal as we pen these lines, but our Theosophic memory did not fail to register the reference which Muslims made to the Spiritual Powers and Personages of the snow-clad Himalayas, and the Hindus were requested to pray to their myriad gods to destroy their common foe. Turn from India to China; the Muslims aided the Buddhists and the Confucianists during the Revolution, which evoked thanks and gratitude from no less a person than Sun-Yat-Sen. What happened during the War? The public press did not tell the tale — though they wrote up many stories. Riots and risings in Algiers, Arabia, Egypt, Lybia, Malabar (India), Tripoli, ought to

have opened the eyes of the civilized men who conducted war and made "peace."

Militant Pan-Islamism made it its business to absorb the spirit of Anti-Christendom and fought the "Christian" soldiers and statesmen with their own weapons, and now the agnostic leaders of Soviet Russia and militant leaders of triumphant France aid them with their counsel, and more.

Let us turn to look at the situation from the Christian point of view. The only factor which troubles Christianity is the massacre of Christian minorities by successful Muslims. It does not occur to these Christians that for centuries they have been at each other's throats in every part of Christendom; it does not occur to them that Greeks have massacred Turks; it does not occur to them that perhaps "Churchianity" is meeting with its just compensation. The frenzy of the churches would make "America, Go Forward" in this "real war of the world, a war at last between Occident and Orient" — to quote from the Christian Register of the 21st of September. Fortunately the churches are divided and the powerful Romish organization indicates a greater desire to destroy the Greek Church and injure the Protestant Sects than fight the Turks, which is in consonance with her policy of many decades.

Racial prejudice and religious bias color the atmosphere through which the newspaper-reading Christians visualize the events that are taking place in distant Turkey. Asiatics are not unaware that from old times those who fought in the name of the Prince of Peace committed strange atrocities. They have not forgotten, for instance, the massacre of thousands of Jews and Muhammedans at the time the army of Godfrey of Bouillion entered Jerusalem to inaugurate the "Kingdom of God." Nor are they ignorant of the tragedy at Jaffa where Richard the

"lion-hearted," King of England, killed some 500 hostages in his care. Against that, Muslim history is not devoid of the considerate and even generous attitude of the followers of the Prophet of Arabia, similar to that evinced by Saladin, who protected the Christian population.

Let Christians not forget that, of all the fighting nations in the war, Turks were the only people who refused to make use of poison gas against their enemies.

When we take into consideration the views, not of vested interests, political or religious, but of disinterested witnesses like the great French author, Pierre Loti, who has written on Turkey since the Armistice, we get a different point of view. What have soldiers and nurses and non-interfering visitors said about the Turks? The shrewd insight of British Tommy Atkins brought to the Turk the honor of being called the "only gentleman in the war."

Thus if church-goers would consult the doctrines of Jesus Christ and contrast them with the teachings of the many churches who quarrel in His name, they would better understand the situation and help in the solution of the problems for the benefit of all countries and all creeds and usher in Peace, instead of favoring some countries and creeds against others, and perpetuating war.

This brings us to our **third** and last point of view — how does the Theosophist look at the woes of Turkey and what solution does he offer?

Europe suffers from the disease of "Anti-Christianity" and Turkey from that of "Anti-Islam" — if we may be permitted to copy the Effendi. Turkey and Islam can help Europe and Christendom if the former's militant aspects make room for its cultural phases. Islam of the pen is mightier than Islam of the sword. If

Muslims recognize that conversion of the world to its soul-culture is more important than the proselytism of men and women in its mosques, they will succeed in the real Holy War which fights the Kingdom of Ibliss and his Darkness. The swing of the Cycle brings the opportunity to Asiatic nations to help the western world, materialistic and agnostic on the one hand, while on the other it has fallen an unconscious prey to the subtle forces of priestcraft and superstition; but Muslims or Brahmanas, Buddhists, or Confucianists will not be able to embrace this great opportunity unless they themselves wash themselves clean of the absorption of these very forces of materialism and superstition. The glamour of modern civilization is upon Asia too, and the fight threatens to perpetuate itself, ranging Asia against Europe.

The creeds of the Crescent and the Cross and their hateful wars hide the Nur of Allah, the Light of Christ — the Radiance which can guide Kings and Empires, Leaders and Republics. Modern men strive for That which is hidden, Kafir fights Infidel, and so the True Believer has nowhere to rest his head. When the Crescent and the Cross unite in fraternity because the Light of Allah and the Love of Christ are recognized to be the same; when cathedral and mosque are not for the Bishop and Moulvi but become the Symbol of the Living Temple of the Human Soul; when Asia and Europe are no more two continents but adjoining territories, where the way of knowledge is the path of love, and action is service; — then only will strife cease and peace come to East and West alike.

Of this the noble Effendi spoke — to help, to guide, to instruct the Europe of 1880. In their prosperity and in their pride they heard him not, and now the laws of retribution have run their course. In their adversity and their despair his wisdom and his warning may help some to throw off

the yoke of slavery to scientific civilization; it may inspire them to turn their faces to the Eternal East and set their feet on the Path of Simplicity. (*Theosophy Magazine*, Jan. 1923, pp. 106-111)

#### LISTEN

Listen my children, If you're on your way  
To wearing a popular crown  
Be kind to the people you meet going up,  
You're sure to meet them coming down.

#### KNOWLEDGE OF SELF

WE find this great precept often repeated in Plato, "*Do thine own work and know thyself;*" of which two parts, both the one and the other generally comprehend our whole duty, and consequently do each of them complicate and involve the other; for he who will do his own work aright, will find that his first lesson is to know himself; and he who rightly understands himself, will never mistake another man's work for his own.

MONTAIGNE

#### KNOWLEDGE & WISDOM

Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,  
Have oftentimes no connection. Knowledge dwells  
In heads replete with thoughts of other men,  
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own;  
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,  
The mere materials with which wisdom builds,  
Till smoothed and squared, and fitted into place,  
Does but encumber what it seems t'enrich.  
Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much,  
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

COWPER

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## BODE'S LAW

Despite the catch-all word "*coincidence*" still being used by science in 2002, there remains a flexibility in their search that was absent in the 19<sup>th</sup> century especially, and to some extent in the 20<sup>th</sup>. For example the following article does admit in one of its "inserts" that: —

Johann Bode was a founding member of the mysterious Masonic secret society known as the Illuminati.

*The Secret Doctrine* declares that Neptune does not belong to our Solar system, and this is precisely where Bode's Law breaks down. Myth and tradition unanimously assert that a "failed" planet existed between Mars and Jupiter where we now find the asteroid belt. For a detailed discussion of this last statement, see *Cataclysm*<sup>1</sup>, an excellent book written by scientists using *multi-disciplinary* evidence.

Bode's Law is a simple formula that shows a clear relationship between the planets' orbits around the Sun. Named for the 18<sup>th</sup>-century German astronomer Johann Bode, it seems to have been set down by Bode's contemporary, Johann Titius. The relationship that Titius' discovered is now known as Bode's Law.

Titius' arithmetic sounds a bit like a party game. Write down this sequence of numbers: 0, 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, 96, 192. The first two numbers seem arbitrary, but after that they simply double each time. Add 4 to each number so that the sequence reads 4, 7, 10, 16, 28, 52, 100, 196, then divide each number by 10. You now have a list of planetary distances from the Sun, measured by counting the Earth's distance from the sun stand as 1 — often written AU (for Astronomic Unit). Mercury is .4 — very near to its real value of .39. Venus is .7, again close to its measured distance of .72. Earth, the third planet, comes out as 1, and Mars makes the list at 1.6 — just a little farther than its real-life distance of 1.52. At this point, the neat arithmetical progression of Bode's Law appears to run into trouble. As far as anyone knew in 1772 — the year that Johann Bode

<sup>1</sup> *Cataclysm: Compelling Evidence of a Cosmic Catastrophe in 9500 B.C.* — by D. S. Allan, J. B. Delair, ISBN 1879181428 — Amazon has it new for \$15.40 and used, \$11.49.

published Titius' table of numbers for the first time — there was no planet occupying the predicted fifth position, at 2.8 AU from the Sun. And although the sixth and seventh positions — 5.2 and 10 — fitted very closely with the observed orbits of Jupiter and Saturn, there was no planet at the predicted distance of 19.6. Yet Bode was sufficiently convinced by the numerical table's neatness to assert that planets would eventually be found to fill the gaps — and he turned out to be right.

The Titius-Bode Rule is a simple arithmetic progression that yields an astonishingly accurate picture of the solar system. Only the distant planets Neptune and Pluto do not fit the pattern, and a version of the rule even describes the complex arrangement of the moons of the outer planets.

[Much of this originated from one of the science websites — probably NASA or the weekly, *Science News*.]

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## MEDITATION: THE ROAD TO RENEWAL

You, friends and readers, who aspire to something more than the life of the squirrel in its ceaselessly revolving wheel; you who are not satisfied with the cauldron which is ever boiling without producing anything, you who do not mistake hollow echoes as old as the world for the divine voice of Truth, prepare yourselves for a future that few of you have dreamed of unless you have already set your feet upon the Path. For you have chosen a way which, in the beginning lined with thorns, will soon widen, and lead you straight to the Divine Truth. You are free to doubt at first; free not to accept on someone's word what is taught concerning the source and the cause of this Truth, but you can always listen to what the voice is saying, you can always watch the effects produced by the

creative force which emerges from the depths of the unknown. The arid soil upon which our present generations are moving at the close of this age of spiritual starvation and material satiety, is in need of a sign, of a rainbow--symbol of hope--above its horizon. For, of all past centuries, the nineteenth is the most criminal. It is criminal in its fearful selfishness, in its scepticism that scoffs at the mere idea of something beyond matter; in its idiotic indifference to all that is not the personal "I"--far more so than any of the centuries of barbaric ignorance and intellectual darkness. Our century must be saved from itself before its last hour strikes. Now is the time for action by all who see the sterility and foolishness of an existence blinded by materialism and so ferociously indifferent to the fate of others. It is for them to devote their best energies, all their courage and all their efforts to bring about an intellectual reform. This reform cannot be accomplished except through Theosophy, and, let us say it, Occultism, or the Wisdom of the East. Many are the paths leading to it, but Wisdom is forever one. Artists foresee it, those who suffer dream of it, the pure in spirit know it. Those who work for others cannot remain blind before its reality even though they do not always know it by name. It is only the light-headed and empty-minded, the selfish and vain drones deafened by the sound of their own buzzing who can ignore this high ideal. They will live until life itself becomes an unbearable burden to them.

Let it be known, however, that these pages are not written for the masses. They are neither a call for reform nor an effort to win over to our views those who are happy in life. They are addressed only to those who are ready to understand them, to those who suffer, to those who are thirsty and hungry for any reality in this world of shifting shadows. And why should those not have enough courage to give up their frivolous ways of life, above all their

pleasures and even some of their business interests, unless the care of these interests is a duty owed to their families or to others? No one is so busy or so poor that he cannot be inspired by a noble ideal to follow. Why hesitate to blaze a trail toward that ideal through all obstacles, all hindrances, all the daily considerations of social life, and to advance boldly until it is reached? Ah! those who would make this effort would soon find that the "narrow gate" and "the thorny path" lead to spacious valleys with unlimited horizons, to a state without death, for one rebecomes a God! It is true that the first requisites for getting there are absolute unselfishness and unlimited devotion to the interests of others, and complete indifference as to the world and its opinions. To take the first step on this ideal path requires a perfectly pure motive; no frivolous thought must be allowed to divert our eyes from the goal; no hesitation, no doubt must fetter our feet. Yet, there are men and women perfectly capable of all this, and whose only desire is to live under the aegis of their Divine Nature. Let these, at least, have the courage to live this life and not to hide it from the sight of others! No one's opinion could ever be above the rulings of our own conscience, so, let that conscience, arrived at its highest development, be our guide in all our common daily tasks. As to our inner life, let us concentrate all our attention on our chosen Ideal, and let us ever look *beyond* without ever casting a glance at the mud at our feet....

H. P. BLAVATSKY  
[FROM "THE NEW CYCLE"]



### PROPERTY RIGHTS THROUGH THE EYES OF AN OCCULTIST

From the right point of view, if you will know, it is only the expression of

another person's *original* ideas, some independent sentence, a thought, which in its brief completeness is capable of being constructed into a wise motto or maxim that could be constituted into what is regarded as *plagiarism* — the pilfering of another person's 'brain property'. There is not a book but is the shadow of some other book, the concrete image, very often, of the *astral body* of it in some other work upon the same or approximate subject. I agree entirely with Dr Cromwell when he says that 'true talent will become original in the very act of engaging itself with the ideas of another;' nay will often *convert the dross* of previous authors into the golden ore that shines forth to the world as its own peculiar creation. 'From a series of extravagant and weak Italian romances, Shakespeare took the plots, the characters, and the major part of the incidents of those dramatic works which have exalted his name, as an *original* writer, above that of every other in the annals of literature.'

FROM A MASTER'S LETTER

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## Psychometry

One of the most interesting discoveries of modern times, is that of the faculty which enables a certain class of sensitive persons to receive from any object held in the hand or against the forehead impressions of the character or appearance of the individual, or any other object with which it has previously been in contact. Thus a manuscript, painting, article of clothing, or jewelry — no matter how ancient — conveys to the sensitive, a vivid picture of the writer, painter, or wearer, even though he lived in the days of Ptolemy or Enoch. Nay, more; a fragment of an ancient building will recall its history and even the scenes which transpired within or about it. A bit of ore will carry the soul-vision back to the time when it

was in process of formation. This faculty is called by its discoverer — Professor J. R. Buchanan, of Louisville, Kentucky — *psychometry*. To him, the world is indebted for this most important addition to Psychological Sciences; and to him, perhaps, when skepticism is found felled to the ground by such accumulation of facts, posterity will have to elevate a statue. In announcing to the public his great discovery, Professor Buchanan, confining himself to the power of psychometry to delineate human character, says: “The mental and physiological influence imparted to writing appears to be imperishable, as the oldest specimens I have investigated gave their impressions with a distinctness and force, little impaired by time. Old manuscripts, requiring an antiquary to decipher their strange old penmanship, were easily interpreted by the psychometric power. . . . The property of retaining the impress of mind is not limited to writing. Drawings, paintings, everything upon which human contact, thought, and volition have been expended, may become linked with that thought and life, so as to recall them to the mind of another when in contact.”

Without, perhaps, really knowing, at the early time of the grand discovery, the significance of his own prophetic words, the Professor adds: “This discovery, in its application to the arts and to history, will open a mine of interesting knowledge.”\*

The existence of this faculty was first experimentally demonstrated in 1841. It has since been verified by a thousand psychometers in different parts of the world. It proves that every occurrence in nature — no matter how minute or unimportant — leaves its indelible impress upon physical nature; (M.L. — — )

Joseph Rodes Buchanan was an American scientist, Faculty Dean and Professor in the Eclectic Medical Institute, in Covington, Kentucky, and research pioneer in psychometry. It was Joseph Buchanan who, in 1842, coined the term "psychometry" as meaning the "measuring of the soul."

General Bishop Polk of the Civil War once told Professor Buchanan of his curious sensitivity to atmospheric, electric, and other physical conditions. If he touched brass in the dark, he immediately knew it by its influence and the offensive metallic taste in his mouth.

Dr. Buchanan began to experiment and soon discovered that these sensations are not restricted to the sense of taste alone. Students of a Cincinnati medical school registered distinct impressions from medicines held in their hands. In order to eliminate thought transference, the substances were wrapped in paper parcels and mixed.

Eventually, it became very evident to Dr. Buchanan that some type of emanation is thrown off by all substances, even by the human body; furthermore, certain sensitives can feel and interpret these emanations in their normal state. Actually, he was staggered by the possibilities of this discovery. He stated:

*"The past is entombed in the present, the world is its own enduring monument; and that which is true of its physical is likewise true of its mental career. The discoveries of Psychometry will enable us to explore the history of man, as those of geology enable us to explore the history of the earth. There are mental fossils for psychologists as well as mineral fossils for the geologists; and I believe that hereafter the psychologist and the*

*geologist will go hand in hand, the one portraying the earth, its animals and its vegetation, while the other portrays the human beings who have roamed over its surface in the shadows, and the darkness of primeval barbarism. Aye, the mental telescope is now discovered which may pierce the depths of the past and bring us in full view of the grand and tragic passages of ancient history."*

If you consider this statement, along with the era in which it was spoken, it really is quite remarkable how far ahead of his time Dr. Buchanan was.

He called the subtle emanation given off by the human body "nerve aura." In the ***Journal of Man***, one of the first Spiritualist monthlies, he published a complete exposition of his system of neurology and anthropology.

Psychometry, for Dr. Buchanan, was essentially a human faculty of the mind; he did not feel it involved the intervention of spirits. However, Mrs. L. A. Coffin, in her preface to Dr. Buchanan's ***Manual of Psychometry*** (Boston, 1889), states that she was often impressed by spirits while performing psychometry. This was not in conflict with Dr. Buchanan's views, as he was an avowed Spiritualist. He simply felt that psychometry was primarily a psychic faculty, not a mediumistic influence.

His classic, ***Manual of Psychometry***, is considered to be the most authoritative text written on psychometry.

<http://www.fst.org/Buchanan.htm>

## Time

*I am watching time.*

*Flickering tongues of fury, here and there . . .  
like bands of rogues ridiculing rules.  
This cozy fire, on a frigid, stormy, winter day,  
is my teacher of time.*

*Time is neither here nor there. . .*

*So is this fire.*

*The line between past and future gasps for  
breath. . .*

*So does the flame.*

*With a flick  
this fire, this time,  
not remotely similar to  
what it was a moment ago.*

*I am watching time.*

— stephania

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## FOUR MODES OF KNOWLEDGE

Thomas Taylor (Intro. to *Phaedo*)

It is well observed, therefore, by Olympiodorus, in his MS. Scholia on this dialogue, that by *divine reason* we must understand *self-beholding intellect*, which, agreeably to Plato's description of it in the *Phaedrus* associates with Deity itself. In order however to understand what Olympiodorus means by *self-beholding intellect*, it is necessary to observe, that there are four modes of knowledge which we are able to acquire in the present life.

1. The first of these results from opinion, by which we learn *that* a thing is, without knowing *the why*: and this constitutes that part of knowledge which was called by Aristotle and Plato erudition; and which consists in moral

instructions, for the purpose of purifying ourselves from immoderate passions. But the

2. Second is produced by the sciences; in which, from establishing certain principles as hypotheses, we deduce necessary conclusions, and arrive at the knowledge of *the why* (as in the mathematical sciences); but at the same time we are ignorant with respect to the principles of these conclusions, because they are merely hypothetical.
3. The third species of knowledge is that which results from Plato's dialectic; in which, by a progression through all ideas, we arrive at the first principle of things, and at that which is no longer hypothetical; and this by dividing some things and analyzing others, by producing many things from one thing, and one thing from many. But the
4. Fourth species is still more simple than this; because it no longer uses analyses or compositions, definitions or demonstrations, but by a simple and self-viding energy of intellect speculates things themselves, and by intuition and contact becomes one with the object of its perception; and this energy is the *divine reason* which Plato speaks of in the present passage, and which far transcends the evidence of the most divine revelation; since this last is at best but founded in opinion, while the former surpasses even the indubitable certainty of science.

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### **Stone Skimming**

Everyone knows a stone bounces best on water if it is round and flat, and spun towards the water as fast as possible. Some enthusiasts even travel to international stone-skimming competitions, like world champion Jerdone Coleman-McGhee, who made a stone

bounce 38 times on Blanco River, Texas, in 1992.

Intuitively, a flat stone works best because a relatively large part of its surface strikes the water, so there is more bounce. Inspired by his eight-year-old son, physicist Lydéric Bocquet of Lyon University in France wanted to find out more. So he tinkered with some simple equations describing a stone bouncing on water in terms of its radius, speed and spin, and taking account of gravity and the water's drag.

The equations showed that the faster a spinning stone is travelling, the more times it will bounce. So no surprise there. To bounce at least once without sinking, Bocquet found the stone needs to be travelling at a minimum speed of about 1 kilometre per hour.

And the equations also backed his hunch that spin is important because it keeps the stone fairly flat from one bounce to the next. The spin has a gyroscopic effect, preventing the stone from tipping and falling sideways into the water.

#### **World record**

To match the world record of 38 bounces using a 10-centimetre-wide stone, Bocquet predicts it would have to be travelling at about 40 kilometres per hour and spinning at 14 revolutions a second.

He adds that drilling lots of small pits in the stone would probably help, by reducing water drag in the same way that dimples on a golf ball reduce air drag. "Although I suppose that would be cheating," says Bocquet, whose report will appear in the *American Journal of Physics*.

We are the stone-skimmers on the great ocean of life! Etherealizing the vehicle — drilling a multitude of air dimples — and increasing the "spin". A flat rock works best! How many bounces, how many incarnations, how many falls can one resound from and move on!

## The Doctrine of Avatars

This “Mystery” is found, for him who understands its right meaning, in the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chapter iv, 5-9. Says the Avatara:

Many births of mind have passed, as also of yours, O Arjuna! All those I know, but you do not know yours, O harasser of your enemies.

Although I am unborn, with exhaustless Atman, and am the Lord of all that is: yet, taking up the domination of my nature I am born by the power of illusion<sup>1</sup>.

Whenever, O son of Bharata, there is decline of Dharma [the right law] and the rise of Adharma [the opposite of Dharma] there I manifest myself.

For the salvation of the good and the destruction of wickedness, for the establishment of the law, *I am born* in every yuga.

Whoever comprehends truly my divine birth and action, he, O Arjuna, having abandoned the body does not receive rebirth; he comes to me.

Thus, all the Avatars are one and the same: the Sons of their “Father,” in a direct descent and line, the “Father,” or one of the seven Flames becoming, for the time being, the Son, and these two being one — in Eternity. What is the Father? Is it the absolute Cause of all? — the fathomless Eternal? No; most decidedly. It is Karanatman, the “Causal Soul” which, in its general sense, is called by the Hindus Isvara, the Lord, and by Christians, “God,” the One and Only. From the standpoint of unity it is so; but then the lowest of the Elementals could equally be viewed in such case as the “One and Only.” Each human being has, moreover, his own divine Spirit or personal God. That divine

Entity or Flame from which Buddhi emanates stands in the same relation to man, though on a lower plane, as the Dhyani-Buddha to his human Buddha. Hence monotheism and polytheism are not irreconcilable; they exist in nature.

Truly, “for the salvation of the good and the destruction of wickedness,” the personalities known as Gautama, Sankara, Jesus and a few others were born each in his age, as declared — “I am born in every Yuga” — and they were all born through the same Power.

There is a great mystery in such incarnations and they are outside and beyond the cycle of general rebirths. Rebirths may be divided into three classes:

1. The divine incarnations called Avatars;
2. Those of Adepts who give up Nirvana for the sake of helping on humanity — the Nirmanakayas; and
3. The natural succession of rebirths for all — the common law.

The Avatara is an appearance, one which may be termed a **special illusion** within the natural illusion that reigns on the planes under the sway of that power, Maya; the Adept is reborn consciously, at his will and pleasure;<sup>1</sup> the units of the common herd unconsciously follow the great law of dual evolution.

What *is* an Avatara? for the term before being used ought to be well understood. It is a descent of the

<sup>1</sup> A genuine initiated Adept will retain his Adeptship, though there may be for our world of illusion numberless incarnations of him. The propelling power that lies at the root of a series of such incarnations is *not* Karma, as ordinarily understood, but a still more inscrutable power. During the period of his lives the Adept does not lose his Adeptship, though he cannot rise in it to a higher degree.

manifested Deity — whether under the specific name of Siva, Vishnu, or Adhi-Buddha — into an **illusive form of individuality**, an appearance which to men on this illusive plane is objective, but it is not so in sober fact. That illusive form **having neither past nor future**, because it had neither previous incarnation nor will have subsequent rebirths, has naught to do with Karma, which has therefore no hold on it.

Gautama BUDDHA was born an Avatara in one sense. But this, in view of unavoidable objections on dogmatic grounds, necessitates explanation. There is a great difference between an Avatara and a Jivanmukta: one, as already stated, is an illusive appearance, Karmaless, and having never before incarnated; and the other, the Jivanmukta, is one who obtains Nirvana by his individual merits. To this expression again an uncompromising, philosophical Vedantin would object. He might say that as the condition of the Avatara and the Jivanmukta are one and the same state, no amount of personal merit, in howsoever many incarnations, can lead its possessor to Nirvana. Nirvana, he would say is actionless; how can, then, any action lead to it? It is neither a result nor a cause, but an ever-present, eternal *Is*, as Nagasena defined it. Hence it can have no relation to, or concern with, action, merit, or demerit, since these are subject to Karma. All this is very true, but still to our mind there is an important difference between the two. An Avatara *is*; a Jivanmukta *becomes* one. If the state of the two is identical, not so are the causes which lead to it. An Avatara is a descent of a God into an illusive form; a Jivanmukta, who may have passed through numberless incarnations and may have accumulated merit in them, certainly does not become a Nirvani because of that merit, but only because of the Karma generated by it, which leads and guides him in the direction of the Guru who will initiate him

into the mystery of Nirvana and who alone can help him to reach this abode.

H. P. BLAVATSKY



## *The Black Light*

[from *The Man of Light* in Iranian Sufism,  
by Henry Corbin, ISBN 0-930872-48-7]

The idea of “black light” (Persian *nūr-e siyāh*) is above all what obliges us to distinguish between two dimensions which could not be accounted for by a one-dimensional or undifferentiable unconscious. To the extent that the mystical language comes to “symbolize with” physical experience, it seems that the latter perfectly illustrates the idea of a polarity not so much between consciousness and the unconscious as between a superconsciousness and a subconsciousness. There is one darkness which is matter. Physicists distinguish between the *blackness* of matter and the *blackness* of the stratosphere. On the one hand there is the *black body*, a body that absorbs all light without distinction of color; this is what is seen in a dark furnace. When heated it passes from black to red, then to white, then to white-red. All this light is light absorbed by matter and re-emitted by it. This is also so in the case of the “particle of light” (the man of light) absorbed in the dark well, which according to Najm Kobrā and Sohraward, is compelled by the fire of the *dhikr* to liberate the particle, to “re-emit” it. This then is the black figure, the well or dark furnace; it is the lower darkness, the infraconscious or subconscious. But there is another light, a light-without-matter, which becomes visible when released from this already made matter that had absorbed it. The darkness above is the blackness of the stratosphere, of stellar space, of the black Sky. In mystical terms, it corresponds to the light of the divine Self in itself, the black light of the *Deus absconditus*, the hidden Treasure that aspires to reveal itself, “to create perception in order to reveal to itself the object of its perception,” and which thus can only manifest itself by veiling itself in the object state.