



CYCLIC EVOLUTION AND KARMA

IT is the Spiritual evolution of the *inner*, immortal man that forms the fundamental tenet in the Occult Sciences. To realize even distantly such a process, the student has to believe (*a*) in the ONE Universal Life, independent of matter (or what Science regards as matter); and (*b*) in the individual intelligences that animate the various manifestations of this Principle. Mr. Huxley does not believe in "Vital Force," others do. Dr. J. H. Hutchinson Sterling's work "Concerning Protoplasm" has made no small havoc of this dogmatic negation. Professor Beale's decision is also in favour of a Vital Principle; and Dr. B. W. Richardson's lectures on the "Nervous Ether," have been sufficiently quoted from. Thus, opinions are divided.

The ONE LIFE is closely related to *the one* law which governs the World of Being — KARMA. Exoterically, this is simply and literally "action," or rather an "effect-producing cause." Esoterically it is quite a different thing in its far-fetching moral effects. It is the unerring LAW OF RETRIBUTION. To say to those ignorant of the real significance, characteristics and awful importance of this eternal immutable law, that no theological definition of a personal deity can give an idea of this impersonal, yet ever present and active Principle, is to speak in vain. Nor can it be called Providence. For Providence, with the Theists (the Christian Protestants, at any rate), rejoices in a personal male gender, while

with the Roman Catholics it is a female potency, "Divine Providence tempers His blessings to secure their better effects," Wogan tells us. Indeed "He" tempers them, which Karma — a sexless principle — does not.

Throughout the first two Parts, it was shown that, at the first flutter of renascent life, Svâbhâvat, "the mutable radiance of the Immutable Darkness unconscious in Eternity," passes, at every new rebirth of Kosmos, from an inactive state into one of intense activity; that it differentiates, and then begins its work through that differentiation. This work is KARMA.

The Cycles are also subservient to the effects produced by this activity. "The one Cosmic atom becomes seven atoms on the plane of matter, and each is transformed into a centre of energy; that same atom becomes seven rays on the plane of spirit, and the seven creative forces of nature, radiating from the

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root-essence. . . . follow, one the right, the other the left path, separate till the end of the Kalpa, and yet are in close embrace. What unites them? KARMA." The atoms emanated from the Central Point emanate in their turn new centres of energy, which, under the potential breath of *Fohat*, begin their work from within without, and multiply other minor centres. These, in the course of evolution and involution, form in their turn the roots or developing causes of new effects, from worlds and "man-bearing" globes, down to the genera, species, and classes of all the *seven* kingdoms (of which *we know only four*). For "the blessed workers have received the *Thyan-kam*, in the eternity" (Book of "The Aphorisms of *Tson-ka-pa*").

"Thyan-kam" is the power or knowledge of guiding the impulses of cosmic energy in the right direction.

The true Buddhist, recognising no "personal god," nor any "Father" and "Creator of Heaven and Earth," still believes in an *absolute consciousness*, "Adi-Buddhi"; and the Buddhist philosopher *knows* that there are Planetary Spirits, the "Dhyān Chohans." But though he admits of "spiritual lives," yet, as they are temporary in eternity, even they, according to his philosophy, are "the *maya* of the *day*," the *illusion* of a "day of Brahmā," a short *manvantara* of 4,320,000,000 years. The "Yin-Sin" is not for the speculations of men, for the Lord Buddha has strongly prohibited all such inquiry. If the Dhyān Chohans and all the invisible Beings — the *Seven Centres* and their direct Emanations, the *minor* centres of Energy — are the direct reflex of the ONE Light, yet

men are far removed from these, since the whole of the *visible* Kosmos consists of "*self-produced* beings, the creatures of *Karma*." Thus regarding a personal God "as only a gigantic shadow thrown upon the void of space by the imagination of ignorant men," they teach that only "two things are (objectively) eternal, namely *Akāsa* and *Nirvana*"; and that these are ONE in reality, and but a *maya* when divided. "Buddhists deny creation and cannot conceive of a *Creator*." "Everything has come out of *Akāsa* (or *Svābhāvat* on our earth) in obedience to a law of motion inherent in it, and after a certain existence passes away. Nothing ever came out of nothing." (*Buddhist Catechism*.)

If a Vedantic Brahmin of the Adwaita Sect, when asked whether he believes in the existence of God, is always likely to answer, as Jacolliot was answered — "I am myself 'God';" a Buddhist (a Sinhalese especially) would simply laugh, and say in reply, "There is no God; no Creation." Yet the root philosophy of both Adwaita and Buddhist scholars is *identical*, and both have the same respect for animal life, for both believe that every creature on earth, however small and humble, "is an immortal portion of the immortal matter" — for matter with them has quite another significance than it has with either Christian or materialist — and that every creature is subject to Karma.

. . . . To make the working of Karma, in the periodical renovations of the Universe, more evident and intelligible to the student when he arrives at the origin and evolution of man, he has now to examine with us the esoteric

bearing of the Karmic Cycles upon Universal Ethics. The question is, do those mysterious divisions of time, called Yugas and Kalpas by the Hindus, and so very graphically — **Κύκλος** — “cycle,” ring or circle, by the Greeks, have any bearing upon, or any direct connection with, human life? Even exoteric philosophy explains that these perpetual circles of time are ever returning on themselves, periodically, and intelligently in Space and Eternity. There are “Cycles of matter”^{*} and there are “Cycles of Spiritual evolution.” Racial, national, and individual cycles. May not esoteric speculation allow us a still deeper insight into the workings of these?

This idea is beautifully expressed in a very clever scientific work¹: —

“The possibility of rising to a comprehension of a system of co-ordination so far outreaching in time and space all reach of human observations, is a circumstance which signalizes the power of man to transcend the limitations of changing and inconsistent matter, and assert his superiority over all unstable and perishable forms of being. *There is a method in the succession of events*, and in the relation of co-existent things, which the mind of man seizes hold of; and by means of this as a clue, he runs back or forward over æons of material history of which human experience can never testify.

Events germinate and unfold. They have a past which is connected with their present, and we feel a well-justified confidence that a future is appointed which will be similarly connected with the present and the past. This continuity and unity of history repeat themselves before our eyes in all conceivable stages of progress. The phenomena furnish us the grounds for the generalization of two laws which are truly *principles of scientific divination*, by which alone the human mind penetrates the sealed records of the past and the unopened pages of the future. The first of these is the law of evolution, or, to phrase it for our purpose, *the law of correlated successiveness or organized history in the individual*, illustrated in the changing phrases of every single maturing system of results. . . . These thoughts summon into our immediate presence the measureless past and the measureless future of material history. They seem almost to open vistas through infinity, and to endow the human intellect with an existence and a vision exempt from the limitations of time and space and finite causation, and lift it up toward a sublime apprehension of the Supreme Intelligence whose dwelling place is Eternity.” (“World-Life,” p. 535 and 548.)



¹ *World-Life; or, Comparative Geology*, by Alexander Winchell, 1883. Prof. Winchell was an American geologist, born in North East, N.Y., Dec. 31, 1824; d. at Ann Arbor, Feb. 19, 1891. Most of his academic career was with the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI. He was also director of the Michigan Geological Survey, and, in addition to the above title, he wrote: *The Doctrine of Evolution, Science and Religion — Pre-Adamites, and Geological Studies*.

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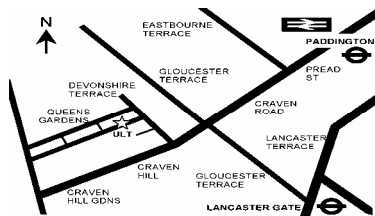
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THE "ELIXIR OF LIFE"

From a Chela's Diary. By Godolphin Mitford, F. T. S.

And Enoch walked with the Elohim, and the Elohim took Him."
— GENESIS.

INTRODUCTION.

[The curious information — for whatsoever else the world may think of it, it will doubtless be acknowledged to be that — contained in the article that follows, merits a few words of introduction. The details given in it on the subject of what has always been considered as one of the darkest and most strictly guarded of the mysteries of the initiation into occultism — from the days of the Rishis until those of the Theosophical Society — came to the knowledge of the author in a way that would seem to the ordinary run of Europeans strange and supernatural. He himself, however, we may assure the reader, is a most thorough disbeliever in the *Supernatural*, though he has learned too much to limit the capabilities of the *natural* as some do. Further, he has to make the following confession of his own belief. It will be apparent, from a careful perusal of the facts, that if the matter be really as stated therein, the author cannot himself be an adept of high grade, as the article in such a case *would never have been written*. Nor does he pretend to be one. He is, or rather was, for a few years a humble *Chela*. Hence, the converse must consequently be also true, that as regards the higher stages of the mystery he can have no personal experience, but speaks of it only as a close observer left to his own surmises — and no more. He may, therefore, boldly state that during, and notwithstanding, his unfortunately rather too short stay with some adepts, he has by actual experiment and observation verified some of the less transcendental or incipient parts of the "*Course*." And,

though it will be impossible for him to give positive testimony as to what lies beyond, he may yet mention that all his own course of study, training and experience, long, severe and dangerous as it has often been, leads him to the conviction that everything is really as stated, save some details *purposely veiled*. For causes which cannot be explained to the public, he himself may be unable or unwilling to use the secret he has gained access to. Still he is permitted by one to whom all his reverential affection and gratitude are due — his last guru — to divulge for the benefit of Science and Man, and specially for the good of those who are courageous enough to personally make the experiment, the following astounding particulars of the occult methods for prolonging life to a period far beyond the common. — G. M.]

PROBABLY one of the first considerations which move the worldly-minded at present to solicit initiation into Theosophy is the belief, or hope, that, immediately on joining, some extraordinary advantage over the rest of mankind will be conferred upon the candidate. Some even think that the ultimate result of their initiation will perhaps be exemption from that dissolution which is called the common lot of mankind. The traditions of the "Elixir of Life," said to be in the possession of Kabalists and Alchemists, are still cherished by students of Mediaeval Occultism — in Europe. The allegory of the *Ab-é Hyat* or *Water of Life*, is still credited as a fact by the degraded remnants of the Asiatic esoteric sects ignorant of the *real* GREAT SECRET. The "pungent and fiery Essence," by which Zanoni renewed his existence, still fires the imagination of modern visionaries as a possible scientific discovery of the future.

Theosophically, though the fact is distinctly declared to be true, the above-named conceptions of the mode of procedure leading to the realization of the fact, are *known* to be false. The reader may or may not believe it; but as a matter of fact, Theosophical Occultists claim to have communication with (living) Intelligences possessing an infinitely wider range of observation than is contemplated even by the loftiest aspirations of modern science, all the present "Adepts" of Europe and America — dabblers in the Kabala — notwithstanding. But far even as those superior Intelligences have investigated (or, if preferred, are alleged to have investigated), and remotely as they may have searched by the help of inference and

¹ A *Chela* is the pupil and disciple of an initiated *Guru* or *Master*.— Ed.[HPB]

analogy, even *They* have failed to discover in the Infinity anything permanent but — SPACE. ALL IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Reflection, therefore, will easily suggest to the reader the further logical inference that in a Universe which is essentially impermanent in its conditions, nothing can confer permanency. Therefore, no possible substance, even if drawn from the depths of Infinity; no imaginable combination of drugs, whether of our earth or any other, though compounded by even the Highest Intelligence; no system of life or discipline though directed by the sternest determination and skill, could possibly produce Immutability. For in the universe of solar systems, wherever and however investigated, Immutability necessitates “Non-Being” in the physical sense given it by the Theists — Non-Being which is *nothing* in the narrow conceptions of Western Religionists — a *reductio ad absurdum*. This is a gratuitous insult even when applied to the *pseudo*-Christian or ecclesiastical Jehovite idea of God.

Consequently, it will be seen that the common ideal conception of “Immortality” is not only essentially wrong, but a physical and metaphysical impossibility. The idea, whether cherished by Theosophists or non-Theosophists, by Christians or Spiritualists, by Materialists or Idealists, is a chimerical illusion. But the actual prolongation of human life is possible for a time so long as to appear miraculous and incredible to those who regard our span of existence as necessarily limited to at most a couple of hundred years. We may break, as it were, the shock of Death, and instead of dying, change a sudden plunge into darkness to a transition into a brighter light. And this may be made so gradual that the passage from one state of existence to another shall have its friction minimized, so as to be practically imperceptible. This is a very different matter, and quite within the reach of Occult Science. In this, as in all other cases, means properly directed will gain their ends, and causes produce effects. Of course, the only question is, what are these causes, and how, in their turn, are they to be produced. To lift,

as far as may be allowed, the veil from this aspect of Occultism, is the object of the present paper.

We must premise by reminding the reader of two Theosophic doctrines, constantly inculcated in “Isis” and in other mystic works — namely,

- (a) that ultimately the Kosmos is One — one under infinite variations and manifestations, and
- (b) that the so-called man is a “compound being” — composite not only in the exoteric scientific sense of being a congeries of living so-called material Units, but also in the esoteric sense of being a succession of seven forms or parts of itself, interblended with each other.

To put it more clearly we might say that the more ethereal forms are but duplicates of the same aspect, — each finer one lying within the inter-atomic spaces of the next grosser. We would have the reader understand that these are no subtleties, no “spiritualities” at all in the Christo-Spiritualistic sense. In the actual man reflected in your mirror are really several men, or several parts of one composite man; each the exact counterpart of the other, but the “atomic conditions” (for want of a better word) of each of which are so arranged that its atoms interpenetrate those of the next “grosser” form. It does not, for our present purpose, matter how the Theosophists, Spiritualists, Buddhists, Kabalists, or Vedantists, count, separate, classify, arrange or name these, as that war of terms may be postponed to another occasion. Neither does it matter what relation each of these men has to the various “elements” of the Kosmos of which he forms a part. This knowledge, though of vital importance in other respects, need not be explained or discussed now. Nor does it much more concern us that the Scientists deny the existence of such an arrangement, because their instruments are inadequate to make their senses perceive it. We will sim-

ply reply — “get better instruments and keener senses, and *eventually* you will.”

All we have to say is that if you are anxious to drink of the “Elixir of Life,” and live a thousand years or so, you must take our word for the matter at present, and proceed on the assumption. For esoteric science does not give the faintest possible hope that the desired end will ever be attained by any other way; while modern, or so-called exact science — laughs at it.

So, then, we have arrived at the point where we have determined — literally, not metaphorically — to crack the outer shell known as the mortal coil or body, and hatch out of it, clothed in our next. This “next” is not spiritual, but only a more ethereal form. Having by a long training and preparation adapted it for a life in this atmosphere, during which time we have gradually made the outward shell to die off through a certain process (hints of which will be found further on) we have to prepare for this physiological transformation.

How are we to do it? In the first place we have the actual, visible, material body — Man, so called; though, in fact, but his outer shell — to deal with. Let us bear in mind that science teaches us that in about every seven years we *change skin* as effectually as any serpent; and this so gradually and imperceptibly that, had not science after years of unremitting study and observation assured us of it, no one would have had the slightest suspicion of the fact.

We see, moreover, that in process of time any cut or lesion upon the body, however deep, has a tendency to repair the loss and reunite; a piece of lost skin is very soon replaced by another. Hence, if a man, partially flayed alive, may sometimes survive and be covered with a new skin, so our astral, vital body — the fourth of the seven (having attracted and assimilated to itself the second) and which is so much more ethereal than the physical one — may be made to harden its particles to the atmospheric changes. The whole secret is to succeed in

evolving it out, and separating it from the visible; and while its generally invisible atoms proceed to concrete themselves into a compact mass, to gradually get rid of the old particles of our visible frame so as to make them die and disappear before the new set has had time to evolve and replace them We can say no more. The Magdalene is not the only one who could be accused of having “seven spirits” in her, though men who have a lesser number of spirits (what a misnomer that word!) in them, are not few or exceptional; they are the frequent failures of nature — the incomplete men and women.¹ Each of these has in turn to survive the preceding and more dense one, and then die. The exception is the sixth when absorbed into and blended with the *seventh*. The “Dhatu”² of the old Hindu physiologist had a dual meaning, the esoteric side of which corresponds with the Tibetan “Zang” (seven principles of the body).

We Asiatics, have a proverb, probably handed down to us, and by the Hindus repeated ignorantly as to its esoteric meaning. It has been known ever since the old Rishis mingled familiarly with the simple and noble people they taught and led on. The Devas had whispered into every man’s ear — *Thou only* — if thou wilt — art “immortal.” Combine with this the saying of a Western author that if any man could just realize for an instant, that he had to die some day, he would die that instant. The *Illuminated* will perceive that between these two sayings, rightly understood, stands revealed the whole secret of Longevity. We only die when our will ceases to be strong enough to make us live. In the majority of cases, death comes when the torture and vital exhaustion accompanying a rapid change in our physi-

¹ This is not to be taken as meaning that such persons are thoroughly destitute of some one or several of the seven principles: a man born without an arm has still its ethereal counterpart; but that they are so latent that they cannot be developed, and consequently are to be considered as non-existing.—ED. Theos.[HPB]

² Dhatu — the seven principal substances of the human body — chyle, flesh, blood, fat, bones, marrow, semen.

cal conditions becomes so intense as to weaken, for one single instant, our "clutch on life," or the tenacity of the will to exist. Till then, however severe may be the disease, however sharp the pang, we are only sick or wounded, as the case may be. This explains the cases of sudden deaths from joy, fright, pain, grief, or such other causes. The sense of a life-task consummated, of the worthlessness of one's existence, *if strongly realized*, produced death as surely as poison or a rifle-bullet. On the other hand, a stern determination to continue to live, has, in fact, carried many through the crises of the most severe diseases, in perfect safety.

First, then, must be the determination — the Will — the conviction of certainty, to survive and continue.¹ Without that, all else is useless. And to be efficient for the purpose, it must be, not only a passing resolution of the moment, a single fierce desire of short duration, but *a settled and continued*

¹ Col. Olcott has epigrammatically explained the creative or rather the recreative power of the Will, in his "Buddhist Catechism." He there shows — of course, speaking on behalf of the Southern Buddhists — that this Will to live, if not extinguished in the present life, leaps over the chasm of bodily death, and recombines the *Skandhas*, or groups of qualities that made up the individual into a new personality. Man is, therefore, reborn as the result of his own unsatisfied yearning for objective existence. Col. Olcott puts it in this way:

Q. 123 . . . *What is that, in man, which gives him the impression of having a permanent individuality?*

A. *Tanha*, or the unsatisfied desire for existence. The being having done that for which he must be rewarded or punished in future, and having *Tanha*, will have a rebirth through the influence of *Karma*.

Q. 124. *What is it that is reborn?*

A. A new aggregation of *Skandhas*, or individuality, caused by the last yearning of the dying person.

Q. 128. *To what cause must we attribute the differences in the combination of the Five Skandhas which makes every individual differ from every other individual?*

A. To the *Karma* of the individual in the next preceding birth.

Q. 129. *What is the force or energy that is at work, under the guidance of Karma, to produce the new being?*

A. *Tanha*—the "Will to Live."

strain, as nearly as can be continued and concentrated without one single moment's relaxation. In a word, the would-be "Immortal" must be on his watch night and day, guarding self against — himself. To live — to live — to live — must be his unswerving resolve. He must as little as possible allow himself to be turned aside from it. It may be said that this is the most concentrated form of selfishness, — that it is utterly opposed to our Theosophic professions of benevolence, and disinterestedness, and regard for the good of humanity. Well, viewed in a short-sighted way, it is so. But to do good, as in everything else, a man *must have* time and materials to work with, and this is a necessary means to the acquirement of powers by which infinitely more good can be done than without them. When these are once mastered, the opportunities to use them will arrive, for there comes a moment when further watch and exertion are no longer needed: — the moment when the turning-point is safely passed. For the present as we deal with aspirants and not with advanced chelas, in the first stage a determined, dogged resolution, and an enlightened concentration of self on self, are all that is absolutely necessary. It must not, however, be considered that the candidate is required to be unhuman or brutal in his negligence of others. Such a recklessly selfish course would be as injurious to him as the contrary one of expending his vital energy on the gratification of his physical desires. All that is required from him is a purely negative attitude. Until the turning-point is reached, he must not "lay out" his energy in lavish or fiery devotion to any cause, however noble, however "good," however elevated.² Such, we can solemnly

² On page 151 of Mr. Sinnett's "Occult World," the author's, much abused, and still more doubted, correspondent assures him that none yet of his "degree are like the stern hero of Bulwer's" *Zanoni* "the heartless morally dried up mummies some would fancy us to be" . . . and adds that few of them "would care to play the part in life of a desiccated pansy between the leaves of a volume of solemn poetry." But our adept omits saying that one or two degrees higher, and he will have to submit for a period of years to such a mummifying

assure the reader, would bring its reward in many ways — perhaps in another life, perhaps in this world, but it would tend to shorten the existence it is desired to preserve, as surely as self-indulgence and profligacy. That is why very few of the truly great men of the world (of course, the unprincipled adventurers who have applied great powers to bad uses are out of the question) — the martyrs, the heroes, the founders of religions, the liberators of nations, the leaders of reforms — ever became members of the long-lived “Brotherhood of Adepts” who were by some and for long years accused of *selfishness*. (And that is also why the Yogis, and the Fakirs of modern India — most of whom are acting now but on the dead-letter tradition, are required if they would be considered living up to the principles of their profession — to appear *entirely dead* to every inward feeling or emotion.) Notwithstanding the purity of their hearts, the greatness of their aspirations, the disinterestedness of their self-sacrifice, *they could not live for they had missed the hour*. They may at times have exercised powers which the world called miraculous; they may have electrified man and subdued Nature by fiery and self devoted Will; they may have been possessed of so-called superhuman intelligence; they may have even had knowledge of, and communion with members of our own occult Brotherhood; but having deliberately resolved to devote their vital energy to the welfare of others, rather than themselves, they have surrendered life; and, when perishing on the cross or the scaffold, or falling sword in hand, upon the battle-field, or sinking exhausted after a successful consummation of the life-object, on death-beds in their chambers, they have all alike had to cry out at last: “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!”

So far so good. But, given the will to live however powerful, we have seen that, in the ordinary course of mundane life, the throes of dissolution cannot be checked.

process unless, indeed, he would voluntarily give up a life-long labor and — Die — Ed. [HPB]

The desperate, and again and again renewed struggle of the Kosmic elements to proceed with a career of change despite the will that is checking them, like a pair of runaway horses struggling against the determined driver holding them in, are so cumulatively powerful, that the utmost efforts of the *un-trained* human will acting within an *unprepared* body become ultimately useless. The highest intrepidity of the bravest soldier; the intensest desire of the yearning lover; the hungry greed of the unsatisfied miser; the most undoubting faith of the sternest fanatic; the practised insensibility to pain of the hardest red Indian brave or half-trained Hindu Yogi; the most deliberate philosophy of the calmest thinker — all alike fail at last. Indeed, skeptics will allege in opposition to the verities of this article that, as a matter of experience, it is often observed that the mildest and most irresolute of minds and weakest of physical frames are often seen to resist “Death” longer than the powerful will of the high-spirited and obstinately-egotistic man, and the iron frame of the labourer, the warrior and the athlete. In reality, however, the key to the secret of these apparently contradictory phenomena is the true conception of the very thing we have already said. If the physical development of the gross “outer shell” proceeds on parallel lines and at an equal rate with that of the will, it stands to reason that no advantage *for the purpose of overcoming it*, is attained by the latter. The acquisition of improved breechloaders by one modern army confers no absolute superiority if the enemy also becomes possessed of them. Consequently it will be at once apparent, to those who think on the subject, that much of the training by which what is known as “a powerful and determined nature,” perfects itself for its own purpose on the stage of the visible world, necessitating and *being useless* without a parallel development of the “gross” and so-called animal frame, is, in short, neutralized, for the purpose at present treated of, by the fact that its own action has armed the enemy with weapons equal to its own. The *force* of the impulse to dissolution is rendered equal to the will

to oppose it; and being cumulative, subdues the will-power and triumphs at last. On the other hand, it may happen that an apparently weak and vacillating will-power residing in a weak and undeveloped physical frame, may be so reinforced by some unsatisfied desire — the *Ichha* (wish) — it is called by the Indian Occultists (for instance a mother's heart-yearning to remain and support her fatherless children) — as to keep down and vanquish, for a short time, the physical throes of a body to which it has become temporarily superior.

The whole rationale then, of the first condition of continued existence in this world, is:

- (a) the development of a Will so powerful as to overcome the hereditary (in a Darwinian sense) tendencies of the atoms composing the “gross” and palpable animal frame, to hurry on at a particular period in a certain course of Kosmic change; and
- (b) to weaken the concrete action of that animal frame as to make it more amenable to the power of the Will. To defeat an army, *you must demoralize and throw it into disorder.*

To do this then, is the real object of all the rites, ceremonies, fasts, “prayers,” meditations, initiations and procedures of self-discipline enjoined by various esoteric Eastern sects, from that course of pure and elevated aspiration which leads to the higher phases of Adeptism Real, down to the fearful and disgusting ordeals which the adherent of the “Left-hand-Road” has to pass through, all the time maintaining his equilibrium. The procedures have their merits and their demerits their separate uses and abuses, their essential and non-essential parts, their various veils, mummeries and labyrinths. But in all, the result aimed at is reached, if by different processes. The Will is strengthened, encouraged and directed, and the elements opposing its action are *demoralized*. Now, to any one who has thought out and connected the various evolution theories, as

taken, not from any occult source, but from the ordinary scientific manual accessible to all — from the hypothesis of the latest variation in the habits of species — say, the acquisition of carnivorous habits by the New Zealand parrot, for instance — to the farthest glimpses backwards into Space and Eternity afforded by the “*Fire Mist*” doctrine, it will be apparent that they all rest on one basis. That basis is, that the impulse once given to a hypothetical Unit has a tendency to continue; and consequently, that anything “done” by something at a certain time and certain place tends to repeat itself at other times and places.

Such is the admitted rationale of heredity and atavism. That the same things apply to our ordinary conduct is apparent from the notorious ease with which “habits,” — bad or good, as the case may be — are acquired, and it will not be questioned that this applies, as a rule, as much to the moral and intellectual, as to the physical world.

Furthermore, History and Science teach us plainly that certain physical habits conduce to certain moral and intellectual results. There never yet was a conquering nation of vegetarians. Even in the old Aryan times, we do not learn that the very Rishis, from whose lore and practice we gain the knowledge of Occultism, ever interdicted the *Kshatriya* (military) caste from hunting or a carnivorous diet. Filling, as they did, a certain place in the body politic in the actual condition of the world, the Rishis as little thought of interfering with them, as of restraining the tigers of the jungle from their habits. That did not affect what the Rishis did themselves.

The aspirant to longevity then must be on his guard against *two dangers*. He must beware especially of impure and animal¹ thoughts. For Science shows that thought is dynamic, and thought-force evolved by nervous action expanding outwardly, must affect the molecular relations of the physical

¹ In other words, the thought tends to provoke the deed.—G.M.

man. The *inner men*,¹ however sublimated their organism may be, are still composed of actual, *not hypothetical*, particles, and are still subject to the law that an "action" has a tendency to repeat itself; a tendency to set analogous action in the grosser "shell" they are in contact with, and concealed within.

And, on the other hand, certain actions have a tendency to produce actual physical conditions unfavorable to pure thoughts, hence to the state required for developing the supremacy of the inner man.

To return to the practical process. A normally healthy mind, in a normally healthy body, is a good starting-point. Though exceptionally powerful and self-devoted natures may sometimes recover the ground lost by mental degradation or physical misuse, by employing proper means, under the direction of unswerving resolution, yet often things may have gone so far that there is no longer stamina enough to sustain the conflict sufficiently long to perpetuate this life; though what in Eastern parlance is called the "merit" of the effort help to ameliorate conditions and improve matters in another.

However this may be, the prescribed course of discipline commences here. It may be stated briefly that its essence is a course of moral, mental, and physical development, carried on in parallel lines — one being useless without the other. The physical man must be rendered more ethereal and sensitive; the mental man more penetrating and profound; the moral man more self-denying and philosophical. And it may be mentioned that all sense of restraint — even if self-imposed — is useless. Not only is all "goodness" that results from the compulsion of physical force, threats, or bribes (whether of a physical or so-called "spiritual" nature) absolutely useless to the person who exhibits it, its hypocrisy tending to poison the moral atmosphere of the world, but

the desire to be "good" or "pure," to be efficacious must be spontaneous. It must be a self-impulse from within, a real preference for something higher, not an abstention from vice because of fear of the law: not a chastity enforced by the dread of Public Opinion; not a benevolence exercised through love of praise or dread of consequences in a hypothetical Future Life.²

It will be seen now in connection with the doctrine of the tendency to the renewal of action, before discussed, that the course of self-discipline recommended as the only road to Longevity by Occultism is not a "visionary" theory dealing with vague "ideas," but actually a scientifically devised system of drill. It is a system by which each particle of the several men composing the septenary individual receives an impulse, and a habit of doing what is necessary for certain purposes of its own free-will and with "pleasure." Every one must be practised and perfect in a thing to do it with pleasure. This rule especially applies to the case of the development of Man. "Virtue" may be very good in its way — it may lead to the grand results. But to become efficacious it has to be practised cheerfully not with reluctance or pain. As a consequence of the above consideration the candidate for Longevity at the commencement of his career must begin to eschew his physical desires, not from any sentimental theory of right or wrong but for the following good reason. As, according to a well-known and now established scientific theory, his visible material frame is always renewing its particles; he will, while abstaining from the gratification of his desires, reach the end of a certain *period* during which those particles which composed the man of vice, and which were given a bad predisposition, will have departed. At the same time, the disuse of such functions will tend to obstruct the entry, in place of the old particles, of new particles having a tendency to repeat the said acts. And while this is the

¹ We use the word in the plural, reminding the reader that, according to our doctrine, man is septenary.—G.M.

² Col. Olcott clearly and succinctly explains the Buddhistic doctrine of Merit or Karma, in his "Buddhist Catechism" (Question 83). — G. M.

particular result regards certain “vices,” the general result of abstention from “gross” acts will be (by a modification of the well-known Darwinian law of atrophy by non-usage) to diminish what we may call the “relative” density and coherence of the outer shell (a result of its less-used molecules); while the diminution in the quantity of its actual constituents will be “made up” (if tried by scales and weights) by the increased admission of more ethereal particles.

What physical desires are to be abandoned and in what order? First and foremost, he must give up alcohol in all forms; for while it supplies no nourishment, nor any direct pleasure (beyond such sweetness or fragrance as may be gained in the taste of wine, &c., to which alcohol, in itself, is non-essential) to even the grossest elements of the “physical” frame, it induces a violence of action, a rush so to speak, of life, the stress of which can only be sustained by very dull, gross, and dense elements, and which, by the operation of the well-known law of Re-action (in commercial phrase, “supply and demand”) tends to summon them from the surrounding universe, and therefore directly counteracts the object we have in view.

Next comes meat-eating, and for the very same reason, in a minor degree. It increases the rapidity of life, the energy of action, the violence of passions. It may be good for a hero who has to fight and die, but not for a would-be sage who has to exist and

Next in order come the sexual desires; for these, in addition to the great diversion of energy (vital force) into other channels, in many different ways, beyond the primary one (as, for instance, the waste of energy in expectation, jealousy, &c.), are direct attractions to a certain gross quality of the original matter of the Universe, simply because the most pleasurable physical sensations are only possible at that stage of density. Alongside with and extending beyond all these and other gratifications of the senses

(which include not only those things usually known as “vicious,” but all those which, though ordinarily regarded as “innocent,” have yet the disqualification of ministering to the pleasures of the body — the most harmless to others and the least “gross” being the criterion for those to be last abandoned in each case) — must be carried on the moral purification.

Nor must it be imagined that “austerities” as commonly understood can, in the majority of cases, avail much to hasten the “etherealizing” process. That is the rock on which many of the Eastern esoteric sects have foundered, and the reason why they have degenerated into degrading superstitions. The Western monks and the Eastern Yogees, who think they will reach the apex of powers by concentrating their thought on their navel, or by standing on one leg, are practicing exercises which serve no other purpose than to strengthen the will-power, which is sometimes applied to the basest purposes. These are examples of this one-sided and dwarfed development. It is no use to fast *as long as you require food*. The ceasing of desire for food without impairment of health is the sign which indicates that it should be taken in lesser and ever decreasing quantities until the extreme limit compatible with life is reached. A stage will be finally attained where only water will be required.

Nor is it of any use for this particular purpose of longevity to abstain from immorality so long as you are craving for it in your heart; and so on with all other unsatisfied inward cravings. To get rid of the inward desire is the essential thing, and to mimic the real thing without it is barefaced hypocrisy and useless slavery.

So it must be with the moral purification of the heart. The “basest” inclinations must go first — then the others. First avarice, then fear, then envy, worldly pride, uncharitableness, hatred; last of all ambition and curiosity must be abandoned successively. The strengthening of the more ethe-

real and so-called “spiritual” parts of the man must go on at the same time.

Reasoning from the known to the unknown, meditation must be practiced and encouraged. Meditation is the inexpressible yearning of the inner Man to “go out towards the infinite,” which in the olden time was the real meaning of adoration, but which has now no synonym in the European languages, because the thing no longer exists in the West, and its name has been vulgarized to the make-believe shams known as prayer, glorification, and repentance. Through all stages of training the equilibrium of the consciousness — the assurance that all *must* be right in the Kosmos, and therefore with *you* a portion of it — must be retained. The process of life must not be hurried but retarded, if possible; to do otherwise may do good to others — perhaps even to yourself in other spheres, but it will hasten your dissolution in this.

Nor must the externals be neglected in this first stage. Remember that an adept, though “existing” so as to convey to ordinary minds the idea of his being immortal, is not also invulnerable to agencies from without. The training to prolong life does not, in itself, secure one from accidents. As for as any physical preparation goes, the sword may cut, the disease enter, the poison disarrange. This case is very clearly and beautifully put in “Zanoni,” and it is correctly put and must be so, unless “adeptism” is a baseless lie. The adept may be more secure from ordinary dangers than the common mortal, but he is so by virtue of the superior knowledge, calmness, coolness and penetration which his lengthened existence and its necessary concomitants have enabled him to acquire; not by virtue of any preservative power in the process itself. He is secure as a man armed with a rifle is more secure than a naked baboon; not secure in the sense in which the deva (god) was supposed to be securer than a man.

If this is so in the case of the high adept, how much more necessary is it that the neophyte should be not only protected but that he himself should use all possible means to ensure for himself the necessary duration of life to complete the process of mastering the phenomena we call death! It may be said, why do not the higher adepts protect him? Perhaps they do to some extent, but the child must learn to walk alone; to make him independent of his own efforts in respect to safety, would be destroying one element necessary to his development — the sense of responsibility. What courage or conduct would be called for in a man sent to fight when armed with irresistible weapons and clothed in impenetrable armour? Hence the neophyte should endeavour, as far as possible, to fulfil every true canon of sanitary law as laid down by modern scientists. Pure air, pure water, pure food, gentle exercise, regular hours, pleasant occupations and surroundings, are all, if not indispensable, at least serviceable to his progress. It is to secure these, at least as much as silence and solitude, that the Gods, Sages, Occultists of all ages have retired as much as possible to the quiet of the country, the cool cave, the depths of the forest, the expanse of the desert, or the heights of the mountains. Is it not suggestive that the Gods have always loved the high places¹; and that in the present day the highest section of the Occult Brotherhood on earth inhabits the highest mountain plateaux of the earth.¹

Nor must the beginner disdain the assistance of medicine and good medical regimen. He is still an ordinary mortal, and he requires the aid of an ordinary mortal.

¹ The stern prohibition to the Jews to serve “their gods upon the high mountains and upon the hills” is traced back to the unwillingness of their ancient elders to allow people in most cases unfit for adeptship to choose a life of celibacy and asceticism, or in other words, to pursue adeptship. This prohibition had an esoteric meaning before it became the prohibition, incomprehensible in its deadletter sense: for it is not India alone whose sons accorded divine honours to the WISE Ones, but all nations regarded their adepts and initiates as divine. — G.M.

“Suppose, however, all the conditions required, or which will be understood as required (for the details and varieties of treatment requisite, are too numerous to be detailed here), are fulfilled, what is the next step?” the reader will ask. Well if there have been no backslidings or remissness in the procedure indicated, the following physical results will follow: —

First the neophyte will take more pleasure in things spiritual and pure. Gradually gross and material occupations will become not only uncraved for or forbidden, but simply and literally repulsive to him. He will take more pleasure in the simple sensations of Nature — the sort of feeling one can remember to have experienced as a child. He will feel more light-hearted, confident, happy. Let him take care the sensation of renewed youth does not mislead, or he will risk a fall into his old baser life and even lower depths. “Action and Re-action are equal.”

Now the desire for food will begin to cease. Let it be left off gradually — no fasting is required. Take what you feel you require. The food craved for will be the most innocent and simple. Fruit and milk will usually be the best. Then as till now, you have been simplifying the quality of your food, gradually — very gradually — as you feel capable of it diminish the quantity. No, but before you mock, consider the character of the process alluded to. It is a notorious fact that many of the lowest and simplest organisms have no excretions. The common guinea-worm is a very good instance. It has rather a complicated organism, but it has no ejaculatory duct. All it consumes — the poorest essences of the human body — is applied to its growth and propagation. Living as it does in human tissue, it passes no digested food away. The human neophyte, at a certain stage of his development, is in a somewhat analogous condition, with this difference or differences, that he *does* excrete, but it is through the pores of his skin, and by those too enter other etherealized particles of

matter to contribute towards his support.¹ Otherwise, all the food and drink is sufficient only to keep in equilibrium those “gross” parts of his physical body which still remain to repair their cuticle-waste through the medium of the blood. Later on, the process of cell-development in his frame will undergo a change; a change for the better, the opposite of that in disease for the worse — he will become *all* living and sensitive, and will derive nourishment from the Ether (Akas). But that epoch for our neophyte is yet far distant.

Probably, long before that period has arrived, other results, no less surprising than incredible to the uninitiated will have ensued to give our neophyte courage and consolation in his difficult task. It would be but a truism to repeat what has been alleged (in ignorance of its real *rationale*) by hundreds and hundreds of writers as to the happiness and content conferred by a life of innocence and purity. But often at the very commencement of the process some real physical result, unexpected and unthought of by the neophyte occurs. Some lingering disease, hitherto deemed hopeless, may take a favourable turn; or he may develop healing mesmeric powers himself; or some hitherto unknown sharpening of his senses may delight him. The rationale of these things is, as we have said, neither miraculous nor difficult of comprehension. In the first place, the sudden change in the direction of the vital energy (which, whatever view we take of it and its origin, is acknowledged by all schools of philosophy as most recondite, and as the motive power) must produce results of some kind. In the second, Theosophy shows, as we said before, that a man consists of several men pervading each other, and on this view (although it is very difficult to express the idea in language) it is but natural that the progressive etherealization of the densest and most gross of all should leave the others literally more at liberty. A troop of horses may be blocked

¹ He is in a state similar to the physical state of a foetus before birth into the world. — G.M.

by a mob and have much difficulty in fighting its way through; but if every one of the mob could be changed suddenly into a ghost, there would be little to retard it. And as each interior entity is more rare, active, and volatile than the outer and as each has relation with different elements, spaces, and properties of the Kosmos which are treated of in other articles on Occultism, the mind of the reader may conceive — though the pen of the writer could not express it in a dozen volumes — the magnificent possibilities gradually unfolded to the neophyte.

Many of the opportunities thus suggested may be taken advantage of by the neophyte for his own safety, amusement, and the good of those around him; *but the way in which* he does this is one adapted to his fitness — a part of the ordeal he has to pass through, and misuse of these powers will certainly entail the loss of them as a natural result. The *Itchcha* (or desire) evoked anew by the vistas they open up will retard or throw back his progress.

But there is another portion of the Great Secret to which we must allude, and which is *now*, for the first, in a long series of ages, allowed to be given out to the world, as the hour for it is come.

The educated reader need not be reminded again that one of the great discoveries which has immortalized the name of Darwin is the law that an organism has always a tendency to repeat, at an analogous period in its life, the action of its progenitors, the more surely and completely in proportion to their proximity in the scale of life. One result of this is, that, in general, organized beings usually die at a period (on an average) the same as; that of their progenitors. It is true that there is a great difference between the *actual* ages at which individuals of any species die. Disease, accidents and famine are the main agents in causing this. But there is, in each species, a well-known limit within which the Race-life lies, and none are known to survive beyond

it. This applies to the human species as well as any other. Now, supposing that every possible sanitary condition had been complied with, and every accident and disease avoided by a man of ordinary frame, in some particular case there would still, as is known to medical men, come a time when the particles of the body would feel the hereditary tendency to do that which leads inevitably to dissolution, *and would obey it*. It must be obvious to any reflecting man that, if by *any procedure* this critical climacteric could be once thoroughly passed over, the subsequent danger of “Death” would be proportionally less as the years progressed. Now this, which no ordinary and unprepared mind and body can do, is possible sometimes for the will and the frame of one who has been specially prepared. There are fewer of the grosser particles present to feel the hereditary bias — there is the assistance of the reinforced “interior men” (whose normal duration is always greater even in natural death) to the visible outer shell, and there is the drilled and indomitable Will to direct and wield the whole.¹

From that time forward the course of aspirant is clearer. He has conquered “the Dweller of the Threshold” — the hereditary enemy of his race, and, though still exposed to ever-new dangers in his progress towards Nirvana, he is flushed with victory, and with new confidence and new powers to second it, can press onwards to perfection.

¹ In this connection we may as well show what modern science, and especially *physiology*, has to say as to the power of the human will. “The force of will is a potent element in determining longevity. This single point must be granted without argument, that of two men every way alike and similarly circumstanced, the one who has the greater courage and grit will be longer-lived. One does not need to practise medicine long to learn that men die who might just as well live if they resolved to live, and that myriads who are invalids could become strong if they had the native or acquired will to vow they would do so. Those who have no other quality favourable to life, whose bodily organs are nearly all diseased, to whom each day is a day of pain, who are beset by life-shortening influences, yet do live by will alone.” — *Dr. George M. Beard*.

For, it must be remembered, that nature everywhere acts by Law, and that the process of purification we have been describing in the visible material body, also takes place in those which are interior, and not visible to the scientist by modifications of the same process. All is on the change, and the metamorphoses of the more ethereal bodies imitate, though in successively multiplied duration, the career of the grosser, gaining an increasing wider range of relations with the surrounding kosmos, till in Nirvana the most rarefied Individuality is merged at last into the INFINITE TOTALITY.

From the above description of the process, it will be inferred why it is that "Adepts" are so seldom seen in ordinary life; for, *pari passu*, with the etherealization of their bodies and the development of their power, grows an increasing distaste, and a so-to-speak, "contempt" for the things of our ordinary mundane existence. Like the fugitive who successively casts away in his flight those articles which incommode his progress, beginning with the heaviest, so the aspirant eluding "Death" abandons all on which the latter can take hold. In the progress of Negation everything rot rid of is a help. As we said before, the adept does not become "immortal" as the word is ordinarily understood. By or about the time when the Death-limit of his race is passed he is *actually dead*, in the ordinary sense, that is to say, he has relieved himself of all or nearly all such material particles as would have necessitated in disruption the agony of dying. He has been dying gradually during the whole period of his Initiation. The catastrophe cannot happen twice over. He has only spread over a number of years the mild process of dissolution which others endure from a brief moment to a few hours. The highest Adept is, in fact, dead to, and absolutely unconscious of, the world; he is oblivious of its pleasures, careless of its miseries, in so far as sentimentalism goes, for the stern sense of DUTY never leaves him blind to its very existence. For the new ethereal senses opening to wider spheres are

to ours much in the relation of ours to the Infinitely Little. New desires and enjoyments, new dangers and new hindrances arise, with new sensations and new perceptions; and far away down in the mist — both literally and metaphorically — is our dirty little earth left below by those who have virtually "gone to join the gods."

And from this account too, it will be perceptible how foolish it is for people to ask the Theosophists to "procure for them communication with the highest Adepts." It is with the utmost difficulty that one or two can be induced, even by the throes of a world, to injure their own progress by meddling with mundane affairs. The ordinary reader will say: "This is not *god-like*. This is the acme of selfishness." But let him realize that a very high Adept, undertaking to reform the world, would necessarily have to once more submit to Incarnation. And is the result of all that have gone before in that line sufficiently encouraging to prompt a renewal of the attempt?

A deep consideration of all that we have written, will also give the Theosophists an idea of what they demand when they ask to be put in the way of gaining practically "higher powers." Well, there, as plainly as words can put it, is the PATH. . . . Can they tread it?

Nor must it be disguised that what to the ordinary mortal are unexpected dangers, temptations and enemies also beset the way of the neophyte. And that for no fanciful cause, but the simple reason that he is, in fact, acquiring new senses, has yet no practice in their use, and *has* never before seen the things he sees. A man born blind suddenly endowed with vision would not at once master the meaning of perspective, but would, like a baby, imagine in one case, the moon to be within his reach, and, in the other, grasp a live coal with the most reckless confidence.

And what, it may be asked, is to recompense this abnegation of all the pleasures of life, this cold surrender of all mundane interests, this stretching forward to an unknown goal which seems ever more unattainable? For, unlike some of the anthropomorphic creeds, Occultism offers to its votaries no eternally permanent heaven of material pleasure, to be gained at once by one quick dash through the grave. As has, in fact, often been the case many would be prepared willingly to die *now* for the sake of the paradise hereafter. But Occultism gives no such prospect of cheaply and immediately gained infinitude of pleasure, wisdom and existence. It only promises extensions of these, stretching in successive arches obscured by successive veils, in an unbroken series up the long vista which leads to NIRVANA. And this too, qualified by the necessity that powers entail new responsibilities, and that the capacity of increased pleasure entails the capacity of increased sensibility to pain. To this, the only "answer that can be given is two-fold:

(1st) the consciousness of Power is itself the most exquisite of pleasures, and is unceasingly gratified in progress onwards with new means for its exercise and

(2ndly) as has been already said — THIS is the only road by which there is the faintest scientific likelihood that "Death" can be avoided, perpetual memory secured, infinite wisdom attained, hence an immense helping of mankind made possible, once that the adept has safely crossed turning-point.

Physical as well as metaphysical logic requires and endorses the fact that only by gradual absorption into infinity can the Part become acquainted with the Whole, and that that which is *now something* can only feel, know, and enjoy EVERYTHING when lost in Absolute Totality in the vortex of that *Unalterable Circle* wherein our Knowledge becomes Ignorance, and the Everything itself is identified with the NOTHING.

CORRESPONDENCE

We Are the People

by Kim Antieau

A woman from another country recently wrote to me after reading one of my essays and said that all Americans were ignorant narcissistic war mongers. I disagreed with her. Then I watched the 9/11 commission hearings and interviews with the commissioners, and I was repulsed by what I heard. Republicans and Democrats were asking, "Why didn't we retaliate sooner? Why didn't we kill sooner?" instead of, "Why did this happen? What can we do to promote peace?"

As the war in Iraq escalates, no one in power is talking about peace. At the same time, the Bush Administration is systematically eroding women's reproductive rights with barely a peep of protest from the American populace. No one seems to notice that the current administration is dismantling laws that protect us and the environment — at least no one in the mainstream media. I started wondering if my letter writer was right? Are we a country of ignorant narcissistic war mongers?

Dennis J. Kucinich, one of the two remaining Democratic presidential candidates, talks about peace, the environment, and women's rights every day, even though the mainstream press doesn't cover him. When I heard he was coming to the Columbia River Gorge where I lived, I offered to help organize the event. I wanted to help create a venue where my neighbors could hear someone in politics speak about the issues we cared about.

Kucinich asked to meet peace activists before the event, so I spent Sunday evening calling local activists and inviting them to a potluck. Monday evening around 5:00 p.m. I went to a private home in Hood River, Oregon where I heartened to see most of the people I had called the night before stream into the house, carrying plates, bowls, pots filled with a variety of vegan dishes.

Not long after we arrived, Dennis Kucinich strode into the room. I happened to be standing in the middle of this room, alone, so he shook my hand first. In person, Dennis Kucinich has presence -- something which is not apparent on television. When he firmly shook my hand, he looked into my eyes. He did this with everyone. When he talked with us, he was *there* with us; he wasn't sliding away or looking for someone

more important. I told him we had plenty of delicious food for him. Earlier in the day someone from the campaign office had asked me to pick up a dozen Clif bars for him. (Chocolate was all right but no raisins.) I told Kucinich we "even have some Clif bars for you." He smiled and said, "Then I guess I'm all set. Let's go."

A group of forty of us, children and adults, began eating together. When someone in the media actually talks about Dennis J. Kucinich, they nearly always mention that he is a vegan. "Vegan Democratic presidential candidate Congressman Dennis J. Kucinich..." Every other person in the Pacific Northwest is vegetarian, vegan, lactose-intolerant, allergic to grains, off carbs, or something. Everyone does their own thing, eating wise, so we don't understand why the media keeps pointing to Kucinich's dietary preferences. Why not then also say, "Carnivore President George Bush..."? In any case, I got a kick out of breaking bread with Dennis J. Kucinich, even though neither of us actually ate bread.

While we finished eating, Kucinich talked with us about the reasons he was still running. He spoke passionately, without notes. He warned that the war in Iraq could get bloodier. He said, "We don't want to exchange a Republican war for a Democratic war."

After dinner, all of us gathered with 200 hundred plus more people in the Grand Ballroom of a local hotel. Kucinich stepped onto the stage and told us he knew he was not going to get the nomination. "I can count," he said. "And I can figure..." A lot of attention was focused on Oregon right now, he said; if he could get delegates, he could influence the national Democratic platform. He said no one in D.C. was talking about peace. We're back to "bring 'em on," he said. "We all know where that leads." So far the war in Iraq had cost \$200 billion, he said, and over 600 U.S. soldiers and 10,000 Iraqis were dead.

It was time, Kucinich said, for the abolition of all nuclear weapons, including those in this country. It was "time for the United States to join the rest of the world." He talked about creating a Department of Peace--the very notion of a Peace Department made most politicians extremely uncomfortable. Like many of us, he couldn't believe the direction our country was taking. Our destiny as a nation should be to achieve peace and sustainability. We needed a "reconciliation with nature." We needed to create a world "where peace is inevitable, where the human heart dwarfs war." He quoted Tennyson: "Tis not too late to seek a newer world."

If government was not responsive to the people and people stopped being involved, Kucinich said, then Lincoln's prayer for a "government of the people, by the people and for the people" becomes meaningless.

"We are the people we are waiting for," he said.

We roared our approval. I wondered if all this enthusiasm and energy would go anywhere: was anyone in power going to listen to Kucinich? To us? Could any of us actually make a difference?

Were the people in this room out of step with the rest of the nation? Or was the rest of the nation out of step with us? Or were the media outlets just not talking to or about people like us? They certainly had not covered the peace movement adequately, and the world seemed to believe the U.S. was filled with people who only wanted war. Were they right?

I looked around the room. I knew many of the people here. There was Paul; he was organizing a march for women's reproductive rights on April 25. Theresa helped organize this event tonight, plus she was on the steering committee of the peace group. Linda set up counter recruitment tables at her son's high school whenever the military showed up. Elena was a member of the public library board and struggled to protect patrons' intellectual freedoms. Another Paul was a liberal congressman who introduced Kucinich tonight. Barbara and another Linda tried to get the county to stop using pesticides. Scot was working with other community members to create a local currency. Ubaldo was helping start up a local multicultural radio station.

All over the country, groups of people just like us were working for peace, the environment, women's rights, and children's health and safety, too. I knew that, even if I never heard it on the nightly news. I needed to remember that fact and this night whenever I started to believe it was useless to keep trying.

"We are the people we are waiting for," Kucinich said.

I hoped he was right.

[Kim Antieau is a writer and a peace and environmental activist. Her latest novel, 'Coyote Cowgirl', is now out in trade paperback. Her weblog is at: <http://www.furiousspinner.com> Her website is at: <http://www.kimantieau.com>]

*<http://www.commondreams.org/views04/0408-13.htm>
Thursday, April 8, 2004 by
www.CommonDreams.org*

WORDINGS

Words are things
that learning brings,
words make rings
of karmic springs.

Words are jewels
that smooth and shape,
words are tools
that cut and scrape.

Words are fiends
that rip and rape,
words are friends
that soothe and drape.

Put together
in sentences,
words reflect
our mentences.

sent out on
the wings of thought,
words return
what we have wrought.

so, be careful
what we say,
for karma always
wins the day,

and we pay.



FOHAT, THE LOGOI, & SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

Fohat is a generic term and used in many senses. He is the light (Daiviprakriti) of all the three logoi — the personified symbols of the three spiritual stages of Evolution. Fohat is the aggregate of all the spiritual creative ideations above, and of all the electro-dynamic and creative forces below, in Heaven and on Earth. There seems to be great confusion and misunderstanding concerning the First and Second Logos. The first is the already present yet still

unmanifested potentiality in the bosom of Father-Mother; the Second is the abstract collectivity of creators called by the Greeks "Demiurgi" or the Builders of the Universe. The third logos is the ultimate differentiation of the Second and the individualization of Cosmic Forces, of which Fohat is the chief; for Fohat is the synthesis of the Seven Creative Rays or Dhyān Chohans which proceed from the third Logos. (*Transactions*, p. 37)

Humanely we are the three logoi ourselves and learn about these three STAGES via our Higher Ego — our ambassador of the HIGHER SELF:

Man is certainly *no* special creation, and he is the product of Nature's gradual perfective work, like any other living unit on this Earth. But this is only with regard to the human tabernacle. That which lives and thinks in man and survives that frame, the masterpiece of evolution — is the "Eternal Pilgrim," the Protean differentiation in space and time of the One Absolute "unknowable." (SDII, 728)

In street language you could say:

First Logos is the clear blue sky
Second Logos is the cloud that forms in that sky
Third Logos is the rain that falls from that cloud



MID-LIFE / GENUINE-LIFE

The following is a student's reflection upon that time in men and women's lives known variously as: mid-life, middle aged, senior, and most poignantly as mid-life crises. I am sure that there are other ways to which this period is referred and I've not chosen these out of preference, because, frankly, I think that they are all poorly illustrative of the possible depth inherent to being at the mid point of a given life.

Imagine this scenario, if you will.

One lives approximately half of the life of which one is allotted by nature, by either one's own nature, or nature in general, which ever seems appropriate. Having reached the age of 45-50, one becomes afflicted by a decrease in energy, soreness in

ones musculature where it hardly occurred before, knee problems, or the kind of fatigue thought only treatable, years ago, by Geritol. Also, the death rate of associates obviously increases along with an increase in such difficulties as strokes, heart attacks and diabetes in one's relations, and perhaps to oneself. All of this is pretty serious business and has the habit of leaving a differing degree of depression in its wake. To add to this, and since misery does seem to love company, and since we are generally surrounded by those of a similar age, there is a tendency to have a growing sense of fear, often reinforced by our friends and family. The effect of this might be seen as a seminar whose mission is to prove that company loves misery. Why? Perhaps it is because all of the symptoms mentioned earlier obviously do happen and life seems to have taken a general turn for the worse.

I know that many, upon nearing retirement age, are actually looking forward to this period to be free of child rearing and daily work, but the period has a weight of circumstance just "waiting around the corner" and it has a way of ruining the hope we had. Ok, however depressing and seemingly unavoidable it is, that's the scenario.

So, having presented all of this, and if this is what most people experience, (and we think normal human experience makes it verifiable), where is this going? Well, a number of questions may be raised. Such as; is what has been outlined, ever unavoidable? Why does it seem that we are so susceptible to this kind of a situation?

Actually the term "susceptible" is quite accurate here, because it would seem that those who do experience any of the above have left themselves "open" as one may who gets a cold having neglected particular precautions. But, this notion of susceptibility also raises its own questions. For instance, if one can be receptive in an automatic way, such that one falls into a particular mode of thinking and has no choice but to experience the consequent

actions, can something be done to open ones eye, as it were, so that one has a choice in these situations? Will such an eye opening be so powerful such that in its observance, one would be left altered so positively as to remove ones susceptibility to the previous ways? Can this happen overnight, as it were, or what should we have done in the past to assist the change in the present?

Let me, then, present another scenario.

Imagine that one has seen through what had been previously described as a basic fact of life; the mid-life crisis. This initial eye opening experience is the absolute realization that we really have lived many lives previous to this one, rather than the commonly (in the West anyway) accepted notion that one life is all that there is. In doing so, what has occurred to one, and was most powerfully motivating, is the idea that cycles of all sizes are a common facet of life and to exclude human life from them is foolish. Our susceptibility to the one life notion can probably be blamed mostly on our short sightedness, and confusion over the meaning of whatever religion one was raised in.

Now, what may "lengthen" our short sightedness is a perspective on time which is not bound by our normal, or most accepted sense of it. And this view is based in what has become evident to one as centered around the startling concept, that more than one life implies the need to understand, not only that which returns, but that which continues or that there is that in all of us which does not die when the body does. That is, a pure individuality, unbound to a body except for relatively short periods, however long they once seemed, and, which is deathless by its nature. This sense of soul is a definite thing in the sense of that which actually exists, although it is far more subtle than any of our worldly perceptions. Therefore, the initial perception of it was one brought about through a reasoning mostly motivated by classical texts, whose reason for existence is the freedom of mind one experiences after having digested them. Although

a severe trauma may have set one's world rocking enough to shake up what one thought was standard, this is generally not enough to sustain a useful period of introspection, or a period of study. However, if one is moved to look into life a little further, or has friends who present one with a classic text or two one may find the following. In *The Bhagavad Gita*, one reads an astoundingly refreshing idea. That, that which lives must die, and that which dies must be born again. This, along with a very powerfully convincing series of essays on the true meaning of our duty as human beings, are most enervating. *Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms*, more or less, ignores the life of the personal mind as it attends a body. It is in favor of the life of the mind, as the entity one actually is. This mind which needs to gain an objectivity such that it can garner wisdom through meditation, is not possible through the accepted senses. One learns that this sense of meditation is enabled by the inhibition of the changes in the every day mind. A practice, which can bring marvelous results, but not necessarily to the suffering or overly needy mind, which needs to be cooled in the "waters" of selflessness. What it seems to do is lead one away from, what we have called the personal mind and its suffering (or even successes) to the light of that mind called Manas (Sanskrit), or Mind per se. A sense of self not afflicted by ups or downs of any kind, and, which has the wonderful habit of focusing on essentials, or truly causal concepts as apposed to merely ideas arrived at by argument or memorization.

I think it makes sense to think that the earlier an individual begins this kind of search for clarity, the better. For, the sooner one takes on the rather formidable task of re-educating that sense of mind which is the culprit, regarding susceptibility to the worldly attitude, which is so troublesome at mid-life, the sooner one will gain a foothold on that slippery mountain of personal addictions inherent to the personal, or selfish mind.

What if, therefore, the essential early years of a life, perhaps the first 30-50, are really produced through our addiction to previous inclinations, rather than to well chosen ideas. These previous inclinations are produced variously, but our point is, they are mostly what motivated our previous life and are strong enough by now to lead us "by the nose" in this one. These drives can be either positive or negative in terms of their being troublesome to us or in fact creative of a useful life. Therefore, their drive will run out if we allow it since they are self powered, but their energy is limited unless fed by our attention to them. Two possibilities, at least, present themselves at the point where the natural impetus of these inclinations begins to wane. Now, this is not always clearly perceptible, but for our purposes let us say that one is quite aware of the situation having had some of the awakenings just mentioned. One is about 50 years of age and it is clear that all of the above (in the early paragraphs) troubles are occurring. If one is armed with the information of what might be happening, and one is daring enough to apply what can, at minimum, be seen as far more interesting than the old ways, something very interesting could happen.

It may occur to one that one hadn't yet lived this life, if it is true that one has been only living by proxy to what has been leading us on, and not really chosen. The impact of this may be powerful enough to awaken a sense of responsibility for oneself to look into what it means to consciously live a life. One may realize that self-flagellation over not doing this sooner is replaced by the exciting task at hand. Ignorance has become simply the veil over that which will become realized in time. We could begin to really live at last, and in so doing, set up a much less oppressive future for the remainder of this life, and, rather than bequeathing our unexamined inclinations to our own future, we will meet our true selves far earlier because of a genuine exertion to live a genuine life. Not only would this be the death of our

susceptibility to the mid-life crisis, but at the middle of a life, one could be finally born.

STEVEN LEVEY
Dublin, Georgia



THE STONE-COLD MOTHER

Though for the Pantheists and Occultists, as much as for the Pessimists, Nature is no better than “a comely mother, but stone cold” — this is true only so far as regards external physical nature. They both agree that, to the superficial observer, she is no better than an immense slaughter-house wherein butchers become victims, and victims executioners in their turn. It is quite natural that the pessimistically inclined profane, once convinced of Nature’s numerous shortcomings and failures, and especially of her autophagous propensities, should imagine this to be the best evidence that there is no deity in abscondito within Nature, nor anything divine in her. Nor is it less natural that the materialist and the physicist should imagine that everything is due to blind force and chance, and to the survival of the strongest even more often than of the fittest. But the Occultists, who regard physical nature as a bundle of most varied illusions on the plane of deceptive perceptions; who recognise in every pain and suffering but the necessary pangs of incessant procreation: a series of stages toward an ever-growing perfectibility, which is visible in the silent influence of never-erring Karma, or abstract nature — the Occultists, we say, view the great Mother otherwise. Woe to those who live without suffering. Stagnation and death is the future of all that vegetates without a change. And how can there be any change for the better without proportionate suffering during the preceding stage? (SDII 475)



SPIRIT & MATTER

Primary Creation is called the *Creation of Light* (Spirit); and the *Secondary* — that of Darkness (matter). Both are found in *Genesis*, chap. i., v. 2, and at the beginning of chapter ii. The first is the emanation of *self-born* gods (Elohim); the second of physical nature. (SDI, 450)



THE MONK IN THE LAB

BY TENZIN GYATSO

Dharamsala, India

April 26, 2003

These are times when destructive emotions like anger, fear and hatred are giving rise to devastating problems throughout the world. While the daily news offers grim reminders of the destructive power of such emotions, the question we must ask is this: What can we do, person by person, to overcome them?

Of course such disturbing emotions have always been part of the human condition. Some - those who tend to believe nothing will “cure” our impulses to hate or oppress one another - might say that this is simply the price of being human. But this view can create apathy in the face of destructive emotions, leading us to conclude that destructiveness is beyond our control.

I believe that there are practical ways for us as individuals to curb our dangerous impulses - impulses that collectively can lead to war and mass violence. As evidence I have not only my spiritual practice and the understanding of human existence based on Buddhist teachings, but now also the work of scientists.

For the last 15 years I have engaged in a series of conversations with Western scientists. We have exchanged views on topics ranging from quantum physics and cosmology to compassion and destructive emotions. I have found that while scientific findings offer a deeper understanding of such fields

as cosmology, it seems that Buddhist explanations - particularly in the cognitive, biological and brain sciences - can sometimes give Western-trained scientists a new way to look at their own fields.

It may seem odd that a religious leader is so involved with science, but Buddhist teachings stress the importance of understanding reality, and so we should pay attention to what scientists have learned about our world through experimentation and measurement.

Similarly, Buddhists have a 2,500-year history of investigating the workings of the mind. Over the millenniums, many practitioners have carried out what we might call "experiments" in how to overcome our tendencies toward destructive emotions.

I have been encouraging scientists to examine advanced Tibetan spiritual practitioners, to see what benefits these practices might have for others, outside the religious context. The goal here is to increase our understanding of the world of the mind, of consciousness, and of our emotions.

It is for this reason that I visited the neuroscience laboratory of Dr. Richard Davidson at the University of Wisconsin. Using imaging devices that show what occurs in the brain during meditation, Dr. Davidson has been able to study the effects of Buddhist practices for cultivating compassion, equanimity or mindfulness. For centuries Buddhists have believed that pursuing such practices seems to make people calmer, happier and more loving. At the same time they are less and less prone to destructive emotions.

According to Dr. Davidson, there is now science to underscore this belief.

Dr. Davidson tells me that the emergence of positive emotions may be due to this: Mindfulness meditation strengthens the neurological circuits that calm a part of the brain that acts as a trigger for fear and anger. This raises the possibility that we have a

way to create a kind of buffer between the brain's violent impulses and our actions.

Experiments have already been carried out that show some practitioners can achieve a state of inner peace, even when facing extremely disturbing circumstances. Dr. Paul Ekman of the University of California at San Francisco told me that jarring noises (one as loud as a gunshot) failed to startle the Buddhist monk he was testing. Dr. Ekman said he had never seen anyone stay so calm in the presence of such a disturbance.

Another monk, the abbot of one of our monasteries in India, was tested by Dr. Davidson using electroencephalographs to measure brain waves.

According to Dr. Davidson, the abbot had the highest amount of activity in the brain centers associated with positive emotions that had ever been measured by his laboratory.

Of course, the benefits of these practices are not just for monks who spend months at a time in meditation retreat. Dr. Davidson told me about his research with people working in highly stressful jobs. These people — non-Buddhists — were taught mindfulness, a state of alertness in which the mind does not get caught up in thoughts or sensations, but lets them come and go, much like watching a river flow by. After eight weeks, Dr. Davidson found that in these people, the parts of their brains that help to form positive emotions became increasingly active.

The implications of all this are clear: the world today needs citizens and leaders who can work toward ensuring stability and engage in dialogue with the "enemy" - no matter what kind of aggression or assault they may have endured.

It's worth noting that these methods are not just useful, but inexpensive.

You don't need a drug or an injection. You don't have to become a Buddhist, or adopt any particular religious faith. Every-

body has the potential to lead a peaceful, meaningful life. We must explore as far as we can how that can be brought about.

I try to put these methods into effect in my own life. When I hear bad news, especially the tragic stories I often hear from my fellow Tibetans, naturally my own response is sadness. However, by placing it in context, I find I can cope reasonably well. And feelings of helpless anger, which simply poison the mind and embitter the heart, seldom arise, even following the worst news.

But reflection shows that in our lives much of our suffering is caused not by external causes but by such internal events as the arising of disturbing emotions. The best antidote to this disruption is enhancing our ability to handle these emotions.

If humanity is to survive, happiness and inner balance are crucial.

Otherwise the lives of our children and their children are more likely to be unhappy, desperate and short. Material development certainly contributes to happiness - to some extent - and a comfortable way of life. But this is not sufficient. To achieve a deeper level of happiness we cannot neglect our inner development.

The calamity of 9/11 demonstrated that modern technology and human intelligence guided by hatred can lead to immense destruction. Such terrible acts are a violent symptom of an afflicted mental state. To respond wisely and effectively, we need to be guided by more healthy states of mind, not just to avoid feeding the flames of hatred, but to respond skillfully. We would do well to remember that the war against hatred and terror can be waged on this, the internal front, too.

[Tenzin Gyatso is the 14th Dalai Lama.
From the New York Times]

Phallicism versus Space, Relationship versus Unity

The river dammed during the Middle Ages ... has now burst up as an irrepressible torrent. Hundreds today study the Kabbalah, where scarcely one or two could have been found some fifty years ago, when fear of the Church was still a powerful factor in men's lives. But the long-pent-up torrent has now diverged into two streams — Eastern Occultism and the Jewish Kabbalah; the traditions of the Wisdom-Religion of the races that preceded the Adam of the "Fall"; and the system of the ancient Levites of Israel, who most ingeniously veiled a portion of that religion of the Pantheists under the mask of monotheism.

Unfortunately many are called but few chosen. The two systems threaten the world of the mystics with a speedy conflict, which, instead of increasing the spread of the One universal Truth, will necessarily only weaken and impede its progress. Yet, the question is not, once more, which is *the* one truth. For both are founded upon the eternal verities of prehistoric knowledge, as both, in the present age and the state of mental transition through which humanity is now passing, can give out only a certain portion of these verities. It is simply a question: "Which of the two systems contains most unadulterated facts: and, most important of all — which of the two presents its teachings in the most Catholic (*i.e.*, unsectarian) and impartial manner?" One — the Eastern system — has veiled for ages its profound pantheistic unitarianism with the exuberance of an exoteric polytheism; the other — as said above — with the screen of exoteric monotheism. Both are but masks to hide the sacred truth from the profane; for neither the Aryan nor the Semitic philosophers have ever accepted either the anthropomorphism of the many Gods, or the personality of the one God, as a philosophical proposition. But it is impossible within the limits we have at our disposal, to attempt to enter upon a minute discussion of this question.



We must be content with a simpler task. The rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law seem to be an abyss, which long generations of Christian Fathers, and especially of Protestant Reformers have vainly sought to fill in with their far-fetched interpretations. Yet all the early Christians, Paul and the Gnostics, regarded and proclaimed the Jewish law as essentially distinct from the new Christian law. St. Paul called the former an allegory, and St. Stephen told the Jews an hour before being stoned that they had not even kept the law that they had received from the angels (the aeons), and as to the Holy Ghost (the impersonal Logos or Christos, as taught at Initiation) they had resisted and rejected it as their fathers had done (*Acts*, vii). This was virtually telling them that their law was inferior to the later one. Notwithstanding that the Mosaic Books which we *think* we have in the *Old Testament*, cannot be more than two or three centuries older than Christianity, the Protestants have nevertheless made of them their Sacred Canon, on a par with, if not higher than, the Gospels. But when the *Pentateuch* was written, or rather *rewritten* after Ezdras, *i.e.*, after the Rabbis had settled upon a new departure, a number of additions were made which were taken bodily from Persian and Babylonian doctrines; and this *at a period subsequent to the colonization of Judea* under the authority of the kings of Persia. This re-editing was of course done in the same way as with all such Scriptures. They were originally written in a secret key, or cipher, known only to the Initiates. But instead of adapting the contents to the highest spiritual truths as taught in the *third*, the highest, degree of Initiation, and expressed in symbolical language — as may be seen even in the exoteric *Purânas* of India — the writers of the *Pentateuch*, revised and corrected, they who cared but for earthly and national glory, adapted only to astro-physiological symbols the supposed events of the Abrahams, Jacobs, and Solomons, and the fantastic history of their little race. Thus they produced, under the mask of monotheism, a religion of sexual and phallic worship, one that concealed an adoration of the Gods, or the lower aeons. No one would

maintain that anything like the dualism and the angelolatry of Persia, brought by the Jews from the captivity, could ever be found in the *real* Law, or Books of Moses. For how, in such case, could the Sadducees, who revered that law, reject angels, as well as the soul and its immortality? And yet angels, if not the soul's immortal nature, are distinctly asserted to exist in the *Old Testament*, and are found in the Jewish modern scrolls. ... This is just what the Gnostics had always maintained quite independently of Christians. In their doctrines the Jewish God, the "Elohim," was a hierarchy of low terrestrial angels — an *Ildabaoth*, spiteful and jealous. ...

Others, again, believe that no greater Kabalist was born among the sons of men than the late Éliphas Lévi — a charming and witty writer, who, however, has more mystified than taught in his many volumes on Magic. Let not the reader conclude from these statements that real, learned Kabalists are not to be found in the Old and New Worlds. There are initiated Occultists, who are Kabalists, scattered hither and thither, most undeniably, especially in Germany and Poland. But these *will not publish what they know*, nor will they call themselves Kabalists. The "Sodalian oath" of the third degree holds good now as ever.

But there are those who are pledged to no secrecy. Those writers are the only ones on whose information the Kabalists ought to rely, however incomplete their statements from the standpoint of a *full revelation*, *i.e.*, of the sevenfold Esoteric meaning. It is they who care least for those secrets after which alone the modern Hermetist and Kabalist is now hungering such as the transmutation into gold, and the Elixir of Life, or the Philosopher's Stone—for *physical purposes*. For all the chief secrets of the Occult teachings are concerned with the highest spiritual knowledge. They deal with mental states, not with physical processes and their transformations. In a word, the real, genuine Kabalah, the only original copy of which is contained in the Chaldean *Book of Numbers*,

pertains to, and teaches about, the realm of spirit, not that of matter. (Extracted from HPB's article, "Kabalâh and Kabalists")



FRAGMENTS FROM HPB

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AVATÂRAS

"The seven [regions]¹ of Bhûmi, hang by golden threads [beams or rays] from the Spiritual central Sun [or 'God']. Higher than all, a Watcher for each [region]. The Suras come down this [beam]. They cross the six and reach the Seventh [our earth]. They are our mother earth's [Bhûmi] supporters [or guardians]. The eighth watches over the [seven] watchers."

Suras are in the *Vedas* deities, or beings, connected with the Sun; in their occult meaning they are the seven chief watchers or guardians of our planetary system. They are positively identical with the "Seven Spirits of the Stars." The Suras are connected in practical Occultism with the Seven Yogic powers. One of these, Laghima(n) or "the faculty of assuming levity," is illustrated in a *Purâna* as rising and descending along a sunbeam to the solar orb with its mysteries; e.g., Khatvânga, in *Vishnu-Purâna* (Book IV, ch. iv). "It must be equally easy to the adept to travel a ray downwards," remarks Fitzedward Hall (p. 311). And why not, if the action is understood in its right and correct sense?

Eight great Gods are often reckoned, as there are eight points of the compass, four cardinal and four intermediate points over which preside also inferior Lokapâlas or the "doubles" of the greater Gods. Yet, in many instances where the number eight is given, it

is only a kind of exoteric shell. Every globe, however, is divided into seven regions, as $7 \times 7 = 49$ is the mystic number *par excellence*.

To make it clearer: in each of the seven Root-Races, and in every one of the seven regions into which the Occult Doctrine divides our globe, there appears from the dawn of Humanity the "Watcher" assigned to it in the eternity of the Aeon. He comes first in his own "form," then each time as an Avatâra.



ON CYCLES AND MODERN FALLACIES

... Cosmic life-times have begun at different epochs, and proceed at different rates of change. Some began so far back in eternity or have proceeded at so rapid a rate, that their careers are brought to a conclusion in the passing age. Some are even now awaking into existence; and it is probable that worlds are beginning and ending continually. Hence cosmic existence, like the kingdoms of organic life, presents a simultaneous panorama of a completed cycle of being. A taxonomic arrangement of the various grades of animal existence presents a succession of forms which we find repeated in the embryonic history of a single individual, and again in the succession of geological types; so the taxonomy of the heavens is both a cosmic embryology and a cosmic palaeontology.²

So much for cycles again in modern orthodox science. It was the knowledge of all these truths — scientifically demonstrated and made public now, but in those days of antiquity occult and known to Initiates alone — that led to the formation of various cycles into a regular system. The grand Manvantaric system was divided into other great cycles; and these in their turn into smaller cycles, regular wheels of time, in Eternity. Yet no one outside of the sacred precincts

¹ In every ancient cosmography the universe and the earth are divided into seven parts or regions.

² Alexander Winchell, *World Life: or, Comparative Geology*, pp. 538-39.

ever had the key to the correct reading and interpretation of cyclic notation, and therefore even the ancient classics disagreed on many points. Thus, Orpheus is said to have ascribed to the “Great” Cycle 120,000 years’ duration, and Cassandrus 136,000, according to Censorinus (*De Die Natali*, Chron. and Astron. Fragments). Analogy is the law, and is the surest guide in occult sciences, as it ought to be in the natural philosophy made public. ...

We must notice and try to explain some of these great and smaller cycles and their symbols. Let us begin with the cycle of Mahâyuga, personified by [®]esha — the great serpent called “the couch of Vishnu,” because that God is Time and Duration personified in the most philosophical and often poetical way.

It is said that Vishnu appears on it at the beginning of every Manvantara as “the Lord of Creation.” [®]esha is the great Serpent-Cycle, represented as swallowing its own tail — thence the emblem of Time within Eternity. Time, says Locke (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*) — Time is “duration set forth by measures,” and Śesha sets forth evolution by symbolizing its periodical stages. On him Vishnu sleeps during the intervals of rest (*pralayas*) between “creations”; the blue God — blue because he is space and the depth of infinity — awakens only when [®]esha bends his thousand heads, preparing to again bear up the universe which is supported on them. The *Vishnu-Purâna* describes him thus:

Below the seven Pâtâlas is the form of Vishnu, proceeding from the quality of darkness, which is called Śesha, the excellencies of which neither Daityas nor Dânavas can (fully) enumerate. This being is called Ananta [the infinite] by the spirits of heaven (Siddha) [Yoga Wisdom, sons of Dharma, or true religion], and is worshipped by sages and by gods. He has a thousand heads, which are embellished with the pure and visible mystic sign [Swastika]; and the thousand jewels in his crests

(*phana*) give light to all the regions In one hand he holds a plough,¹ and, in the other, a pestle From his mouths, at the end of the Kalpa, proceeds the venomed fire that, impersonated as Rudra [Śiva, the “destroyer”] devours the three worlds.²

Thence Śesha is the cycle of the great Manvantara, and also the spirit of vitality as of destruction, since Vishnu, as the preserving or conservative force, and Śiva as the destroying potency, are both aspects of Brahma. Śesha is said to have taught the sage Garga — one of the oldest astronomers in India ... — the secret sciences, the mysteries of the heavenly bodies, of astrology, astronomy and various omens. Śesha is so great and mighty, that it is more than likely he will some day, in far off future ages, render the same service to our modern astronomers. Nothing like “Time” and cyclic changes to cure sceptics of their blindness.



INITIATIONS

In a secret work upon the Mysteries and the rites of Initiation, in which very rough but correct prints are given of the sacramental postures, and of the trials to which the postulant was subjected, the following details are found:

- (1) The neophyte—representing the Sun, as “*Sahasrakirana*,” “he of the thousand rays”—is shown kneeling before the “Hierophant.” The latter is in the act of cutting off *seven locks* of the neophyte’s long hair,³ and in the following illustration,

¹ An emblem referring to the “ploughing” and sowing the renewed earth (in its new Round) with fresh seeds of life.

² H. H. Wilson, *Vishnu-Purâna*. Ed. by Fitzedward Hall; Book II, chap. v, p. 211.

³ See *Judges*, xvi, again, where Samson, the symbolical personification of the Sun, the Jewish Hercules, speaks of his *seven locks* which, when cut off, will deprive him of his (physical) strength,

- (2) The postulant's bright crown of golden beams is thrown off, and replaced by a wreath of sharp ligneous spines, symbolizing the loss.¹ This was enacted in India. In trans-Himâlayan regions it was the same.

In order to become a "perfect One," the Sakridâgâmin ("he who will receive new birth," *lit.*) had, among other trials, to descend into Pâtâla, the "nether world," after which process only he could hope to become an "Anâgâmin"—"one who will be reborn no more." The full Initiate had the option of either entering this second Path by appearing at will in the world of men under a human form, or he could choose to first rest in the world of Gods (the Devachan of the Initiates), and then only be reborn on this our earth. Thus, the next stage shows the postulant preparing for this journey.

- (3) Every kind of temptation—we have no right to enumerate these or speak of them—was being placed on his way. If he came out victorious over these, then the further Initiation was proceeded with; if he fell—it was delayed, often entirely lost for him.

These rites lasted seven days.



i.e., kill the material man, leaving only the spiritual. But the *Bible* fails to explain, or rather, conceals purposely, the esoteric truth, that the seven locks symbolize the septenary physical or terrestrial man, thus cut off and separated from the spiritual. To this day the High Lamas cut off during public consecrations a lock of the hair of the candidates for the religious life, repeating a formula to the effect that the six others will follow, when the "upâsaka" IS READY. The lock of hair or tonsure of the Roman Catholic priests is a relic of the same mystery-idea.

¹ No need of explaining that Sañjñâ — pure spiritual conscience — is the inner perception of the neophyte (or chela) and Initiate; the scorching of it by the too ardent beams of the Sun being symbolical of the terrestrial passions. Hence the seven locks are symbolical of the seven cardinal sins, and as to the seven cardinal virtues — to be gained by the Sakridâgâmin (the candidate "for new birth") they could be attained by him only through severe trial and suffering.

Dawn's Ray

With bright dawn's ray
The soul wrestles at the onset of day
So quieten and listen to the voice of
silence,

The voice where clamour'd roar is still
When golden light floods in and nature's
secrets spill'd.

Pure essences waft over senses sublime
And no earthly man knows
Of aught that flows
From heaven's wide breadth to stars
untold,

Through majestic heights, past pilgrim's
fold
There to reach to man, undreamt sights of
old -
It is said under blazing suns, naught new is
told.

Ageless secrets are oft repeated, and again
Till lessons are learnt and cycles framed;
Man suffers long whose memory is short,
The clock ticks time till the All's brought
forth.

So break the trap, rend garments of
illusion
Spare those suffering — end your shamed
collusion.

Be free from fate, and Live at last,
To help poor man reform his cast.

