

The Exile of the Soul by Roy Mitchell

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This work was published by the Blavatsky Institute as a memorial to Mr. Roy Mitchell who was the founder and guiding genius of the Institute.

FOREWORD

In *The Exile of the Soul*, students of occultism will discover a key to the mysteries of man's being and to the basic relationship of the individual to his fellows. Mr. Mitchell, during his years of research in ancient and modern religions and philosophies, came upon what he found to be the interlocking fragments of an ancient truth relating to man's constitution, origin and ultimate destiny. This truth he presented in *The Exile of the Soul* with all the vigour and directness of his unusual mind.

Roy Mitchell's work on this great subject was not finished at the time of sudden death in July 1944 at his summer home in the Berkshires, near Canaan, Connecticut, where he was enjoying a sabbatical year from his duties as Professor of Dramatic Art at New York University. He had planned several more chapters dealing with the application of this truth in other fields of human endeavour, but enough is here given to put into the hands of sincere students, a very valuable working guide.

Roy Mitchell never asked for belief; his attitude was, "Here is an ancient idea which works for me - it works in the realms of psychology, philosophy, religion, humanism, art, mathematics, mysticism - for it is the Ariadne's thread which I can follow - to me it has revealed a new and deeper understanding of all occult teachings and a richer awareness of the actuality of the Brotherhood of Man. Take it, use it and see if it does not work for you also".

This stimulating and evocative work reveals a portion only of Roy Mitchell's rare genius as a teacher. This found its finest expression in his group talks and in his work with individual students. He believed in humanity, believed with all his great heart and soul that hidden behind the masks of personalities, an infinitely finer and richer Self was concealed; he addressed himself to that Self in others - he evoked that Self. The ties of affectionate regard and respect which bound him and his many friends together were of that enduring nature which are established 'when deep calls unto deep'.

"Son, things of this kind are not taught, but are brought to remembrance by the God, when he pleaseth".
HERMES TRISMEGISTUS.

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THE BIOLOGICAL PROBLEM

Biology, ancient as well as modern, has taken count of three classes of phenomena. The first are the phenomena of the thinking soul. These are the noetic functions. The fact that modern biological writers call them psychic should deceive nobody. It only means that some writer looking in a lexicon for a Greek word for soul took the first word he found, "psyche", regardless of its suitability. If he had been a better thinker he would have kept on until he found the word "Nous" which means thinking or rational soul. Psyche means the animal or irrational soul. The second class of phenomena are those of animate nature. Just where animate nature ends and inanimate nature begins is still a matter of doubt to biologists. By animate they describe whatever lies between noetic and physicochemical phenomena. In the best terminology these functions would be called psychic. The biologist, a little off key as usual, calls them vital. Vital is a word that, as we shall see, has other connotations. It is however, the accepted name for a series of phenomena, and, in the form "vitalist", stands for a school of opinion, and I shall have to use it. The third class of phenomena are the physicochemical ones of so called inanimate nature.

Biologists, ancient and modern, are regimented according to the way in which they view these classes, the way in which they group them and the relative importance they assign to them.

Animists are those who give first importance to the intelligent soul but deny the separate existence of the psychic or vital functions. These latter they say are no more than lower, unconscious functions of the noetic power. Recognizing thus only soul and body they declare that the body is directly guided and controlled by the thinking soul. As a scientific theory of life animism is comparatively recent. Its great exponent was the German physiologist Stahl (1660-1734). After his death it was continued by some of his pupils and had a revival in the last century, under E. Chauffard. It is the theory of life most easily aligned with theology, and has been largely influenced by theological considerations.

Monism is the opposite pole. It is like animism in that noetic and psychic functions are confused and identified. It differs from animism in that its followers give first importance to the body. Monists in addition to confusing thought and feeling, commit the further error of assimilating all phenomena, psychic and noetic to general forces in nature which govern plants and animals. They tend to deny the existence of individual souls. In the beginning of modern science the monistic or mechanistic biologists saw the body as a complex of chemical apparatus, of pipes, pumps, retorts, levers, etc., etc., and interpreted soul as an illusion growing out of the activity of these. They have gradually approximated more closely to vitalism with the difference that they call the vital factors directional ones, and deny them actual entity. Monism corresponds to the Charvaka school of ancient and modern India. Biological monism is a reaction from theology.

The third possible position is called vitalism. It takes count of the three classes of phenomena, noetic, psychic and physicochemical, as entitled to separate consideration. It says there is a vital (or psychic factor) between the thinking soul and the physical body by means of which the body is governed and directed. In modern times vitalism arose out of the obvious failure of the animistic doctrine of Stahl, and has numbered among its exponents Bordeu, Grimaud, Barthez, Johannes Muller, Liebig, Candolle the botanist, Flourens and Dressel. Its origin, however, as a theory of life goes back into furthest antiquity. It is the doctrine of the oldest occult schools, of religions at their inception, of the mystery systems, and is taught by Pythagoras, Empedocles, Plato, Aristotle, the Neo-Platonists, Galen, Paracelsus, Van Helmont,

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Agripa and others. Vitalism is neither a leaning towards nor a reaction from theology but has maintained its course regardless of current fashion.

The great objection the vitalists bring against animism is the philosophical one that animism requires the impossible conception of the thinking soul acting directly on the material body. Vitalists argue that the functions of the soul are reflective, volitional and conscious whereas the phenomena of the body are automatic, involuntary and unconscious. The only means of communication, they declare, can be through a vital principle which is distinct from thought.

Although the intentions of the animists and the monists are diametrically opposed, say the vitalists, their conclusions are particularly identical. The animist throws down all barriers between thinking and feeling. The monist destroys the barriers between feeling and physiological action. The animist posits a soul that performs all functions from the highest intuitional ones down to the lowest gleam of consciousness observable in plant and animal life. The monist posits a body that can by physicochemical action explain all functions from the simplest chemical ones up to (and for some monists including) the functions of thought. They both - excluding the utter mechanists of course - have a spiritual principle which animates all living creatures and both schools have a body which is purely materialistic. The dispute between them is which is the cause and which the effect. Does the thinking soul of man merely clothe itself with a body it does not understand, or does the body generate a kind of motion which is to be understood as mind?

Neither, says the vitalist. Pythagoras taught that between *Nous*, the thinking soul, and *soma*, the body, there is a feeling or sensitive soul which he called *psyche*. Plato says there can be no understanding of man until we have made the difference between the divine rational soul which is immortal and the irrational soul which is mortal. Aristotle enunciating the ideas of his time took count of *Nous*, the intellectual soul, and *psyche*, the irrational or vegetative soul. The Egyptian priests had a passionate or desire soul which they called *ab-hati* standing between the immortal soul, the *ba*, and the body or *chat*. The Hindu schools have a thinking soul *Jivatma* (the living, divine principle) or *antahkarana* (the cognitive soul) and a body called *Sthula sharira*. Between the soul and body they have an animal soul called *Kama-rupa*. Their symbol for the thinking soul is Vishnu and for the animal soul, Shiva.

Galen, physician to Marcus Aurelius, and the medical writer whose system continued in Europe until the Renaissance, took count of (1) mind, (2) what he called animal, vital and natural spirits, and (3) body. Paracelsus, the reformer of mediaeval medicine taught the existence of a (1) thinking soul, (2) the Olympic spirits or vital forces of animal life, and (3) the body. Van Helmont the alchemist, physician and philosopher was a vitalist and refused to admit that the soul directly directs the body. The gap between soul and body he filled with a sensitive or feeling soul ruling a hierarchy of entities that correspond to the animal-vital natural series of Galen and to the Olympic spirits of Paracelsus.

In the ranks of modern biologists, the monists, whose great emphasis is on body and bodily function are vastly in the majority. The animists have dwindled to a mere handful. The vitalists remain but are widely different in their allegiances. At one pole are those who maintain an animistic vitalism that almost loses the vital principle in the thinking soul. At the other are those who maintain a monistic vitalism which almost loses the vital principle in the physiological processes.

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The steady trend of modern biology is, however, in the direction of vitalism and as experimentation goes on there are increasing analogies for, and demonstrations of, the existence of a lesser soul and of whole ranges of souls inferior to that again as the occultists have always contended. In common with the other sciences which are gradually turning back to the older philosophies and vindicating occult theories, biology is returning to a vitalist theory of man through what is called pluri-vitalism.

Pluri-vitalism is the secondary doctrine we saw in Galen, Paracelsus and Van Helmont. These occultists argued that the functions of the body are governed by a multitude of lives, cellular, corpuscular and organic. Galen's doctrine of three kinds of spirits was that the animal spirits preside over the nervous system, the vital spirits govern most of the other functions and that the natural spirits regulate the liver and can be incorporated thus in the blood. Paracelsus' Olympic spirits, which, as we shall see, derive their names from the earth gods of the Greek Olympus, are forces peculiarly of this earth stream of evolution, and control the functions of the liver, heart and brain. They exist also, says Paracelsus, in all other living forms of nature. Van Helmont, in placing below the thinking immortal soul a sensitive mortal soul, gave the sensitive soul as its agent an *aura vitalist* or principal *archaeus* (The Hindu *prana*, and the true vital element). This latter he says has its seat at the pylorus, or orifice that empties the stomach. Below this again, Van Helmont placed the lesser individual lives he called *blas* or *vulcans* in each organ. The Kabbalists, the Egyptians, the Alchemists and all ancient schools placed the seat of the true psyche or feeling soul in the heart and said that its fluid vehicle, by which it pervades the body, is the blood. This is, by the way, the reason for the Jewish practice of slaughtering a food animal in such a way as to bleed it.

It was the fashion a generation ago to ridicule these classifications. Experiment has shown, however, that they are a valid terminology for phenomena since demonstrated. It has long been known that the lowest creatures are complete lives in their various parts. Plants propagated by cuttings have all the qualities of their parental stock. Worms cut into many parts complete themselves. In 1901 at Turin the biologist Locke kept the heart of a rabbit alive for several hours. Since then the heart of a man has been kept beating eighteen hours after the man's death. The experiments have been continued with muscles, glands, cells, tissues, nerves, brain itself, demonstrating the old belief that each organ and each lesser centre of life has a separate existence. In the phrase of the Montpellier vitalist, Bordeu, each part of the body is "an animal in an animal".

The body of man is therefore the field of activity of a vast number of beings of whom the soul is only one - albeit the highest and capable of becoming the governing one. The thinking soul is the potential ruler of a great colony of entities extending from a sensitive soul or psyche down to the lowest cell life. The mechanistic biologist is loath to call these lesser lives entities. The furthest he will go is to call them vital properties but the march of discovery is forcing him back to the idea that each, as a spiritual entity - however low its manifestation - is a fiery life. Moreover he is being driven by analogous advances in psychology and physics to realize that the co-ordination of these - so frequently inimical to each other - is not not the work of the thinking soul but of a soul below the level of our consciousness. The present fashion in biology is to refuse to consider the vital soul as an active agent. A trifle afraid of each other, biologists take refuge in evasive sayings. They say it is a directional factor, an "ideal plan in the process of being carried out". Which of course entails the concept of an Ideal Planner, a sort of diffuse and non-individualized God, who only enters His plan as a vague force or energy. They argue that the vital properties in each organ are modes of activity inherent in the living substance and that these modes are derived from the arrangement of the molecules of the substance. Whether the arrangement is fortuitous,

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as the chemists have held, or is the careful work of the divine Molecule-Arranger they cannot agree. That the Planner and Molecule-Arranger might enter His plan as many individual souls - however humble - would be mythological and pagan. It might land them before their university senates on charges of pantheism or even witchcraft.

It will be observed in all the foregoing, the confusion arises out of the problem of the thinking soul. Thousands of phenomena show that it is not the efficient governor of the body. It knows nothing of the normal functioning of the organs. The beating of the heart, the coursing of blood, the chemistry of the conversion of food into renewed tissues, the expansion and contraction of the lungs, the processes of glandular secretion, the peristaltic action of the intestines, all go on without us. If the noetic soul were the direct ruler and knower of these functions we should have no occasion for debate about them. The proof that the thinking soul is external to these activities is to be found in the fact that it is unconscious of them..

Even the phenomena of death do not, for the vitalist, require the soul. Death for the animist is the withdrawal of the thinking soul. Death for the monist is the breakdown of the machine. For the vitalist death is the withdrawal of the animal entity. Withdrawal of the noetic soul alone, while the psychic entity survives, is insanity.

Man minus a thinking soul would be a problem completely assimilable to all the problems of animal life. His introduction into the animal scheme renders the latter abnormal. The early animists, when pressed for an explanation of the fact that the soul could do so little with the physical functions, borrowed from theology a reply which theology had long ago borrowed from occult philosophy and said "The soul is prevented by the consequences of original sin from guiding and directing the body".

Despite the ridicule the answer elicited it contained a clue to the solution of the problem. The animal order to which the human body belongs is a symmetrical and ordered whole - a stream of lives proceeding according to a plan. The thinking soul is the anomaly. It is the governor who does not govern. It is the deluded being who does not know the nature of its own forces. It is the thinker that now identifies itself with governance and now realizes its impotence. It is the thinker that cannot determine between these three - the soul as the director of the body, the body as the creator of the soul, or the soul as to co-inhabiter with a lower entity of a body which is itself the creation of a great number of still lower lives. The whole confusion is brought about, seemingly, by the effort of the thinker to identify himself with an order of beings to which he does not belong.

When we understand the thinker in man as an onlooker, and the real present ruler of the body as a sensitive and passional soul, the confusion begins to clear.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM

The science of psychology, whose function it is to describe and explain the states of consciousness, has the same problem of the dual soul of man as that which confronts the biologist. The nature of the psychologist's research, however, requires him to approach it from another side.

Psychology was once a branch of philosophy and proceeded by introspective and philosophical methods. It was given its present name by a writer named Goelemus who is not distinguished in its annals except for the fact that it fell to his lot to go to the Greek lexicon for the word meaning "the lore of the thinking soul" and to come back with a word meaning "the lore of the unthinking soul". As we shall see, Goelemus was more fortunate than were those biologists who were similarly careless with their Greek.

Modern psychology was drawn into the field of science at the time when materialistic scientists were greatly in the ascendant and were most sure that the explanation of all the phenomena of consciousness could be found in the nature of physical matter. The natural sciences of astronomy, geology, physics, chemistry and biology all proceed on the assumption that the phenomenal universe is a reality which can be understood without reference to life or consciousness. The special concern of modern science is with a realm of effects. It may assume that these effects are causes and succeed in gaining a wide knowledge of them. An hypothesis may be intrinsically wrong and still be valid for working purposes. Chemistry proceeded in its routine operations under Dalton's atomic hypothesis and can continue to do so in spite of the fact that a few years ago the atomic theory had to be replaced by the electronic. So also, physics proceeded successfully for two hundred years on Newton's gravitational theory only to be advised a few days ago that its basis has to be thrown into the discard. Psychology has not fared quite so well. When it took on the scientific method it could not as the physicist does, for instance, relate all things to energy and matter. Energy and matter are part of the spectacle and can be viewed apart from life. Psychology, however, assumed the task of using the limited means of science in order to view the spectator himself.

So it has hung between sky and earth, refusing to be considered a branch of metaphysics and never quite gaining respect as an exact science. The most materialistic of its apostles have undertaken again and again and in a variety of ways to align it with chemistry and explain consciousness by the qualities of matter -saying that consciousness is a derivative of matter. Unhappily, however, for all their endeavours they have never produced a working hypothesis that covers the whole field of their science as Newton's did for physics or Dalton's for chemistry. The psychological theories work admirably for certain limited groups of facts but fail hopelessly to solve quite as important groups. The failure is due to the fact that psychologists are undertaking to prove the functions of the spectator by the functions of the spectator - to prove something by itself. A philosopher can, within the terms of his method, succeed in this; a scientist never can.

Thus it happens that Professor William James, leader of the physical school of psychologists, summing up the advances of psychology as a science, says :

"Psychology is but a string of raw facts, a little gossip and wrangle about opinions, a little classification and generalization on the merely descriptive level, a strong prejudice that we have states of mind and that our brain conditions them, but not a single law in the sense that physics shows us laws." This in

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1892 and, except for a greater quantity of descriptive material psychology has scarcely moved since then.

It is still engaged in warfare over its basic definitions. What is consciousness ? The majority of psychologists say "mind", and refuse to admit that there can be any other form of consciousness than mind. Their chief reason for declaring that consciousness is mind is that nothing can be known to them until it becomes a thought. Which is the equivalent of telling a physicist that there can be nothing but mental matter and energy because energy and matter have to be imaged in mind before they can be examined This adherence to the dogma of the necessary identity of consciousness and mind has sterilized the entire research and leaders among the psychologists have not been slow to tell their fellows so. Professor Edward Montgornery says :

"Psychology as a science of self-originated and self-acting conscious existence .. can only lead to nihilistic results; such a science constructed without reference to an abiding *extra-conscious* source of actuation and emanation will end in vacancy." And Montgornery goes on to argue that the states outside the conscious mind are not necessarily mind at all.

This is why, when the student tries to arrive at a general idea of current psychological theory he comes constantly on the use of the word "mind" as describing factors that have no place in mind

Broadly speaking, modern psychology agrees (or disagrees) on the following classification of the levels of consciousness. Above conscious mind is one group of phenomena. Then comes conscious mind. Then below it two groups. Let us examine them in this order .

Above mind, what is called supra-liminal mind, or supra-conscious mind. The existence of this as a separate group is in dispute. It is the field of intuitions, of conscience and of the recognition of duty. Some psychologists see it as the connecting link between the Ego and the God, the field of our conceptions of eternal verity and the means of our power to know verity. Other psychologists repudiate it altogether. They do not believe in intuitions, forgetting that all the basic assumptions of science itself rest on intuition. All mathematical assumptions are intuitions. The idea that consciousness exists in all persons is an intuition. With the means at his disposal the scientist cannot prove scientifically that consciousness exists in any other person than himself. This realm above conscious mind is the world of archetypes in the older philosophers. I shall return to it in later articles. The Eastern philosopher calls it Buddhi-Manas.

Then comes conscious mind. It is called sometimes "the lighted circle". Thomson Jay Hudson named it "objective mind" and said some wise and a great many foolish things about it. It is the realm of mental awareness, and is that part of mind in which the consciousness or Ego is normally focussed. Any image in it may depart from it - slip out of it - any time. The Hindus call this Manas and never make the mistake of confusing it with consciousness. It is matter in its own plane and only one of the grades of matter in which consciousness can manifest itself.

Below conscious mind is that which is commonly called the subconscious mind. Myers called it the subliminal consciousness. Hudson called it subjective but confused it with so many other qualities as to

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make his description unserviceable. It is the plane of half-forgotten fragments of thought, of lost (but recoverable) memories, of characteristic impulses, of what are modernly called complexes (called by the Buddhist *skandhas* or confections) . It is the plane also of emotions which are hybrid unions of thought and passion, the desire-saturated odds and ends of past thoughts which are the principal creators of moods. The Eastern philosopher calls this twilight plane Kama-Manas. In occult science the combination of all its elements is called personality, the mask through which Egos on earth see each other.

Below the level of subconscious mind is a fourth division which links the three levels of mind with the forces of the body. It is the plane of instinct, of reflexes and of automatic and involuntary function. It is also the repository of muscular and functional habits that have been acquired consciously at some time in the past, and the method of their acquirement forgotten. The Eastern philosopher calls this level Kama. Some psychologists have called it "unconscious mind". Psychologists themselves are at war over it, and in it is the whole crux of modern psychology .

Some psychologists, Ladd for instance, while admitting the factors of consciousness it describes, ridicule the name. They say there can be no such thing as unconscious mind. It is a contradiction in terms. To talk of unconscious mind is to talk of unconscious consciousness or of non-existent existence. It is inconceivable, they say.

And so it is in the sense in which its inventors use it. None the less there are such functions as are thus described, and of them the Ego is undoubtedly unconscious. What active and efficient consciousness can exist in a man of which he is not conscious ? The inevitable answer stares the psychologists in the face, but they will not accept it for the same reason that the biologists would not accept vitalism. This lower consciousness that stands between Ego and body is one of which the Ego is unconscious because *it is not his consciousness*. It is the consciousness of a separate and lower entity.

Modern psychologists are facing the same old *impasse* that Stahl faced two hundred years ago, when he ascribed all human functions above the chemico-physical ones to the thinking soul of man, and Bordeu laughed his theory into oblivion. Stahl tried to stretch the concept of soul beyond its workable limits. The psychologists are stretching their concept of mind to an extent which makes their research sterile, as Montgomery assured them they would. The instinctive activities below mind are undoubtedly forms of consciousness but they are not mental consciousness.

This was the doctrine of the older philosophers. Pythagoras, Empedocles, Plato and Plotinus taught it. So did the Church Fathers, Clement, Origen and Tatian. It was the doctrine also of Emmanuel Swedenborg who declared that man is a trinity, that there is an internal man who is celestial, a reasoning man who is spiritual and an external man who is the natural entity - natural because he is a part of nature. The distinction between the Ego and the lower entity or animal soul has been testified to many times by scientists like Wigan, Brown-Sequard, Proctor and by Carl Du Prel in his *Philosophy of Mysticism*.

This idea of a duality is the very foundation of the most fertile of all psychological departments of research - hypnotism. In no other field can the psychologist gather the unequivocal data he does in hypnotic experiment - ugly and all as it is in its method. It is now an axiom of hypnotism that the one

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essential characteristic of hypnotic states is that the Ego must be unconscious of what is occurring. That is, after the somnambulistic period he should have no memory of what has occurred. The only possible explanation of all the phenomena of such conditions is that the conscious Ego, by consent, surrenders the entity of whose activities he is unconscious, to the will of the operator. He does not merely surrender himself. If he did he would be conscious of it and would prove that consciousness by retaining a memory of it. Neither does the Ego merely surrender the body. The subject in a hypnotic state is a going organism possessed of all automatic and involuntary functions, all reflexes and all instincts. For the duration of the trance state this lower entity obeys the operator as he would his own Ego. Perhaps a little better.

We come now on a curious thing. It is as illuminating for the occult student as it is confusing for the scientist. The entity whom the hypnotist controls possesses mind. Not all functions of mind. There are certain ones it does not possess, but on the other hand it uses those it does possess, to a higher degree of efficiency than is manifested by the subject of the experiment in his normal state.

Because the subject under hypnotic influence exhibits mental powers, the psychologist assumes that in some mysterious way only the memory of the Ego has been inhibited and that everything else remains. But an examination of the kind of mind manifested by hypnotized subjects shows that it lacks precisely that kind of mind which is peculiarly the mental characteristic of the Ego. The entity under the control of the hypnotist is unable to discriminate. It is unable to observe a series of facts and draw a general conclusion from them. It does not, in other words, manifest inductive reason. The mind which the controlled entity exhibits is entirely reproductive and recollective. The subject cannot think what the Ego has not thought before. It can draw on the storehouse of thoughts, words and actions existing in the subconscious mind above it, the submerged rubbish-heap of bygone intellection, but it cannot invent new things. It cannot initiate. Invention is done for it by the hypnotist who has taken the place of its normal inventor, the Ego. A hypnotized subject will get drunk on water because he is told it is alcohol, and will sober up on brandy because he is told it is an antidote to alcohol. If the Ego is musical the subject of a hypnotic trance will be musical; if the Ego is philosophical the subject will be philosophical - not otherwise.

It would seem therefore as if the subconscious mind can be drawn upon by either of two beings, the Ego who created it, or the animal soul for whose use and endowment, according to the old philosophers, the thoughts were made.

So much for the demonstrations contained in hypnotic suggestion. The hypothesis of unconscious mind as a lower entity is also the explanation of autosuggestion in its forms of Christian Science, faith-healing, habit-curing and mental therapeutics. The reason why the hypnotist, is more successful than the Ego himself in making the lower being do what he is told, is that the hypnotist is detached and has no sentimental or habitual misgivings. He is a successful hypnotist because he does not change his mind.

It is the explanation - and H. Blavatsky offered it half a century ago -of the phenomena of the *séance* room. The lower entity - the elemental or animal soul - is, in the vast majority of cases, the visitant who floods psychic literature with his puerile recollections of earth and his ante-mortem theories of post-mortem states. Just as we saw him in the hypnotist's laboratory, he cannot, after death, reason inductively. He can offer fragmentary memories or corroborate what the sitters put into his mind. This is why a *revenant* can create the externals of a disembodied entity but can so rarely transcend the

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automatisms of earth life. He is the animated *bhuta* or *pisacha* of Eastern occultism, the shell of Theosophical literature.

Freud's psychoanalytic system, which owes far more to mediaeval and Renaissance occultists than its author might care to admit, offers valuable testimony to the independent existence of the lower soul, and the active part it plays in demanding from the Ego the intellectual reinforcement it needs for the fulfilment of its desires. The Ego - Freud's "censor"-is not only the creator of ideas for his own use, but he is also most frequently the creator of ideas that have no other purpose than the satisfaction of the desires of the lower being. This is the reason for the desire-saturation of the elements in the subconscious realm of mind, the ideas that have slipped out of the Ego's field of conscious knowledge and form the reservoir of animal mind in man. The fact that Freud, misreading his data, proposes an animal ethic for the divine soul, only demonstrated that psychologists, like other men, do not know what to do with facts when they get them.

Behaviourism, the *enfant terrible* of modern psychology, is for the most part a study of the relation of the animal soul to the body. It disagrees with occult science in the same way that all materialistic science does, and proceeds on the assumption that bodies are real and soul is not. It says that the body of man by its muscular reflexes and visceral twitchings begets the illusion of all higher faculties. Even misinterpreted thus, the Behaviourist data are valuable to the student. Watson's identification of emotions and powers with specific centres in the body is a restoration of the ancient doctrine of the body as a mirror of soul-function. Like so many other schools of psychology, however, Behaviourism survives by denying the existence of phenomena its theory will not explain. It offers a plausible theory of living persons but it gets into trouble when it is confronted with the problems of dead persons, and with the other psychological phenomena of *séance* rooms. Behaviourists know they will never persuade anybody that visceral twitchings in the present body can continue in an after world after the physical viscera have ceased to twitch. Neither can it say with authority that visceral twitchings in the medium enable her to know that somebody's deceased mother's cousin was named Edward. Nobody wants to be a failure, so, rather than fail, Behaviourism repudiates psychic phenomena altogether.

It has become apparent to the student of occult philosophy that the principal cause of the psychologist's quandary is his refusal to admit the materiality of any other planes than the physical. The Eastern psychologist has no such problem. For him the world of desire or *Kama* is a definite realm of matter interior to and interpenetrating the highest state of physical matter as water interpenetrates a solid. His world of mind or *manas* is a still subtler plane interior to the plane of desire and interpenetrating it and the physical planes as air interpenetrates liquids and solids. Interior to all these is a still subtler plane of radiant matter called *Buddhi*, that stands in the same relation to the three below it as light does to gases, liquids and solids. A soul in Eastern psychology is an essence, a *Jiva*, as immaterial as the Western scientist would ask, but possessed of the power of manifesting in any of the planes - in the radiant world of *Buddhi* as a cognitive spiritual being, in *manas* as an intellective, form-making creator, in *kama* as a sensitive, feeling soul, as the souls of animals are. The fundamental fact about him is that he is not the plane in which he operates. He is spirit; it is matter. In all of which the Eastern psychologist may be as wrong as Newton and Dalton were and still he might supply Western psychology with a working hypothesis.

The identification of consciousness or awareness exclusively with mind is an absurdity and responsible for the absurdities in which psychology is enmeshed. The Ego is obviously a being making forms in mind.

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Quite as obviously the lower entity is another being living a passional life in the realm below mind and borrowing his intellectual elements from a Jiva who is for some reason his instructor. The sodden, forgotten world between the two is the debris of lives of incompetent and misused instruction. Subconscious mentality is a disorderly tangle of forms on which Ego and animal draw at will. When years ago Dr. Maudsley reproved science for forgetting that all external objects are really seen within us, he voiced his celebrated witticism, "A thing is a think". Psychology will get out on to *terra firma* again when it learns to say "A think is also a thing."

In the meantime Goelemus the unskilful word-searcher is being justified. Psychologists are devoting themselves less and less to the thinking soul which must ever elude materialistic science, and are resigning its study to the metaphysicians. More and more they are devoting their inquiries to the feeling soul - the true psyche - which because it is external to man is capable of being studied in the objective manner of science. Gradually they are isolating it, describing it and revealing it as conformable to the animal world from which occult science says the Ego has lifted it. At the same time the true Ego withdraws and day by day becomes more definitely the anomaly he is - a visitor in a world that is not his own. The question is, "What is his true world ?"

THE MATHEMATICAL PROBLEM

Something peculiarly enlightening for the student of the occult sciences has occurred in these recent years of the steady materialization of thought under the influence of positive science. There has been a revolution against materialism and strangely enough the rebel has been the most exact of all scientists - indeed the only scientist who has never had a doubt cast upon his exactitude - the mathematician.

The mathematician has been the factotum of his fellow, and less scientific, scientists. They brought him their sums to do. They enlisted him to work out their formula. They engaged him to impart to their young men enough of his science to enable them to carry on the simpler operations of their own. He was a sort of slave-pedagogue, regarded as vague and unpractical in his preoccupations but none the less useful.

The mathematician has always been more or less of a mystic. He is constantly engaged in meditation on abstractions like those archetypal ideas of Plato's. The nature of his work compels him to remember what less scientific inquirers forget, that all the major assumptions of scientific research are intuitions and are unprovable by mental process. He is used to remembering that the mind of the seeker, while it is an instrument, is none the less in itself a severe limitation. The mathematician knows that you can never have a science until you have posited a number of things you are entirely incapable of proving. These he calls axioms. If he is a bit shaky about whether his intuition is accurate, he is honest and calls them postulates. Consciousness, for example, is an axiom. Space is only a postulate. So is time. Matter is only a postulate, Motion is a postulate. The mathematician is strict. If he is not it is bound to show in his result.

I have said the exponents of positive science bring their formula to the mathematician for solution, and like the good auditor he is, he reproves the evils of their bookkeeping. He objects, for instance, to their trick of trying to explain one unknown by another. When, to take a classical example, they say motion is change in the relations of matter, and when they are then asked what matter is, they say matter is the field in which motion makes changes, the mathematician is reproachful. He reminds them that they cannot define one postulate by another .

They can get nowhere, he has reminded them, until they make up their minds on the whole subject of knowledge. What is knowable ? What is not knowable ? How is anything knowable ? He does not demand with Berkeley that they believe only in consciousness and deny that anything has actual existence outside of the spectator's idea of it. Neither would he let them take their stand with Buchner and Haeckel and go to the extreme of saying that matter and motion are the only truth and that consciousness is merely a sensation arising out of their operation.

The mathematician votes with Kant. He says the only sound position is the critical one~that each of us is a consciousness, that there exists outside of us a world of causes. A tree is something that causes me to think of a tree, but a real tree is vastly different from what I think it is and if I do not know all about a tree, it is because I have not brought to bear on it an adequate perceptive equipment. Or as the occultist would say, I am not seeing the tree on a high enough plane to know its high plane truths. Or as Ouspensky has stated it in his *Tertium Organum*, it is not because I have a confused perception of a real world, but because I have a very acute perception of an entirely unreal world. Or again, as Hinton would have said it, I am not seeing a real tree but the thinnest possible three-dimensional section of a real tree.

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Or as Kant would have said, the space-sense I bring to bear on the tree is inadequate: it is a limitation of my mind. In the far older *Voice of the Silence* the parallel saying is, "Mind is the great slayer of the real."

The modern restoration of the idea that our sense of a three-dimensional world is not ultimate, begins with Kant. His philosophical successors promptly lost the idea or never knew he had it. His mystical successors, carried it on. The academic philosopher's ideas only have to be accurate enough to get into a book or a student's notes. The mathematician's and the mystic's ideas have to work. R. F. Gauss and N. I. Lobachevsky were the first continuators of Kant's idea. Then came C. H. Hinton, who in a remarkable series of works developed a mechanism of cubes for the education of the space-sense. He declared that diagrams on paper were quite useless because the solid itself being a symbol, the diagram is a symbol of a symbol. His mechanism is an equipment of coloured cubes by which to make the transition from three-space into four-space perceptions. After Hinton the most notable figure in the same phase of the inquiry has been the Russian P. D. Ouspensky who has worked out a remarkable relation of the ideas of two-, three-, and four-space consciousness to mysticism and occultism. More recently and in the field of physics, Einstein, Eddington and their group have made the mathematical formula that demonstrate the concept of time as being a limited understanding of a fourth way in space. They have also developed Kant's relation of the observer to the object observed, into their theory of relativity.

For my present purpose I require only the straightest way through the subject.

The line represents one-dimensional space. It is generated by the motion of a point. It has no "up or down" and no "across". It has only "along". A line moved in a direction at right angles to its length generates a surface. It has the dimensions, of length and breadth but no "up and down", no thickness. This is two-space. A surface moved in a direction and breadth generates a solid. This is three space. Can this solid - imagine it a cube --- be moved in a fourth direction which is none of the three others but perpendicular to all of them and thus generate a four-space shape - a tesseract?

Mind cannot grasp it. The positive scientist says emphatically, "No." Mathematicians say "Yes, it is puzzling and paradoxical but we must say it can." There is a dimension of space (perhaps several) that eludes our mental space-sense "but is none the less real on that account. It is probably more real than our limited mental concept".

The mathematician has a constantly recurring problem. When a physicist, let us say, brings the mathematician a sum to do, and it is one that involves linear dimensions carried into surfaces, the mathematician writes alongside and above the quantity a little 2- x^2 - meaning the quantity is to be squared. If it is a problem running into solids, the mathematician writes x^3 . But occasions arise when he must write x^4 . You can imagine a colloquy between the mathematician and his client. The physicist says:

"But there is no such thing as four ways in space."

"I am sorry," says the mathematician, "but there are the processes. I'd like to make the result easier for you but I cannot tell a lie."

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"But I cannot imagine such a thing."

"That is a defect certainly," says the mathematician, "but it is your own defect. The calculation is all right."

Which is precisely what Kant said. Mind shackles us to an adequate concept of the world and therefore precludes our knowing the truth about it.

Hinton said that by observation and reflection we can know three dimensions. By intuition we can know four dimensions. This intuition he called direct apprehension. It has been called by the occultist direct cognition, and is said to be an attribute of Buddhi, the fourth level of the manifested world, and the plane next above Manas or mind, which is the third. In his posthumous book, *A New Era of Thought*, Hinton has, curiously enough, related this direct apprehension of four-space to love and sympathy and brotherhood which are also attributes of Buddhi and the indications are that his realization of the relation arose out of his own experience as he developed by means of his cubes the power of seeing the tesseract.

After Hinton came Ouspensky who built on Hinton, but carried the experiments into many other fields. The phase of his research that means most to us at the present moment, is that which has to do with the higher animals. Ouspensky says the dog and the horse, for instance, have no consciousness of three-space. All their actions in and reactions to the world around them show that they are under a two-space limitation. They see the same objects - or causes - as we do but they cannot convert what they see into three dimensions. He advances a great many demonstrations of this. For most of them I must refer the reader to his *Tertium Organum*.

Ouspensky's work stirred resentment and unbelief among some lovers of animals. They were chiefly the people who anthropomorphize their pets and attribute to animals thought processes like their own. They believed it involved some degradation of the animal to impute to it a limited space sense.

The better animal lovers welcomed a profound insight into age-old problems of animal behaviour. It offered the explanation of why a dog, going round an unfamiliar tree, for example, is startled when he sees a previously unseen branch and swerves as if the tree had thrust an arm out at him suddenly in hostile demonstration. His master knowing a third dimension of trees knows that the branch extends another way in space and has been there all the time. Ouspensky offers the only valid explanation of dogs barking at the turning wheels of vehicles in the notion that they are alive. He explains also the animal's inability to use the principle of the lever, a fundamental mechanism of all three dimensional concepts.

Occult science offers a continuation of Ouspensky's thesis. It says that the Ego is living in the body of an animal and is compelled to see the world through the sensory and sensational mechanism of an animal. It will be unnecessary, therefore, to go to the dog and the horse for assurance of the two-dimensionality of animal consciousness. If what Ouspensky says is true, the whole series of phenomena will be observable in the complex of organisms which we call man. If all knowledge of the physical world must pass to the Ego through the eye's and consciousness of an animal nature, there must be a stage in every

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percept when it will be two dimensional.

And is it not so ? The reader must test it for himself. Our first view of everything is two dimensional. We see a surface. Depth, the third dimension, has to be reasoned out by an effort of thought. Look at the moulding on the door or window before you. It appears as a flat surface with light and shade. You examine it more carefully and analyze the shadows into a third dimension, saying, "It goes back there, it comes forward here, it curves towards, it curves away ." Pick up a perspective drawing in, let us say, a text book of solid geometry, or look at a mechanical drawing in line. It presents itself at first as an arrangement of lines on a surface. Then you reason it out, setting back this plane and advancing that one, recognizing this as receding, that as approaching, this plane as foreground, that as middle ground, a third as distance. Or wake up in an unfamiliar or half lighted room and watch the tricks your animal vision will play on you before you resolve the flat impressions into their successive planes by effort of will. Or, come around the corner and see unexpectedly a coat thrown over a chair and observe how you start like the dog did as he ran around the tree, until your mind asserts itself and assures you there is nothing hostile in what at first seemed so. You say in such cases that you got a start. Of course you did not. The animal got a start.

Evidently Hinton left out a step. His formula should have been : By observation we know two-space ; by reflection we know three-space; by direct apprehension we know four-space.

Let us return now to the direct apprehension of four-dimensionality. Is it a function of a higher soul than the thinking soul we identify with ourselves, or is it a higher function of the thinking soul ? Hinton's experiments prove conclusively, and so do Ouspensky's, as also do those of Einstein, that the apprehension of objects in their four-dimensionality is the removal of a limitation. It is a function of the soul in a level just above mind. When Hinton sets about his space-education discipline, he shows that the vision comes first in glimpses that can be made increasingly permanent. Each time he wants to make the transition into four-space, he starts by making the transition from two-space to three-space as a means of knowing what the three-to four-transition would be. The two-space to three-space transition is easy because we make it more or less unconsciously every minute of the day. Since the transition from two-to three-is a resumption each time of a power of thought we have long possessed, the transition from three - to four - is similarly a *resumption*. It is not a new acquirement but a renewal of an old power .

We are back again with the occultists! Occult science takes count of seven dimensions in space, of which The Divine Ego, by virtue of evolution in past world periods has made himself master of four. In his present anomalous state of limitation and bewilderment he has "fallen" from his four-dimensional consciousness into a three-dimensional one. Presently, the occult traditions say, unless he consolidates his forces and re-asserts his divinity he can fall another stage and come under the limitation of two-dimensionality.

Two dimensions mark the present apex of the evolution of the animal soul. The dog cannot himself make the transition from two to three. Two are for him what four seem to be for us. (I offer here because it will come up later, the suggestion that the Ego has really touched a fifth dimension in his past but has not fully mastered it.) Our task, the occult tradition would indicate, is to help the animal soul to make his necessary transition into the three-space consciousness of mind. We must first recover our own apex and then lift him. We cannot stand still. If we will not go up we must go down. The descent into *Avernus*

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manifests itself in its incipient stages as psychism, which, unless it is resisted, must degenerate into two-space consciousness. The psychic is one who cannot resolve his perceptions into their necessary planes, either of time or of space. With this process of degeneration, I shall deal more fully later in the series.

Here then is another contribution to the necessary picture of the Exile in his relation to the worlds above and below him. Again his position is anomalous. He sees surfaces, he thinks them into solids. He could go on and resolve them into vastly more potent four-space forms but he faints and grows weary. He is the user of a power of vision above that of the animal in which he dwells and is the possessor of a dormant power of vision higher than that he uses. Resumption of his high vision does not seem to wait on evolution or any cyclic process. It seems to be available when the Ego wills it. The animal soul, on the other hand, is a creature of cycles. It is evolving. Is this perhaps what the *Secret Doctrine* means when it says the Ego is not evolving; it has emanated?

THE PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM

We have seen how, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, psychology, attracted by the glittering beginnings of scientific research, deserted the field of philosophy for that of positive science and came thereby under limitations that have made it almost unworkable. The other branches of philosophy could not so readily change to a materialistic basis and they have remained more or less in their original field of subjective research, but they too have been affected by the scientific fashion. They have assumed the name of "the philosophical sciences". They define their province as the co-ordination and synthesis of the results of scientific research. That is, they have been persuaded that the interior or subjective method is no longer good enough, because reality lies outside us. They become, therefore, the servants of external reality. The modern philosopher proudly calls himself the "critic of the sciences," and, as inevitably happens when a man devotes himself exclusively to the criticism of the product of others, he ceases to produce in his own right.

The philosopher's position would be superb if he could sit in state and have the scientist bring results to him for criticism. But a scientist does not quite see the necessity for a philosopher at all. The scientist is quite confident he can do his own criticizing. And so, within the rules of his enquiry, he can. At last with no business coming in, the philosopher goes looking for business and ends up in the orbit of a scientist who has his eye fixed to the end of a microscope. When a few philosophers, all in quest of business, have gathered, they find nothing to talk about but whether the microscope-man can believe his eye. The idealistic monists contend that what he sees is all in his mind. The materialistic monists ask "What is he himself but the sort of thing he sees under the microscope?" The reality is in the object. The seer is an illusion arising out of the motion of the parts of the object. The critical realists, who as we have seen before have a high position - Kant's - if they wish to take it, content themselves with a compromise and try to steer a peaceable middle course.

Am I flippant about it? Here is a modern philosopher stating it in more dignified terms. It is Professor A. S. Pringle-Pattison speaking :

"Subject-object, knowledge, or, more widely, self-consciousness and its implicates - this unity in duality - is the ultimate aspect which duality presents. It has generally been considered, therefore, as constituting in a special sense the problem of philosophy. Philosophy may be said to be the explication of what is involved in this relation."

This is the present state of the art of Pythagoras and Plato, of Kapila, of Sankaracharya, of Nagarjuna, of Arya-sangha, of Plotinus, of Kant, and all the line of the lovers of wisdom. It has been said, not once but many times, these recent years, that formal philosophy has reached the most arid, unserviceable and generally contemptible era in its history.

Professor Pringle-Pattison's definition of the crux of modern philosophy is the sterile modern form of what once was the great fertile problem of epistemology, the theory of knowledge. The ancient philosopher asked, "How does knowledge come into the world?" The immediate and inferior answer is, "Through the senses." Such an answer will not stand the test of the commonest experience. We are all conscious of knowledge not traceable to what we have seen or heard. Apart from visions in dreams, which might be

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recollections of something we have seen but have forgotten, we have tendencies, aptitudes, capacities which are themselves a sublimated form of knowledge. If playing the piano after long training is an earned aptitude, the capacity to play the piano without any training in this life can only be an earned aptitude. Precocious genius is a kind of knowledge not traceable to known experience. So the philosopher, articulated to the scientist, who is in his turn articulated to the doctrine of the exclusive reality of an outside world, falls back on the idea of heredity and says some ancestor earned the aptitude. These knowledge-powers, he says, are transmitted from generation to generation. This is the Plan of the Universe.

It may be true, but at the best it is an inefficient Plan, and in no wise to be compared to the other processes of nature. For one thing, too many of the wisest of mankind do not transmit at all, and when they do so it is with the poorest results. Almost all of mankind transmit at a time when they would seem to have the least worth transmitting. The valuable experience of all of them is at its greatest worth long after they have ceased transmitting. Too many make no use of what has been transmitted, and too many destroy it with counteractive energies. Added to which the scientist is now satisfied that acquired characteristics cannot be transmitted anyway. What escaped these abysses of inadvertence is called heredity. This seems to be the Plan. A more incompetent one could scarcely have been conceived. A Greek or Hindu philosopher would be ashamed to entertain it even for a moment. It neglects the one factor of which the philosopher - or anybody else for that matter - can be sure, the factor of soul. But this man of ours, having become a critic of the revelations of microscopes can only admit what microscopes reveal, and they are not equipped to reveal souls.

For a statement of the problem in terms of souls, therefore, we must take the whole inquiry to the older philosophers. Plato is nearest to hand and easiest for my reader to examine for himself. It comes up in the *Phaedo*. There, in the last talk between Socrates and the Thebans, Simmias and Cebes, Socrates raises the whole question of knowledge. Whence comes it ?

Socrates wastes little time on the possibility of attaining pure knowledge through the senses. Even seeing and hearing, the best of the senses, are not accurate or exact. What then of the inferior senses of smell, taste and touch ? Certainly the body is of little assistance. On the contrary it contaminates truth. It keeps man busy finding sustenance for it. Its diseases hinder the pursuit of truth; it begets passions, desires, fancies and foolishness, and so constantly does it break in on study that the Ego finds it almost impossible during life to think at all.

But man, Socrates argues, has interior standards of truth, and the perceptions of this world fall short of them. Two objects, for example are almost equal. They just fall short of a perfect, abstract equality which man can entertain although he has never seen perfect equality on this earth. So it is, Socrates argues, with every other external fact we contemplate. We measure it against an abstract perfection which cannot have arisen out of earth experience. We look at a triangle. It is not a perfect triangle. How do we know? We have never on earth seen a perfect triangle. Neither have we ever seen perfectly parallel lines but we persist in thinking of them. So also with a point which we cannot ever have known on earth, and a line, and all the posited ideas of geometry. We have abstract perfect criteria for goodness, truth, beauty, love, justice.

None the less these perfections we cannot quite bring to earth. They are vague and fragmentary, now in

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our effort to realize them, stronger; and since obviously they are not of this human state, in which such perfections are nowhere evident outside of us, there is only one possible explanation of them. They are recollections. They are the earned aptitudes of a half-remembered past. Of what past?

The scientist recognizes interior recollections that have no counterparts in this life. He says they are inherited and has erected about them a doctrine of racial memory, but that will not explain their perfection. His race is evolving. Its ancient memories cannot be of things more perfect than anything in its present state. If so the race is degenerating.

There is also a school of pietists who deny the interior ideas as memories, preferring to think of them as divine intimations of the future. Socrates has a quick answer for these !

"If a man, when he has heard or seen or in any other way perceived a thing, knows not only that thing, but also has perception of some other thing, the knowledge of which is not the same but different, are we not right in saying that he *recollects* the thing of which he has the perception ? ... As when one sees Semmias, one often remembers Cebes."

What other solutions are there ? That we got the perfections in this life? Obviously not. That we got them at the instant of birth and lost them in the same instant ? This is ridiculous. Did we get them in a previous life on this earth ? There could be nothing more perfect in a previous human life than in this one. Whence then ?

From a state that preceded the human one, when, before we were human beings, we were in a state higher than the one in which we now find ourselves. Our present earth life and the earth lives preceding it are to be thought of, not as our proper place in a scheme of soul evolution at all. If so we are degenerating. The old philosophers called our present state a temporary obscuration and the result of some offence of ours against divine law. It is an obscuration that has brought about a condition of amnesia. Thus only can we explain the high memory that is evoked by the imperfect perceptions of this earth life.

The problem is the central one in Plato. In Socrates' discussion with Meno, the whole dialogue turns on this theory of knowledge. If Meno knows the whole of anything he need not ask about it. If, on the other hand, he knows nothing about it, he can neither ask nor learn. The only possible condition under which he can know enough to ask, and little enough to profit by being told, is that he possess a fragmentary recollection of it. This fragment is his fragment of crystal. The instruction enables him to restore it to its original completeness. One man cannot teach another unless by virtue of the fact that the other has a partial recollection of the truth to be taught.

Socrates, in Meno's presence, demonstrates the truth of his doctrine, when he calls in a slave-boy and, first, by letting the boy discover his own ignorance, then by asking him questions to elicit his memory, leads him through the geometrical problems of the duplication of the square.

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This is the central doctrine in the greatest of the lovers of wisdom. It is Empedocles' doctrine of the fall into the dark meadow of Ate. It is Plotinus' doctrine of the restoration of the Divine Intelligence and the return to the One. It is the basis of the Taraka Raja Yoga system which proceeds by an exercise of reminiscence identical with Plato's dialectic or "choosing through." It is the basis of the many mnemonic systems occultists have used as an aid to meditation, those curious arrangements of questions and the philosophical categories placed on revolving discs such as the one Raymond Lully invented and Giordano Bruno used. It is the basis of the lamasery wheels of which the exoteric "praying wheels" are the distorted form, the discs of the Tibetan mystics called *chakravartins* or wheel-turners. It is the explanation also of the effort of the older philosophers to arrange knowledge in categories. It is the only valid theory of meditation itself as the process of stilling the body and steadying the mind in order to elicit from the archetypal memory what the Ego has known but has forgotten.

This is the only fertile mode in philosophy. The narrow treadmill of subject-object must always be sterile, must always contradict itself, must always fail of what it undertakes to do. We can only know the higher truth of a thing by rising into a higher plane of being.

What then must we do? Await the slow crawl of the evolution of the soul until we evolve those higher powers ? Maybe we can try to hasten evolution. We had better save ourselves so vain an effort. We would be trying to hasten that which cannot by its very nature be hastened.

It is not a problem of evolution that faces the soul, and still less a problem of hastening evolution. It is a problem of *resumption*, of recovery of atrophied powers long since evolved and now forgotten.

This is the testimony of the sages and seers. They do not offer it as a guess. They offer it as a demonstrable fact which every man, by virtue of his dormant divinity, may know for himself by examining his intuitional memory .

Clearly it is not a current problem in academic philosophy. Philosophers of our time have forsaken intuitional memory and devoted themselves to the inferior reports of the senses. And, as we have seen, fertile philosophy has tended these recent years to pass over to the mathematicians for whom the senses matter less and the intuitions more.

For the purposes of this series, the problem of the theory of knowledge offers us another picture of the Ego, bewildered and stripped in a strange world which he sees through senses which are not his own, in a body that limits the use of the mind. He is the possessor of a high reality which he neglects for an illusory appearance he has lost the power to interpret.

THE MYSTICAL PROBLEM

We come now upon another phase of the same problem of consciousness - that presented by the phenomena of mystical experience. I use the word mystical in its modern sense as describing an interior revelation that can be had independently of the senses and of the reasoning processes.

Needless to say, this idea that there can be a transcendental knowledge superior to ordinary processes is one of the most ancient in the history of mankind. It is to be found at the origin of all religious systems, and indeed, as we shall see, all religion is to a lesser or greater degree a distortion of it. The possibility of this interior experience has been asserted by the greatest philosophers, by the saints and sages, and is in a sense the one ever-present and enduring thought in religion. It is also the idea around which the fiercest struggles have raged and against which the bitterest persecution has been directed.

Although an enormous literature has arisen out of mysticism, only recently - in this era at least - have we had a comparative examination of its phenomena. The first notable one is by the Canadian psychologist Richard Maurice Bucke who in his *Cosmic Consciousness* assembled and examined a large number of cases of the direct illumination commonly described as mystical.

It is outside of my purpose in this article to make a complete examination of Dr. Bucke's material and results, but to deal with certain special aspects of it. Drawing largely from biography and autobiography, he cites many remarkable cases of illumination in the lives of Jesus, Buddha, Walt Whitman, Jacob Boehme, Francis Bacon, Plotinus and other historical figures. These he supplements with modern cases of interior experience drawn from among his friends and patients.

The records thus gathered present certain common factors. One is a more or less definite sense of "lighting up" and is frequently accompanied by an objective luminosity, when the subject finds himself bathed in light. Another is the descent upon the subject of an ineffable peace likened to the "peace that passeth all understanding" in the Christian Testament. A third is that of possessing a direct apprehension of fact, a means of knowledge that is best described as the mystics described it, as transcending reasoning processes altogether. A less common, though no less marked, experience, in the cases where it is recorded is the modification or complete elimination of the sense of time, as if time were merged or lost in another way in space. The German Theosophist, Jacob Boehme, says he saw the "signatures of things" and that he saw the grass growing.

More important than any of these is the realization by the subject of a communion between the members of the human race and an actual sense of being in a realm of consciousness where all separation and longing are at an end. It is an entry into a one-consciousness, seemingly without loss of individuality, and a kind of all inclusiveness in which the person experiencing the new state takes the rest of the race into his being.

Walt Whitman in *Song of Myself* describes it thus:

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"Swiftly arose and spread around me the peace and knowledge that pass all argument of the earth,
And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,
And I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own,
And that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and the women my sisters and lovers,
And that a kelson of the creation is love,
And limitless are leaves stiff or drooping in the fields,
And brown ants in the little wells beneath them,
And mossy scabs of the worm fence, heap'd stones, elder, mullein and pokeweed."

Dr. Bucke in his analysis of the cases came to several interesting conclusions which, while they will not satisfy all the demands of occult philosophy, represent nevertheless a great advance in the scientific study of mystical experience. He divides consciousness into three great grades or successive divisions. The lowest of these, representing subhuman levels, as of the animal, he calls "Simple Consciousness". The reasoning consciousness of men and women, limited as it is by a sense of separateness, he calls "self consciousness". The illuminated state, in which separateness disappears, he calls cosmic consciousness, a level transcending the mental state as much as mind transcends the instinctual consciousness of the animal. Issue has been taken with him on the use of the word "cosmic" as describing too high a level, but nobody has yet suggested a more satisfactory term.

Since Dr. Bucke's time there have been numerous other inquiries and, although it is not a popular subject with academic psychologists because it makes trouble with theologians with whom they have to live, it has had a considerable share of attention from the more independent writers. The general disposition has been to regard the superior consciousness as one into which the human race will eventually evolve, and to look on those who have had intimations of it as forerunners of the rest of mankind.

When this theory goes hand in hand with the idea of physical evolution or race-evolution, as it sometimes does, and there is no element of the immortality of the individual soul implied in it, it means that succeeding generations of men and women begotten of the present ones will have an increasing number of cosmically conscious persons among them, cosmic consciousness becomes the general and finally the universal condition.

This is a cold idea. It offers the present generation the comfortless theory that all our striving and suffering is for the purpose of transmitting to other entities in a distant future powers and blessings they have not earned. To complete the anomaly, experimental science has now reached a position where it declares that all our striving will not and cannot transmit its fruit anyway. So poorly do the facts of interior illumination consort with the Darwinian theory of evolution that it is little wonder the psychologists are not fond of the subject.

When the theory of cosmic consciousness goes hand in hand with the idea of the survival of the soul of man after death and the passage of the soul into higher realms of consciousness, a heaven-world or whatever, the disposition of writers - mostly theologians - is to treat the experience as a passing intimation of the after-death states, a sort of foretaste of heaven vouchsafed by God to saintly persons

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during their earth life. The exponents of this theory are in grave difficulties. The chief one arises out of the fact that the experience is not confined to saintly persons but sometimes happens to persons whose lives are to say the least heretical and sometimes markedly irreligious in any sense that would please the orthodox God. Conversely many persons of saintly conduct do not achieve any such foretaste of the hereafter. The ironical commentary on this theory is that the cosmic vision has been frequent among those whom the Church found necessary to burn at the stake. In fact the church has had a definite antipathy to persons who had a foretaste of its own Heaven. It may have feared that some visionary would blurt out the truth.

A much better theory of it is the Hindu one - that the soul is engaged in a pilgrimage of experience which requires a long series of lives on this earth, in the course of which it evolves successive powers. Having passed through an arc of descent from spirit to matter and having turned at the mineral on its way back to a vastly enriched spiritual existence, the soul, they teach, has had successively the consciousness of the mineral, the plant and the animal, and is now passing through the mental state of consciousness as man. Beyond the mental state is a state of direct cognition or awakening into reality, which they call Buddhi. This has been attained by the leaders of mankind and into it all men will in due time enter. Those who have experienced it partially are our vanguard on the long path of the evolution of the soul. This is the opinion commonly offered today as Theosophy. In point of fact it is orthodox Brahminism and is, in its own way, scarcely less a distortion of Theosophy than is orthodox Christianity.

The fatal defect of the Brahmin explanation of the data of cosmic consciousness is identical with the defect of the Christian explanation of the ecstasies of the saints as an advance knowledge of the hereafter. Both religions assume that those who have a touch of cosmic consciousness are of great mental and spiritual stature.

The facts show that they are not. While many who experience the higher vision are, like Jesus and Buddha, beings of transcendent spirituality, and some, like Bacon, are giants of intellect, many of the recorded cases are of very simple, often ignorant and frequently anything but blameless people. The experience is nothing if not sporadic and obeys a law of its own nature. The Christian finding no rule for it attributes the whole thing to the pleasure of God. The Brahmin, whose theory of gradual advance would require that before going on with a realm above mind, a man should have exhausted the development of mind, has no adequate explanation to offer.

This curious illumination strikes like lightning. While it does favour the saint, it does not neglect the sinner. It comes very often to the sick, to the drunkard and the epileptic. Remarkable cases of conversion (literally, together-turning) as in the cases of Raymond Lully, John Bunyan and others, show that it can come even to men plunged in vice.

The learned, the ignorant, the devoted, the austere, the sodden, the well, the sick, the vicious, the nearly mad - these are not categories of leadership. Half of them give the lie to the other half. Nor did Jesus seem to expect that leaders would be the readiest to receive his message of liberation. He tended to pass over acknowledged leaders and to devote himself to those who by reason of misery and suffering on earth were best able to understand a doctrine of transcending earth and entering into a Kingdom of Heaven that he declared awaited them. Gautama did not confine himself to leaders among men. He found great men as did Jesus but his doctrine was as readily applicable to the vicious as to the austere.

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The *Dhammapada* shows him going to young men mired in their vices and bidding them turn. When they did they became Arhats.

That the manifestation in man of a power above the level of mind is the experience of men and women whose intellectual powers are not equal to the task of explaining it, is evidenced by the fact that mystics themselves differ widely in their explanations.

Mystics with an inclination for orthodox Christianity, for example, say the illumination flows into the soul by a supernatural channel. For the Roman Catholic Church the Church itself is such a channel. So are the sacraments. For mystics of Protestant sects, the Bible is a magical channel.

Quietistic cults like the Friends and the followers of the Abbe Fenelon and Madame Guyon ascribe the results to direct Divine intervention. They say that, in answer to aspiration, God himself acts immediately upon the mind of the devotee. Jacob Boehme held this theory of his own remarkable experiences. He declared that in his vision he saw God. H. P. Blavatsky remarks drily that what he saw was his Divine Ego, as all aspirants eventually see it.

More valid than either of these is the Platonist theory maintained by the most philosophical of the mystics. They say that the illumination comes by faith or intuition resident in the higher consciousness of the soul itself, and that there can be direct attainment of truth by virtue of the fact that man possesses from a previous world-period an inheritance of wisdom which he now neglects, but which he may at any time recover. A momentary return of it may be experienced under special conditions.

Obviously the cosmic consciousness is not, then, a *latent* thing, in the sense that it is still to be developed. It is a *dormant* thing in the sense that it has been developed and lost temporarily. It is not a potentiality to be realized in a distant future. It is an ever-present knowledge which the vast majority of men cannot use because it is overlaid by mental and emotional confusions. When such a power can be aroused by aspiration, the following of intuitions, or by austerity, it is sufficiently explained as an intimation of a new power. When, however, it comes direct out of intense suffering, out of turning from vice, or out of disturbed physical conditions, we need a wider formula than either the Brahmin or Christian one. We need a formula that will reconcile the contradictions. The old occult formula, the only one that will serve the unbiased inquirer, is that cosmic consciousness is an old, hard-earned power, lost and in these cases for a brief time recovered. The Christian formula for it, as the words were originally understood, is that in the parable of the prodigal, "This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

The implication in the highest mystical and occult schools - indeed the explicit statement many times repeated - is that we thinking souls are all prodigals, alienated from a divine unified consciousness which the *New Testament* calls *ho theos*, the god. That consciousness we have as a dim, flickering, inward light.

This aspect of it as a unified whole is important for purposes of the present study. The universal characteristic of all true experiences of cosmic consciousness is an immeasurably quickened sense of

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unity with the rest of mankind. This is variously described. Sometimes it is a flooding of the nature of the subject with a great love. Sometimes it presents itself as a sense of peace resultant on the passing away of the sense of separateness. It has also been described as an attainment of the centre of a wheel where stillness prevails and the stress of earth life, even of mental life, vanishes. It is the place of stillness that the Chinese called *Tao*, and the Buddhists call *Alaya*. "Alas, alas, that all men should possess *Alaya*," says *The Voice of the Silence*, "and that possessing it *Alaya* should so little avail them."

All these descriptions bear out the old idea that the world above mind is the Oneness towards which At-one-ment tends, and that we only lose our way in a too far removed and unserviceable notion when we talk of being merged in Ultimate Deity. The Unity to which we are now returning is the rest of our race - the divine exiles here on earth.

This seems to be the reason why persons who have had a touch of cosmic consciousness show a prevailing impulse for the rest of their lives to make mankind the object of their devotion, to see God as it were in their brothers' faces. All true humanism has arisen primarily out of this mystical vision and has taken its stand against the worship of a personal God. The older humanists called the Divine Communion, in whose body we are all atoms, Osiris, and symbolized the present partition of mankind into scattered and confused souls as the dismemberment of Osiris, the fragments of whose body must again be assembled. It is to the assembling of the fragments that the Masters are pledged.

Damascius says of this resurrection of the dismembered Osiris, or return to the higher consciousness, that it "should be a mingling with the God, an all-perfect at-one-ment, a return upwards of our souls to the divine".

So we have again, in another problem of modern science which is compelling the attention of students, a picture of the soul of man which can transcend mind under conditions so contradictory as to preclude the idea that the soul is slowly evolving into the transcendent state. We must decide whether we will take our stand with the Church mystics and the Quietists and say it is the fantastic gift of a personal God, or with H. P. Blavatsky and the occultists who say it is the renewal, brief or enduring, of an ancient power of entering a common consciousness we have forgotten.

THE THEOLOGICAL PROBLEM

Within recent years theological problems presented in the theologian's manner have ceased to be matters of great importance to thinking people. They are survivals of a gloomy interval in the history of mankind and do not conform to a free habit of thought. Emancipated thinking must be based on verifiable experience that can be correlated and made to yield laws. While the proper correlation may be greatly assisted by the records of previous enquiry and by intuitional processes, it is none the less necessary that the whole inquiry have its roots in physical, emotional and mental phenomena.

Instead of proceeding from fact on any of these three planes, theologians demand that you proceed from imputed fact-dogma. This dogma, which we now know derives from an ancient, symbolical guide to the intuitions, has been so badly mutilated that it will no longer interpret fact. The theologian is in a quandary. Lacking the ability to impose it by force, he must discard it altogether or thump a desk and assert that it is fact.

The primary material of Christian theology - all other theologies embody the same principle but manifest it variously - instead of being made up of data of experience, is a body of tradition or fable, handed down from generation to generation, and, as I have suggested, badly distorted in its many transfers. In its starkest form the tradition is as follows :

That the universe and all its creatures are the product of an omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, but none the less personal God, who is moved by anger, jealousy, unwillingness to forgive and by preferences for one of His creatures over another. That the first human beings He created in His own image proved a disappointment and plunged themselves and all their physical descendants into a state of alienation from the omniscient God who must have known perfectly well what they intended to do, but was none the less angry with them for what He permitted them to do. So unrelenting was He, or so incompetent at finding a way out of His mistake that it was a trifle over four thousand years before He executed a scheme of redemption by which He incarnated on earth as His own Son. Those who would or could thereafter believe such a relief measure was actually the work of the same One Cause, who kept the stars in their courses, ordered the minerals and plants and animals with all their myriad intricacies and ramifications, could at death go to eternal happiness. Those who for some defect could not, were condemned for eternity to an inferior state, if not to a state of actual torment.

Most theologians, for reasons of common sense, would repudiate so bare a statement. They avoid bare statements of their dogma because without theological adornment and a thick mist of words it is too terrible for acceptance. Rarely does any of them dare to state it even in full. They devote their lives to special and less contradictory aspects of it.

None the less, what I have given is a map of the theological theatre of war, and all the great battles of theology have been settled or are still raging within its boundaries.

The profound controversy between theists and deists is between those who think that a personal God, having made the world, remains in touch with all His creatures to hear their prayers and importunities,

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and those who think that having made it, the personal God is now beyond reach and is no longer bothering about it. The deists are called rational theologians.

The intricate trinitarian dispute turns on whether God incarnated Himself as His Son, or whether He made for the occasion a Son of superior quality but separate from Himself.

The struggles over original sin are also within the map. They have to do with the mystery of that first offence which God must have anticipated but which so gravely annoyed him when it occurred. They have to do with the precise nature of the offence, the extent of the alienation, and the justice of the inheritance of the penalty by souls who had nothing to do with the offence and do not even know what it was.

The famous, but never finished, war between the Traducians and the Creationists is a dispute about the origin of the individual soul and started as a skirmish in the fight about original sin. The Traducians declared that souls are generated at the same time and in the same manner as bodies, by sexual union. Thus only, the Traducians said, could there be any transmission of the original sin by inheritance. The Creationists insisted that whenever two bodies came together and made a third, God hurriedly created a soul to thrust into it. Although Traducianism is the only theory (within the map) that will validate original sin, it is now rarely held. The Creationist picture of a God of love making an innocent new soul to accommodate the amours of a drunkard and a harlot, who will later instruct it in their arts and send it bowling along to hell, has evidently proven more attractive to the theologians. Perhaps it is another mystery into which you must not peer - or you may laugh.

The unending controversy between the exponents of freewill and those of predestination with all the rarefied subtleties that have gone into it, is a war to decide, within the boundaries I have outlined, whether, because God knows everything in advance - as would become an omniscient deity - all events are therefore fixed, or whether one of God's creatures can decide of his own free will to do something God knows in advance he will not do or something God had not foreseen. Predestination destroys the whole point of the redemptive system, because whether an individual will be saved or not is all fixed in advance. Free will, on the other hand, makes God less than omniscient. If the Predestinarian is right, God knows in advance every time he makes a soul for eternal torment, but seemingly He continues to do so because He is bound by a law manifested in the sexual proclivities of His creatures. In which case again He is not only less than omnipotent but is a servant of sex.

The wars over the true apostolic succession are no more than commercial wars about the authorized agency for the redemption brought to earth by Incarnate God. The apostolic successors would argue that in addition to making an inefficient scheme of salvation, God further vitiates its efficiency by permitting a monopoly of it instead of using every agency to further it. They have this in their favour of course, that the God who would work out such a system of salvation would be just the one to limit its use. He is that kind of a God.

The controversy over the actuality of the eternal torment for those who rejected or missed redemption are wars of method. They are between those who believe in scaring men into the arms of a loving Father, and those who would lure men into the arms of an angry one. Or the other way about. It does not make much difference.

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These are the great wars. There are numberless little ones. Does the power of the Incarnated God to absolve from sin continue in his human self-elected successors and exponents ? Does an infant who dies without doing wrong suffer eternally for the sin of those first parents to whom he is in no way spiritually related except through the Loving God who made all three ? Can a ritual of admission to a Church save such an infant from the penalties for sins he never committed? Has God made any provision or amnesty for those who missed redemption because God made them before it came into effect? Has He made any provision or amnesty for those who miss it or have missed it for geographical reasons - being born in an unfavourable place ? Has He made any provision for those who refused the whole doctrine because they sincerely believed they had a better one, or because the men who tried to persuade them by argument or force were notoriously debauched or dishonest or cruel? If God has made any or all of these provisions is it not a much less advantageous thing for a man to hear of redemption than to live in ignorance where the responsibility is not so great ? Was not the whole redemptive scheme, therefore, a further cruelty in that it put on some a responsibility it did not put on others ? Who is to be held responsible, the Congo native who dies in ignorance of redemption for lack of a visit from the missionary, or the missionary who went to a garden-party instead of carrying the message to the native ? Or does God personally adjust these lesser inadvertences at the last day ? Since all cases contain inadvertences, might He not merely adjust each case as it comes up without any redemptive complications at all ? Is redemption to be considered the reward of godlike acts, or is it the reward of simple belief in the scheme ? If it is the reward of acts, what point would there be in redeeming a dying man already bankrupted by his sins ? If this is the reward of faith the sooner a man dies after his redemption the better. This, incidentally, was the position of the Chicago clergyman who, having reconciled a murderer with his God, opposed a commutation of the death penalty, for fear his convert, if permitted to live, would fall again from grace. The clergyman was strictly logical within the theologian's scheme. If other clergymen were as logical, and were devoted enough, they would first save and then shoot their converts.

These are a few of the crucial issues of Christian theology .They fill the dusty tomes of those great and good men whose books we see but so rarely read. Stripped of their latinity and reduced to everyday language these are the subjects theologians debate. They are at great pains, however, not to let the contradictions get into one sentence where they will become too evident. As long as they are carefully compartmented they are impressive. If perchance the contradictions become evident the theologian says "That is a great mystery, and it does not do to pry into the inscrutable will of God. It unsettles faith," he says. What he means is that such enquiry unsettles theology. People will reject his system as valid theory and his revelation as fact.

You will observe that for the theologian his dogma presents many problems. For the person no longer persuaded that the Creator of the universe can be so incompetent and ridiculous a personage as the theologian makes him, there can be only one problem - a psychological one.

How has such a farrago of nonsense maintained the tenacious hold it has upon the minds of men ?

There are several reasons, some lesser, and one, I believe, the great central reason. One reason is to be found in human laziness, the willingness to let men whose trade it is argue these problems. Another reason is human fear - the fear of going in the face of bigotry. Another and more important reason is that the flower of the teaching of Jesus, regeneration through love, has so commended itself to good men and women that they have accepted for its sake the tangle of degradations the theologians have permitted to

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grow up around it. Another reason is that, aided by the forces of bigotry and frightened compliance, theologians of a certain type have, wherever they could, destroyed the traces of efforts men have made to purify and cleanse it.

Beyond all these, the great reason for its persistence is that, concealed within its misshapen form, there is just enough of the element of truth to arouse in men the vague memory of a truth they once held but have forgotten and cannot quite recall. Deformed as the fable is, it has still the discernible shape of an age-old wisdom about the origin of man and of his relation to earth. The dogma has the power to stir the ancient memory without reviving it, and men cling to the distorted formula in dread that if they lose it they will have no clue at all. The more they dread the loss of the clue the more frantic and bigoted they become.

There is no absolute untruth in the world. The grossest superstitions are divine visions reflected in the waters of man's desires, and the more disturbed the waters, the more hideous the reflections. The Kabbalist says, "Demon deus inversus est - the evil principle is only the godlike principle upside down."

For the student of occultism every distorted image is a divine image he must restore. Every myth, every fanaticism, every broken fragment of unclean magic, has somewhere at the heart of it a clue to a divine function. Man does not make new ideas of religion; he gets old ideas wrong.

Let us see if we can find what was in the minds of the first progenitors of the fable, who possessed their memory of the ancient truth, and see then how the theologian has reflected it in the waters of his own desire. In order to do so we must now go outside the Christian field because although all theologies are distorted the distortion varies with the religion.

By putting fragments together and comparing one with another we discover the original formula to have been something like this :

That from an Absolute Divinity, an Unmanifest, have emerged wave upon wave of beings, no less divine than their ineffable source but limited by their conceptions of themselves. That in long process of ages they have proceeded through experience to more and more extended consciousness, presenting in the aggregate the picture of a great army of journeying souls stretched out along a road, none less divine than any other, but differentiated by their consciousness of divinity. That not only do they advance but they are bound by the law of their being to preserve the unity of the whole by transmitting, each to the orders below it, in a kind of cosmic link-motion, the spiritual forces received from the orders of beings beyond. That, being each a first cause in his own right, they have the same free will that inheres in the great First Cause, and can manifest it in the measure that they have realized divinity. That in the chain, however it came about, a race, identified with this earth before the thinking Egos touched it, broke down, and whether by the exercise of its own will or by the failure of the will of the regents who guided it, became distorted. That another race beyond these- our own - whose duty it was to transmit higher powers to the lower race, refused to accept responsibility for the misshapen creatures, or to enter into them. That at last under cosmic law the higher race was compelled to do so, was drawn down into the sphere of earth, where its individuals dwell now, embodying themselves as rarely as cosmic law will permit, in the misshapen bodies of the beings they have to redeem. That by their rebellion they have lost

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a great measure of the powers they first brought to earth, and instead of being the Unity they once were, are a scattered and terrified host. That if they take thought and renew their lost powers they can return to that comparatively high wisdom from which they fell. That if they do not they must inevitably be drawn down into the creatures they despise. That from time to time one of the unwilling becomes willing, performs his task, returns to the Unity with his brothers - the God of which he is a part - and knowing the truth pledges himself to work for the restoration of it among his exiled brethren here upon earth. That such liberated ones work without ceasing, relying upon each other for support, and creating a unified body of doctrine which they renew from century to century as the activities of theology vitiate it. That the liberated one stands in the relation of exemplar and friend to the rest of mankind, and that it is the Ego who is, himself, the redeemer and potential Son of the Unity or God he has forgotten. That the original sin which taints us all refers therefore to the refusal and that it is carried from incarnation to incarnation by each Ego and not from father to child by generation.

At first glance it seems as fantastic a formula, perhaps, as the other. It has this difference, however, that it is capable of proof by phenomena on all planes. It is the key to comparative religion and it agrees with the findings of philosophy and the sciences as far as they have gone. Often, as I have shown, it solves what they cannot.

Let us see now how the theologians vitiated the age - old formula - in what desires they let it reflect itself.

Their first destructive step was when they desired that their God should be more important and all-inclusive than the gods of their rival religions. They expanded the phrase "the God" in the books they had inherited. "The God" was evidently what the Eastern religious teachers called Atma. It is our Unity or Oversoul and functions in a realm immediately superior to mind. Between it and the First Cause are vast ranges of consciousness which will be beyond our ken for untold ages. As soon as the theologians of those early years said "Our God is the All-God" they started at once a series of destructive contradictions, and they had to give attributes to an Absolute Unmanifest who cannot have attributes.

The next distortion arising out of their desires was when they made their teacher Jesus the one and unique Son of their Absolute God. This required that they wipe out all traces of previous teachers who were also Sons of "the God". It required also that they destroy the symbolic and exemplary relation of Jesus to all Egos and have it in the special and historical relation of the pseudo-deity Jesus to all mankind. It was Sanchoniathon who said of the Egyptians that "they corrupted their mysteries by cosmical and historical affections," which is precisely what these early Christians did. They made "the God" cosmic in his scope, and the Son who was the symbol of each Ego they reduced to a historical incident.

When you have told one lie you must either acknowledge it or tell another. No falsehood ever stood alone. In order to validate their cosmic Father and His unique Son they had to wipe out also that which had been explicit in early Christianity, as it is in all religions at the beginning, the doctrine of the rebirth of the soul. If the Omnipotent Creator after a long interval begets His one and only Son, it is essential for a belief in it that the souls who are to be saved shall come only once to earth. If they have come many times before and are to come again and again thereafter as a means of working out their own destiny, the one and only appearance of the Saviour must be only a trifling incident in their lives. Furthermore if you admit the principle of coming again and again, the first thing you know you will have the necessary

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idea of a Saviour coming again and again, which of course plays the mischief with the unique redeemer idea. People will shop around and go where they like the theology best. It also arouses the suspicion that the pagan redeemers whose cults surrounded early Christianity might have been similarly Sons of God. Buddha might have been a redeemer, and Krishna, and Dionysos, and Attis, and Hercules, and Horus, and Baldur. So, abolishing reincarnation from their formula, the early Christian theologians had to fall back upon the alternative of souls begetting souls by sex or of God creating souls to order .

Another distortion of the ancient truth must necessarily follow. If the soul has not lived before, it cannot have shared in an offence that alienated it from the God. Therefore the very evident state of alienation that exists must have been inherited in some obscure way or must arise out of God's annoyance at the behaviour of Adam and Eve.

The old universal saying is that the soul alone is responsible. What it has sown, that also must it reap. The degraded formula says, "By a special act of clemency on God's part, the soul may sow a great evil and reap a great good, or may sow a little good but for lack of having taken part in God's clemency, may reap a great evil." Exact justice thus becomes a farce. When the Church Fathers had extracted the last comic element out of it in this form, their Latin successors developed new comic values by remitting evil themselves. Then they spun out the doctrine to permit of the issue of coupons that would remit sins even before they were committed.

It is easy, therefore, to see how men who take such a doctrine and by falsifying the idea of "the God" so necessary to its usefulness, by removing the idea that each soul is a redeemer of a fallen being, by vesting the redemptive power in one personage, by throwing away the necessary idea of the pre-existence of the soul, and by making justice the whim of deity, must come out with a monstrous caricature of the old idea.

They have had hundreds of chances to amend. They had a choice between Plato who knew it and Aristotle who did not. They wiped out the Platonists and clung to Aristotle. Origen knew and taught it and they put him under anathema. In 1400 it was a punishable offence on the part of Pico della Mirandola even to offer to debate whether Origen was in hell. Paul knew the old tradition and for centuries the Latin theologians would willingly have left him out of the New Testament. They laboured to supplant him with their favourite Peter through whom they had exclusive sales rights on salvation. The Mithraists knew it and the Holy fathers crushed them. The Manicheans knew it and a hundred thousand were put to death with torture. Basilides knew it and his books were burned. The Cathars and Albigenses knew it and were mercilessly destroyed even though the south of France had to be devastated. The troubadours knew it and paid with their lives. Lully knew it and was locked up as mad. Dante knew it and was an exile all his life. Roger Bacon knew it and was kept under lock and key. Bruno knew it and was burned to death.

Since the Renaissance the burnings have been less frequent. The bigots have been forced to use persecutions of a lesser sort, obscurantism, tampering with books, and fulminations from their pulpits.

There has never been but one heresy -the effort to restore the old doctrine of the exile of the soul and to restate the means by which each man must find his way back into the wisdom of the God.

THE MYTHOLOGICAL PROBLEM

In the preceding article I have offered a brief version of an ancient formula as an approximation to the truth underlying Christian theological distortions of the tradition of the fall and redemption. I have claimed for the formula that it is a key, not only to the understanding of the Christian mythos, but to the interpretation of all other mythological systems. I am now under obligation to demonstrate that it is as I have said.

It should require no great space to prove that Christianity, however bitterly theologians argue for its historicity is a mythos like all the others. It is true that for many centuries, during which there was a poverty of comparative data, the theologians had little difficulty in persuading men that the miraculous birth, the escape from slaughter in infancy, the baptism by the fore runner, the transfiguration on the mount, the temptation, the crucifixion, and ascension of Jesus were unique in religion, and were celebrations on the part of God of His special paternity of the Judean redeemer. Neither was it difficult in those days to argue that the sayings of Jesus embody a truth and ethic previously unattained by any sage or prophet among men.

A better informed generation knows now, from archaeological research and the inflow of Eastern scriptural writings, that every religion has had its virgin mothers, most religions several of them. Virgin birth is now recognized to be much more a spiritual than a physical fact. Better philosophers than ours find something ridiculous in our Christian insistence on a foolish and unnecessary trick by which a God would distinguish this unique Son from the multitudes of other ordinary sons. The slaughter of the innocents by Herod has never been taken as fact except by the credulous. So wholesale a massacre would have been corroborated by a dozen classical historians. Now we know that an identical legend forms part of the symbolic story of every avatar in his infancy. Buddhist Gautama, Hindu Krishna, Egyptian Horus, all had similar escapes from the powers of evil, and in the Egyptian mythos, the jealous ruler was actually called Herrut, the "slayer of the youngling in the egg". Even Herod seems to have been used mythically. All religions have the illustration as a symbol of the passing under the waters, or plunging in the waters of desire. Most religions have a transfiguration on the mount, and of some of these other transfigurations, notably the Buddhist and Egyptian, ours is only an attenuated shadow. Even our cherished cross is a universal glyph of the process by which a superman sacrifices himself for an erring race, and is the symbol of the means by which, having done it, he rejoins the Oversoul. Gautama Buddha is marked with a cross on his forehead; Krishna is transfixed to a tree by an arrow in a cruciform attitude; Horus is crucified on an orb between two trees or "breathers" ; Bacab in ancient Yucatan is crucified between two revilers in Tzonpantli, the place of the skull. All redeemers ascend to heaven after their work is done and take their place with the Father. The husband of the Virgin of the world is always an artificer, Vulcan, mate of Venus Urania; Joseph of Mary; Seb of Isis ; Brihaspati of Soma. The secret teaching is invariably given on mounts of vision; the twelve apostles have their parallels in the twelve labours, the twelve adversaries of Buddha, twelve initiations, twelve Zodiacal signs and the twelve powers in the body along the girdle of the beast. The avatars are always fishers of men, or shepherds of men, or both. There is always an adversary who has been cast out in some fabulous war in heaven.

Even the *Logia* or sayings of Jesus, clung to so desperately by men whose business it is to prove that they are selling an exclusive line of goods, are not original with the Christian scriptures. They all have

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their earlier parallels, often richer and fuller than the fragments which survived our era of patristic bigotry. The Sermon on the Mount is age-old and was never spoken, extemporaneously. It was obviously written. The Lord's Prayer has earlier parallels for every phrase, so also have the parables. The whole story of Jesus from Gethsemane to the end is not a historical narrative. It is a scenario for the secret mystery drama of the early Christians, that drama to which St. Paul refers when he says: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eye's Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"

To the kind of man for whom there is more virtue in a story if it be given time and place, and if all the events in it are actual, this passing of the treasured marvels of the historical life of Jesus into spiritual myth is a desecration. To the thinking man such a spiritualization opens a door into wisdom. History, he knows, is shadow; myth is the effort of the creative mind to explain the truth behind shadow. A historical event is over and done with; a myth is ongoing and eternal. Sallustius, the Neo-Platonist said of Greek myths - and of all myths: "These things never were; *they always are.*"

As the Christian fable resumes its place among the cosmic stories of the world, it takes on dignity. The tradition, once frankly allegorical, then reduced for so many centuries to the imbecility of unrelated fact, stands again abreast of the great spiritual dramas of the race, and may be interpreted by means of its parallels.

There are three kinds of modern writers about mythology. The first are the few who see in it a secret tradition passing from generation to generation, kept always in the world for returning and returning souls as they become in time pure and intuitive enough to receive it. They interpret the parallels of religion and myth as meaning that all systems emanate from the one body of truth available to all sages. These myth-interpreters have their reward in the wisdom that comes of discerning similarities and in the power that comes of teaching.

The second are the mythologists who with a great parade of scholarship and scientific method, but with a definite intention, none the less, to bring in a verdict for the uniqueness of Christianity, plunge into the subject and emerge presently with a book that proves, by disparaging all other faiths, that Christianity is the sole and effulgent light of the world. These get their reward in professorships, curatorships of museums, editorships of safe books and occasionally a bishopric. They produce many books but are not extensively read. Their celebrity arises chiefly from the fact that they quote each other approvingly. It is very doubtful, for instance, if you have ever read a book by J. Estlin Carpenter, or Professor Grant Showerman or Dr. Pfeleiderer, but if you have ever read any book in this class, you are sure they are great men.

Third are the mythologists who, having observed the success in our time of the materialistic doctrine of evolution, have endeavoured to interpret mythology along lines parallel to it. They decide that myths evolved with man. All religious fables, they say, arose out of primitive misapprehension and, superstition, and all religion is the philosophization of the errors of savage belief. These mythologists try, according to various formula, to probe the benighted mind for the influences - hunger, fear, cruelty, and lust - that were the first parents of religious belief. If they are consistent in their theory, of course, they have to find that Christianity is similarly a collection of rationalized outcroppings of savagery, but their art and usually their fame is in the measure of their skill in not saying so in a manner that will give offence. Most of them make

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a slight, but still discernible, genuflexion as they pass the altar. They have their reward in being acclaimed as very scientific and uncompromising, and are said to be abreast of modern culture. They produce many books and are most widely read of the three classes. None the less they are a puzzled lot.

Their first difficulty arises out of the fact that none of them has ever succeeded in proving that a religion evolves, or even improves as time goes by. Like the Christian apologist whose business requires him to demonstrate the superiority of Christianity, they have carried a partial conclusion into their impartial enquiry.

Every datum of religion indicates that a religious system does not evolve. It always degenerates. It is never born of human ignorance, but of human vision. The normal habit of mankind is not to enrich the lucubrations of the village idiot, but to cheapen and miss the point of the sentences of the village wise man. The best Christian to date has been the inspirer, whoever he was, of the Christian renewal of the wisdom tradition. No Christian would contend for a moment that the founder of Christianity had been surpassed or improved on. The best Buddhist so far, and the wisest, has been Gautama Buddha. The best exponent of Bhagavad Gita has been the teacher who uttered it. There has been no Platonist greater than Plato, no teacher of Yoga greater than Patanjali, no exponent of Veda greater than Veda Vyasa, no Hermetist greater than Hermes, no Zoroastrian greater than Zoroaster, nor any Vedantin greater than Sankara. A stream does not rise higher than its source. What student would be so foolish as to read the five thousand words of Lao-Tsze and then examining modern Taoism with its devils and its shamanism, declare that the present form had evolved ? A garment evolves ? It evolves tatters and filth.

We have no trouble demonstrating the degeneration of living religions, where we can find something of the personality of the prophetic founder and his apostles. Why then should we suppose that a different law supervenes when the personalities of the founders are missing? Or should we, having a system, refuse to believe there was a founder? Whatever is true of religions whose whole duration falls within the historical period is true also of those whose start was prehistoric. Why accept a Jesus or a Lao-Tsze or a Buddha and reject an Orpheus or a Hermes? And finding the degraded fragments of an older faith why should we suppose them to have had an origin different from that of the degraded fragment of a younger one ?

If the older forms are more corrupt it is not because they have had a different kind of origin, but, obviously, because they are older, and more thousands of misunderstanders of the first ideal have had a chance to corrupt them. One selfish or stupid man can defile a whole sect; he can disgust the more intelligent members of it with his distortions of truth until, when they go elsewhere, he can have only the people foolish enough to perpetuate his follies. How great then can be the destructive effect on a religion of the entry into it of thousands of self-seeking and inferior men who make filthy its first intent. With such a destructive process in mind it is not hard to foresee the time, for instance, when the selfishness and bigotry of the followers of Christianity encrusting it with their dogmas of papal infallibility, of sacraments that are pure whether the priest is or not, of plenary absolutions, of indulgences, of extreme unctions, of assumptions of Mary; their fetichisms of sacred hearts, of charms and amulets and scapulars, of magical waters, of reproduced stigmata, and bones and nails and bits of wood, of Veronica's napkins, will make Christianity no longer fit for the use of the higher kind of intelligent humans and will hasten it down the long road to voodoo and tribal magic.

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In the meantime thinking souls will have enlisted under other and newer teachers, no more inspired than the Christian and no less Sons of the God, but with a restored and cleaner magic. If in lives to come one of our present Christians happen on broken shards of the Christian vessel and thinks of them as born of the mistakes of savage minds, he will be making the same error about the Nazarene that our mythologists make about the forgotten northern sage whose wisdom remains to us in the Elder Edda, or about that Thoth-Herme's whose vision became the hocus-pocus of a thousand Egyptian cemeteries.

This is the prime reason why the evolutionary mythologists are puzzled. If you are quite sure that nine-tenths of the material of your study is nonsense, it will be fatally easy - for reasons of mental laziness alone - to give up your effort to understand a difficult problem, and assign the whole thing to the nonsense division. The man who is satisfied that the earth is flat and that the sun goes over and under it, can never become a distinguished interpreter of Copernicus, nor will any man who thinks compassion a waste of time make much of the sayings of Gautama Buddha. Neither will anyone who is sure the science of philology was invented yesterday have the patience to unriddle the *Cratylus* of Plato. Instead you will find him saying, "Plato, so intelligent about other matters, was ignorant and credulous in his tracing of the origins of Greek words, and his *Cratylus* has no scientific value." Which is to say that the clear-eyed Plato, in spite of the strictest habit of examination of any philosopher we have ever known, in spite of a lifetime in the use of Greek, in spite of association with the greatest trained minds of the golden age of Athens, in spite of an intimate knowledge of the several dialects and related languages, the possession of dictionaries that have disappeared, for all he pondered words and was the greatest classical user of them, for all he was the avowed continuer of the then - extant lore of Orpheus, Onomacritus, Pherecydes, Aglaophamus, Homer, Pythagoras and Pindar, word makers and users, knew less of these things than a foggy-minded English or German curate.

Similarly you will find such a Gradgrind writing, "The Greek mind, of course, was incapable of understanding such and such a thing or, " It never occurred to the ancient Egyptian that-", or "The Hindu could not conceive of ", or when Homer does not specifically mention something, saying " It is certain that Homer knew nothing of -". Sometimes you will find one of these omniscient gentlemen writing this kind of nonsense; "The figure of the infant Horus with his finger upon his lips was long considered a symbol of secrecy, and was used as such by Egyptian, Greek, and Roman secret societies. Modern research shows that it meant nothing of the sort ; that it was merely a sign of childish innocence." That is to say, the societies that *used* it and the sculptors who *made* it with such a use in mind, as a sign of the inviolability of a mystery cult did not know why they used it or why they made it. What is one to do with minds like these ? Yet such are the constant processes of argument brought to bear on the modern interpretation of myth. These are the absurdities inseparable from an evolutionary theory of religion.

With this habit to defeat their best endeavours it is easy to see why our interpreters of religious fable do not penetrate far into the mystery. They have in recent years worked out a definition of myth on which most of them agree. In the version of W. Sherwood Fox it is as follows :

" A myth is a statement, or virtual statement as implied in a symbol, an attribute, or an epithet, accepted as true by its original maker and his hearers, and referring to the eternal nature and past acts of beings greater than man, and frequently to circumstances which to us are improbable or impossible."

It is the requirement of this school of thinking that the phrase "accepted as true by its original maker and

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his hearers," should mean that it was accepted as literally true, or if some element of symbol did enter in it must be such a symbol as could be easily grasped by childlike minds. If one suggests that it may have been offered as philosophical or mythical allegory, these mythologists reply that being born of savagery it could have had only a trifling interpretation. Under no circumstances must you attribute a high meaning to it although it is permissible to attribute ever so far-fetched a low one. Their dogma is that because it originated early in the history it must have a less profound value than if it had appeared later. Which is the same as saying that all later poets must be superior to all earlier ones, that all later philosophers must be wiser than all earlier philosophers and all later teachers more profound than all earlier ones. Which of course is nonsense.

The outstanding fact about human thought is that wisdom is where you find it and you are more likely to find it in a document of tradition that has had the power to move many persons over a long period of time. The great myths may easily have been - indeed the mass of evidence is in favour of their having been - the symbolical expression of ideas from which we are excluded because of materialistic prejudices. The same Sallustius I quoted before had another wise saying about which is a key to the art of myth reading. It was that when the events of a myth become improbable or impossible as literal fact it became the duty of the student to look for a spiritual fact. Only an evolutionary mythologist can assume that these early poets and seers must have been fools offering impossibilities to credulous listeners. By the rules of his game he must think Keats a fool for telling people that jocund day ever stood tiptoe upon a misty mountain-top.

The central clause is valid enough but it is insufficient to account for the facts. He says that myth refers to "the eternal nature and past acts of beings greater than man." What is needed to complete it is an idea, as easily available to Dr. Fox as it is to any other reader. It is to be found throughout the pages of the best and wisest teachers of the various systems - that most of the beings greater than man, whose eternal nature and past acts form the body of myth, *are none other than man himself*. The rest are man's adversaries here upon earth.

Pythagoras is clear upon the point so far as Greek myth is concerned. So is Empedocles and so is Plato. So also are Plotinus, Plutarch, Iamblichus and Proclus. Hermes Trismegistus, the Egyptian, leaves no doubt of his belief that men are fallen divinities. The Hindu sages, Krishna, Gautama, and Sankara, taught it. So did the Chinese Lao Tsze, Lieh Tsze, Chuang Tsze, Confucius, Chu Hse, and Wang Yang Ming. No one can read the Gathas without recognizing it as fundamental in Zoroastrian belief; the Sufis taught it, and so did the Christian Gnostics. It is in the Eddas, the Quran, and the Kabbalah. It is in our Christian tradition.

Why then, if it is so evident that all the myths deal with a golden age before the descent of the Divine Egoes, a bondage or enchantment here in the hands of the adversaries, and a return again to our earlier home, do not modern mythologists accept it?

Because they do not want it. And honest use of their scientific method would dictate that they report the phenomena as they find them saying, these are the beliefs and although we do not hold them, these foolish and credulous people did. They are not so honest, they repudiate the philosophy that accompanies the stories and assign meanings they themselves can believe. The only reason for thinking an ancient Mayan could possibly believe the ocean swallowed the sun at night and disgorged it in the

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morning is that Sir Bertram Windle had the kind of mind that permitted him to believe the Mayan could.

Just as surely as the Christian apologists are pledged to the belief that Christianity is the true light, so the evolutionary mythologists are pledged to the idea that evolution is the only true theory of man on earth, and no matter what the facts, they will bring in their predetermined verdict. That man was once higher than he is and is now below his true place is a defiance of Darwin and Haeckel and although you may say what you please about God, Darwin and Haeckel are sacred. Too many men have invested their reputations in them.

Meanwhile, the contradictions involved in the life, let us say of Dionysos, the heights from which he has come, the degradations to which he has fallen and the heights to which he will again ascend, clear enough as Proclus explains him, must be modernly interpreted as the sap in the grapevine. Prometheus, the god who fell into the bondage of the earth forces, so revealing a figure in Aeschylus, must remain a primitive savage who discovered fire; the Kumaras or celibate youths who descended into half animal bodies to redeem them, must have their interpretation in sex magic and taboo; the Chinese men of old time who knew the Tao and lost it, must be understood as skin-clad barbarians of a pastoral age. The key that would reconcile the contradictions and thus lead to a useful conclusion these mythologists reject because they do not want the conclusion.

The fables of redeemers, understood in all the older faiths as types and exemplars of man himself, of the ego of each of us, are to these interpreters, "culture-heroes" and no more. The fables of Orpheus who came down into this place of shades for Eurydice, of Persephone drawn down into the realm of Pluto, of Herakles who toiled for the liberation of men, of Perseus who freed Andromeda from the sea-monster, of Theseus who defeated the Minotaur, of Apollo who slew Typhoeus, of dismembered Osiris assembled and raised again, of the Greek Sons of the Sun besieging the stronghold of the Sons of the Moon to free Helen, Rama the Son of the Sun freeing Sita from the moon host, Arjuna and his four brothers all the Sons of the Sun defeating the Kurus or Sons of the Moon. Vainamoinen defeating the evil magician Lemminkainen, the Volsungs toiling to save a lower race, are nothing but childish efforts of the dawn of human intellect to celebrate their tribal strong men? It doesn't seem reasonable. There is too much power in the stories. They have moved too many wise men of vision. If they do not move mythologists to vision the implication is plain.

THE ETHICAL PROBLEM

We get our word 'ethics' (through the Latin *ethicus*) from the Greek *ethikos*, that which pertains to *ethos*, character. With the Greeks the word *ethos* had other connotations. It meant custom, usage, native habit, and in its original sense contained also the idea of an accustomed seat or place, a habitat, or primal abode.

As a branch of philosophy ethics concerns itself with the meaning and scope of the words "good" and "bad", "right and wrong", as applied to character and to conduct. The first phase of its enquiry is descriptive. It endeavours to classify thoughts, moods, and actions according to their goodness or badness. In its second phase it determines, if possible, whether the common ideas of goodness and badness and right and wrong reveal any absolute standards of action, or point to any cosmic laws that govern the issues of conduct.

After many centuries during which ethics had been looked upon as purely philosophical in its subject matter and method, enthusiastic scientists of the nineteenth century made an effort to bring it into the fashionable field of positive science, but without notable success.

It should have been evident to the biologists who made the effort that it must end in failure. It inevitably ends in a ring-around-a-rosy. A science is necessarily experimental. Since the results of right and wrong action could be understood only by the experimenter and in his own person - to anyone else or in anyone else they would be mere opinion - he must be, therefore, not only his own laboratory but also his own judge of results, and he must judge by means of his ethical judgment which is the subject of his experiment.

Worse than this for practical purposes, it is the great defect of all attempts at ethical experiment that the observable consequences of actions are too far removed from their causes in point of time. Indeed the cycle of most important moral operations does not fall within a single lifetime. This makes a positive science of ethics quite impossible for a materialist or a theologian. If the experimenter is a materialist he can have no assurance that the results will show at all before the soul that produced the causes is resolved again into the life force from which it came. The results of most of his experiments must therefore be lost entirely or must be seen in physical descendants, in which case the whole problem is transferred to the field of heredity. An action that will only have its effect in a man's remote descendant is not a matter of active ethical interest, especially if he does not expect to have a descendant. If the experimenter has a predisposition for Christian dogma he is in an equally bad fix. The results of most experiments will only become evident in Heaven or Hell and will not be natural effects on the doer but merely effects manifested in the approval or annoyance of God. The only possible scientific experimenter in ethics would be the theosophist who believes in reincarnation, and he would expect the results to show in a subsequent life and would regard effects in this life as arising out of experimental conduct in previous ones. He would then have two courses of procedure, one would be to set up a cause and wait patiently for its result with the certainty that by the time he reached his result he would have mislaid his memoranda of the cause. The other would be to develop his memory of the specific causes in previous lives that have given rise to present results. As we shall see there is a simpler method.

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It is now generally agreed that ethics had better remain a branch of philosophy.

Philosophy has been defined as "a process of reflection upon the presuppositions involved in unreflective thought". In other words the philosopher turns his attention upon himself to discover how and why his mind does what it does and what are the elements he has all along carried in his mind without thinking of them. He does not deal with new things but with old and previously unobserved things. He sets his own precepts, concepts and processes in new lights and examines them. He seeks merely to become more fully aware of himself.

In logic he examines the processes of reasoning. In epistemology he seeks a theory of knowledge, endeavouring to know how he knows and whence come his ideas. In metaphysics he examines his apprehensions and his conceptions of space, cause, time, and substance. This is the enquiry into what the Greeks called the True - *aletheia*, the unforgettable. In aesthetics he examines his ideas of the Beautiful - *kalos*, excellence of form and motion as embodying interior spiritual function. In ethics he examines his ideas of the Good - *agathon*, that which is firm and secure.

In its first stages ethics is not a philosophy at all. It deals with specific problems such as any man might face in his daily life. "What would be just in this case ?" "What, in that case, would excuse one from responsibility?" The power to answer such questions is present with every Ego however little it may have been exercised. The power grows with use. Presently the first philosophical phases of the subject arise. "Why, given similar cases, should there be so great difference in the answers given by different men ?" "Why should the answers vary at all?" "Or, why, indeed, should men, having found an answer to a question proceed to do something contrary to that which they have decided ?" "Why should men, desirous of following a certain wrong line of conduct justify their actions by casting doubt upon the authority of the ethical judgment ?"

Thus, out of its own contradictions and difficulties, arise ethics as a philosophy. After all it is natural that it should so arise. Ethical philosophy is born of its own disabilities as certainly as a study of health is born of the fact of illness.

All ethical systems belong broadly to two groups. There are those that maintain that the intuitive power of judgment possessed by man is supreme, and a supreme guide to conduct. The others maintain, on one ground or another, that man's ethical judgment is not final but that there are other and external considerations which must guide his actions. These external standards vary. Herbert Spencer tried to erect standards on biological data and failed egregiously. Christian theologians have tried to base standards on an imputed revelation of the dictates of a personal God. Various writers have tried to found systems based on what they claim to be the universal acceptance of certain judgements, social, legal, or political. In view of the fact, however, that each of these systems is finally tested by the author's own ethical judgment and is addressed to the ethical judgment of those who read or study it, we are forced to conclude at last that there is only one valid basis for ethics, that of supreme power of the soul of man to decide between right and wrong. If a soul deciding for itself addresses to souls deciding for themselves a system of ethics which declares that souls do not decide for themselves, there is something wrong with the system.

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One of the great controversies in ethics has revolved around hedonism. The hedonist bases his contention that pleasure is the end of all human effort upon the universally experienced feeling that for a "good" to be good it must in some sense be "my good". The anti-hedonist offers the fulfilment of duty as the true end of effort, arguing that the pleasure of the individual can never be complete in himself.

A multitude of controversies have arisen also out of theology and the effort to place the ideas of an omniscient God above man's interior judgment. The first fallacy of such an external standard for conduct lies in the fact that the ethical judgment is itself superior to the idea of God. Man has never been willing to worship a God who does not fulfil his moral requirements. God is therefore inferior to whatever it is in man that makes ethical judgements. The folly of thinking of a God greater than the maker of Him has led to innumerable contradictions. The most noticeable in its effect on ethics has been that dispute to which I have referred before in these articles, the one about free will and predestination. It is a dispute that never could arise in the realm of pure ethics at all because all the ideas of ethics have to do with free choice between right and wrong and the inalienable right of man to will his own destiny. It is only when theologians have managed to persuade men of the existence of a personal deity who knows everything in advance that anyone will consider even for a moment, the soul as bound to a routine laid down in the mind-made God's foreknowledge.

The central problem of ethics, and the one with which I am especially interested in this series of articles, is a mystical one. It is the problem of the nature of that mysterious quality in man that makes him the sole and final arbiter of his relation to earth. The primary manifestation of the quality is the operation of Will. The soul of man acts, it refrains from action. It approves, it disapproves. It judges. It may judge rightly or wrongly in any given case but it reserves, for some high reason it does not itself understand, the right to will and to judge.

Emerson's schoolboy with his book of history is in no awe of Napoleon or of Alexander. He arraigns them for every thought, word and deed, he praises, he condemns serenely and without passion. He is their equal, not of this earth but of a higher world than this from which they all three have come. He is one soul appraising another and deciding what he would do - nay, will do - in like case, trying them by a higher criterion than they or he can bring to actuality. So he judges all kings and saints and heroes. His judgements of the event may be faulty, desires may disturb his calm; anger may sweep over him or a chill of fear; his understanding may limp but from his height he decides. He and they are beings superior to earth, walking about fitfully and dimly remembering how Gods should walk.

Plato, in common with all the great occult philosophers, found in this high assumption a demonstration of the state of the soul prior to its original descent into the bondage of earth. Lest I be accused of twisting Plato's doctrine to my needs let me offer a summary in the words of the late Dr. Henry Sidgwick : ". ..If the objects of abstract thought constitute the real world, of which this world of individual things is but a shadow, it is plain that the highest, most real life *must lie in the former region and not in the latter*. It is in contemplating the abstract reality which concrete things obscurely exhibit, the type or ideal which they imperfectly imitate, that the true life of the mind in man must consist; and as man is most truly man in proportion as he is mind, the desire of one's own good, which Plato, following Socrates, held to be permanent and essential in every living thing, becomes in its highest form the philosophical yearning for knowledge. This yearning, he held, springs-like more sensual impulses - from a sense of *want of something formerly possessed, of which there remains a latent memory in the soul*, strong in its proportion to its philosophic capacity; hence it is that in learning any abstract truth by scientific

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demonstration, we merely make explicit what we already know; we bring into clear consciousness hidden memories of a state in which the soul looked upon Reality and Good face to face, *before the lapse that imprisoned her in an alien body*, and mingled her true nature with fleshly feelings and impulses."

Sidgwick gives here the impression, frequent in modern philosophical writings, that Plato's Reality and Good are the ultimate Reality and Good. It is evident from Plato himself and from the Neo-Platonists that they were only comparative and that they do not in any sense embrace the entire scale of knowledge, but only an octave above and beyond the present octave of mind, namely, that subtle but none the less material plane the Eastern writers call Buddhi. It was the realm of the Christos in the Gnostic systems. This interior world which the soul has lost, Plato and his followers regarded as one in which our now separated soul's must be reintegrated into a unity we once enjoyed but have lost owing to the delusions of earth. The reawakening of the soul of man is for Platonists, a return to that Unity. This is the One of Plotinus, and as I have already suggested, it is the One which Christian theologians disfigured into their ultimate and all-knowing God.

Conceiving the race of men here upon earth as disintegrated and scattered fragments of that Unity, but essentially bound, each to the others, we have a clue to the truth about that other great crux of ethics - duty. This is the one which Kant called the greatest of mysteries. It is the ethical factor we saw the hedonist rejecting when he said, "That is not good which is not *my* good." The exponent of duty is a believer, however dimly he may see it, in the lost Unity, and he says, "Good can only be *our* good." There can be no good which omits any of the exiled race. They must go through together.

The concept of duty - that which one owes - is, then, a blurred recollection of the essential fact of existence in the One. This is the only valid explanation of the constantly recurring intuition that can impel a man to an act of sacrifice which he cannot justify by any process of mind. Hedonism is of the mind; duty is a reminiscence of the lost world beyond mind, and mind has been called always the great slayer of the real. The concept of justice is an archetypal idea from that lost world, as are the concepts of love, philosophy, mathematics and the yearning for beauty.

The differences between the souls of men in this world are not, therefore, to be explained as differences of development or as varying accretions of powers. They can only be explained as varying degrees of loss of divine self-consciousness. This is the only adequate explanation of the differences in the clarity of ethical judgment. Failure of judgment does not come of inadequate development but of over clouding. The will to act, the arrogation of the right to decide are of the divine soul and are common to all men. The failure to judge wisely comes of the obscuring forces of an alien earth.

THE HUMANIST PROBLEM

The magnificent old word "humanist" is one which has known many vicissitudes and if the rising fashion is any index, it is likely soon to know a few more.

In its broadest and most general sense humanism denotes a greater preoccupation with the welfare of man than with the glory of God. It implies a realization that whatever God's glory may be will be most efficiently enhanced by the service of God's creatures. Humanism is therefore an emphasis and an approach rather than a theory, and is polar to theology and sacerdotalism, which tend to emphasize man's duty to an extra-human and highly hypothetical Deity and to ascribe human joys and sorrows to the operation of His inscrutable will.

Of course humanism is as old as the human love which motivates it, but, in periods of priestly ascendancy it is forced to flow underground. In Europe it has several times welled up into a visible stream, once with Plato, once with the Neoplatonists, once with the Arabian philosophers who came into Europe with the Saracen invasion, and once with the rebirth of Platonism at the Renaissance of the fifteenth century. It is with this last that the word is specially identified, but like so many other words it has been parcelled out among the seers of the parts of things and has been used in limited senses. It is widely used to refer to the cultivation of classical (profane or non-Christian) literature; sometimes to mean any kind of secular learning. More recently Comte and his followers arrogated it as a name for the Positive philosophy. R. B. Haldane and others have used it to describe modern scientific advance. Professors Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More and Norman Foerster have revived it as a name of their kind of addiction to "polite letters" and abstention from anything that seems too modern, and have used it to describe a cold, intellectual gentility which they pretend derives from Plato. In the past year or so it has become a cult name and seems to be in for a vogue that will defile it, just as the word "Theosophy" has been defiled. It will then have to go back to the limbo of soiled words to be reissued when men have forgotten the follies associated with it. To date, however, it is a clean, noble word.

Each of the great humanistic movements in Europe in history has had a direct theosophical origin. It has been the projection into philosophy, religion, the arts, philanthropy and government of an idea which is fundamental in all theosophies - the idea of the essential unity of mankind and the consequent necessity for brotherhood as a means of awakening the intuitions of interior divinity which are the central object of effort in every theosophical system. This is the idea bound up in the word "Theosophy" itself. It is not, as so frequently interpreted, merely Divine Wisdom. Any religious system purports to be that, and saying that theosophy is especially so is no more than vociferation. It is "the wisdom of the god", that wisdom which man may make manifest by virtue of the fact that he has in the past attained to a far higher measure of divinity than he now displays. Or in another symbol, it is the Sophia, lost since our entry into this sublunary sphere.

It is easily demonstrable that no theology (Christian or other) can generate a vigorous humanism. Although Jesus, for example, is a humanist of the first order, engaged in his lifetime in the task of humanizing Jewish dogma, the theological accretions that have gathered about his doctrine have inevitably destroyed the spirit of his work. The dogma concerning Jesus is that a Father in Heaven, of whom he is the extraordinary son and we the stepchildren, has sent us all into the world and has known in advance the outcome of His action and ours. Nevertheless this God requires of us that we make a

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series of choices that His own foreknowledge renders impossible. Theology argues also that we can repair wrong choices by an implicit belief in the disparity between us and Jesus. It says that the outcome of this brief and futile period of choice - in which there is obviously no choice - is a return to the Father, who will in Justice and Mercy, (not manifested up to date) straighten out the whole intolerable tangle. With so muddled a theory of life and so optimistic a theory of death it is not marvellous that the central hope of theology will be a return to the Father. The more contradictory and confusing this God becomes the more surely will He become theology's central fact.

The injunction of the theologian's God to be compassionate and to love one's neighbour as oneself is the addition of insult to injury. Man is expected to do something God evidently overlooked - in effect to transcend his God. In any case it is the history of theology that the people who have taken its dogmas most seriously have been more concerned with propitiating the Deity than with loving the neighbour. The most logical adherents of the Christian dogma have felt with Torquemada that the best service one can render his erring neighbour is to despatch him to his God before he can do any more damage to his soul's chance of happy return. The fear of God has always been the destruction of the love of humanity.

Science does better. Compelled by the strict terms of its enquiry to confine itself to tangibles, visibles and audibles, it has to leave God - even an interior one in man - out of its research. It has therefore no lofty ideal left but the service of humanity. This service is, however, a trifle vague because, so far as the scientist can see - as scientist - humanity has its origin in birth and its end in death. Before the one and after the other there exists only the vaguest sort of abstraction. So unless the scientist has unscientific interior intimations to bear him up, he must pour all his energy and learning into a flux of forms that have visibility but no meaning. Man is only demonstrably man while he is in the body; therefore, he must argue, body makes man. The beneficiaries of the scientists' devotion have done nothing to deserve it, neither is there any certainty that they can requite it, or even benefit greatly by it. In only a few cases can they transmit it. This is a cold kind of humanism, and I doubt if any scientist with no wider vision than it implies would ever go on with it. So while he is performing a humanistic service, the theory of his effort is to be found elsewhere. He can, just as easily as anyone else, be a man who does the right thing for that wrong reason.

There is a third theory of life, increasingly widespread among us today, immeasurably wider in its sweep than the notions of theology and science, which might conceivably give a motive for humanistic endeavour but which rarely does so. It is that system of thought vaguely described as Hindu philosophy and promulgated in India and the West by exponents of exponents of the Advaita Vedanta. Rarely has it been offered in any completeness. What we have is a syncretism drawn from the six Darshanas or philosophical systems of India, better or worse put together .

It starts, as all great philosophies must, with an incognizable First Cause, out of which arises the polarity we recognize as spirit and matter. The Absolute Cause manifests and in the resultant ocean of being myriad centres of consciousness arise, each seeing the other apart from itself and each under the illusion of I and not-I. These lives begin a long pilgrimage from ignorance through successive stages of self-realization to an ultimate full knowledge of their divinity.

So far there is no division of opinion. This idea of the manifested universe and the flow of souls is common to all Eastern system and to many Western ones. The modern Vedantin, however, assuming a

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simple and unbroken rhythm as capable of explaining all phenomena, and as reconciling all contradictions, proceeds to deal with man as having mounted the cosmic stair to the position we now occupy. The Vendantin would say that our present mental consciousness represents our full stature, and that continuing on the wheel of evolution of soul powers and returning life after life to earth, we shall pass presently into a superhuman condition and from that on to a higher, so step by step to the inner most. Many of our own order, he would say, have gone on, becoming Mahatmas, Rishis, Arhats, and we must all become so in due course.

This is a great concept, greater by far than any generally accepted theory we have had in the West. It is greater than our theology and greater than our science but as a complete hypothesis it has always been rejected because it does not fit the facts.

The theosophical schools, of which the philosophies are dessicated fragments, refuse it. They say, "No. Unfortunately it is not so simple as all that. There is undoubtedly such an emergence from the Absolute, undoubtedly such a cycle of outpouring and return. Undoubtedly also the evolution or unfolding of the powers of souls is the great law of the Universe. Unfolding consciousness, however, requires also an increasing unfolding of will and the freedom to choose. Whatever permits an individual or an order of individuals to choose permits a wrong choice as well as a right one. If a right choice can result in achievement, a wrong one can result in failure. H. P. Blavatsky speaks of the "necessity of failures even in the ethereal races of Dhyān Chohans".

The theosophist of any school would say, therefore, that man in his present state is not proceeding serenely in his ascent. Somewhere in the past he has made a choice which is now impeding his progress. And even if the theosophist had no more to say about the nature of the choice and the resulting impediments, there are enough indications around us everywhere to show that serious impediments do exist. The theosophist does, however, say more. He says that man - the Ego - is not at the full altitude to which his evolution entitles him, but is considerably below that altitude, and is the partly-conscious possessor of powers more or less in atrophy. There is an order of beings evolving on this earth, a lunar race, but it is far below the stature of man. Man himself is making a bad job of a redemptive act to which the law of the interrelation of orders of beings has committed him and he is for the most part doing his best to go counter to a law of sacrifice which requires that he raise to the level of mind a creature who without his assistance cannot advance. Because of this failure to lift the animal soul, thereby establishing a rate of progression that will permit him to rise himself, he is in no present process of evolution at all but in one of stagnation. Indeed, in the cases where man is most obstinate in refusing his obligation, and uses the animal organism for selfish and separative magic, he is in a state of active degeneration, with lower levels before him. His remedy against further descent is his memory of the lost wisdom.

Because evolution tends ever to unity, whatever memory we recover will be in terms of a level of unity higher than our present one, a community in which the severances of man from man have formerly disappeared and can be made to disappear again by the exercise of brotherly love.

This is the theosophy of Veda, of Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, of the Orphic Mysteries, of Hermes and Plato, of the alchemists, the Rosicrucians, the Sufis, the Kabbalists and of the occultists of the Renaissance in Europe. It is also the theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky and her teachers, so difficult for those who have become indoctrinated with the spurious Hinduism of recent years.

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It is also the only "theosophia" which by any conceivable set of conditions can be "remembered" out of our past, as Plato says it must be, or attained by virtue of an earned divinity which all men possess.

These then are the two doctrines that can arise out of the idea of the evolution of the soul. The one is that the soul is proceeding evenly on its way, that it has known nothing higher than it now knows, and that every step is a new one. The other is the same but with the modifying idea of the lapse, of which Kant has said that it is fundamental in religion.

"That the world lieth in wickedness is a complaint as old as history, even as what is still older, poetry. ..All alike nevertheless make the world begin from good: with the Golden Age, with life in Paradise, or one still more happy in communion with heavenly beings. But they represent the happy state as soon vanishing like a dream, and then they fall into badness. ..Later, but much less general, is the opposite, heroic opinion, which has perhaps obtained currency only among philosophers, and in our time chiefly among the instructors of youth, that the world is constantly advancing in precisely the reverse direction, namely from worse to better. .. This opinion, however, is not founded upon experience, if what is meant in moral good or evil, for the history of all times speaks too powerfully against it."

Of the two doctrines, one is a doctrine of ultimate achievement, the other a doctrine of immediate conditions. Each has its place in theosophy but whereas the Vedantin bases his ethic on the ultimate, the theosophist bases his on the immediate.

There is no humanism to be born out of the idea of orderly progression, because none is needed. It is a doctrine of *laissez faire*. If all men are coming out at the same goal - duly and in the course of the cycles - what virtue can there be in fixing one's concern upon the pilgrims. If there is any matter for concern at all it should be the goal.

Humanism can arise only out of the other, the realization that the Ego of man is one of a broken legion, in sore straits in an alien world, and must find his divinity in the restoration of the scattered host.

The line of demarcation between these two positions runs through all human thought and practice. Here are some of the conflicts :

Our Vedantin is the Pollyanna of metaphysics. His scheme is one of glad progress regardless of ethical choice. All suffering is a necessary part of the joyous plan. No matter what a man does, he is doing it for the unfolding of his divine consciousness. The theosophists, on the other hand, have always said that believing this is a glad world is begotten of what one wants to believe. It is not a glad world. On the contrary it is a world of misunderstanding and division, of death and separation and loneliness, of isolation, of tears and sorrow, of cruelty and distorted lusts, of the terror of little children at being born into earth. Gladness is *in spite* of the conditions in which we find ourselves. Gautama Buddha enunciated the doctrine of a sad world out of which we must arise and the Vedantins call him a pessimist.

The Vedantin says there is no urgency. Everything is working out according to immutable plan. All beings

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must go forward and all must achieve. What are a few scores of years in the sweep of evolution ? What is the hurry? But turn to the great theosophists- Gautama, Hermes, Krishna, Jesus. There is the will of man at work in the world, they say, and the will of man is not bound only to the good side of the immutable law. It can be separative as well as unitive; it can do as much evil as it can good. The servitor of mankind who goes to early death, to the faggots and to the rack, who is persecuted in life and slandered in death, is matched by the vampire upon mankind who uses the bondage of the rest to feed his lust. The lovers of mankind find something urgent in man's state. Their world is a field of battle, and they are always too few. Every disciple who comes to them must come as a recruit to an army that never rests. Each enlistment must be an answer to the old question of The Voice of the Silence;

"Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"

The Vedantin argues that reincarnation into this earth is the unalterable law, and then he undertakes to tell how to escape it. The theosophist says that reincarnation is a necessity only until we complete what we came here to do, then we may leave it, unless in compassion we return as teachers to liberate our brothers.

The Vedantin tells us of great time cycles and of a progress that goes step by step with them. In an aeon we develop this power, in another aeon that ; senses come into operation as the cycles unfold. Then if one asks him why anybody should exert any effort at all, why any man should press forward, he will offer some cloudy nonsense about hastening evolution, about speeding up the cycles, as if any man could do that. If he could he would destroy all that is cyclic about them. He would abolish cycles. Theosophists of all schools have, on the contrary, taught "a path to liberation in this life". They say, in effect, "These are not new powers you must steal from the cycles, but old powers you must restore, and you can restore them whenever you will it.

The Vedantin speaks of powers gained anew. When he comes upon a word like "restore" or "regain" he explains it as meaning that all powers are latent in the Absolute and that to gain a power is to draw on a previously existent one. He prefers however to say "attain". The theosophist has always said "attain again". His words are "re-store", "re-new" "re-deem" "re-member" "re-cognize", "re-surrect", "re-ligion", (it-self the binding back of something broken) , "re-union with the companions of their former toil". The theosophist's figures of speech are of prison-houses of the soul, of bondage, of slavery, of deliverance out of Egypt, of liberation from the wheel of rebirth, of being raised from the dead, from the sepulchre, from the roofed-in cave, from the dark meadow of Ate. They are figures of finding a way out of a labyrinth, of rousing a warrior from sulking in his tent, of rising superior to despondency and going into battle, of rising from lethargy or from drunkenness, of turning from the cities of the plain and going up into the mountains, of forsaking the fleshpots. The theosophist talks of exiles, of wanderers, of prodigal sons who have wasted their substance in a far country, of sons that were dead and are alive again, were lost and are found, of Sophia tempted into the vices of the world, of Narcissus falling in love with his image in the waters of desire, of gods dismembered as Osiris was, of heroes like Odysseus fighting their way home over the raging seas of passions and having to do battle for their old heritage.

The Eastern metaphysician of unbroken rhythms and processes has also - as he must have - a garden-hose theory of illumination. He says our ideals and high aims come from high, kindly beings in the world beyond us. But Hermes and Plato will not have it so. Hermes says, "This race, my son, is never taught,

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but when it wills it, its memory is restored." Plato makes Socrates say, in the *Meno*, "It is no wonder that she (the soul) should be able to recollect all that she knew before about virtue and other things." And in the *Meno* also he says that the greatest of the things we know, we learned before we were human at all.

The Vedantin has curious ideas about the power of the Ego to go on alone. If you perform austerities until you have shut out the world you can attain to a state in advance of the rest. The great Compassionators agree that within limits you can, but they say of one who tries it that he is a Pratyeka or Ekash-ringa, which means that he is concerned only with one person - himself. Or they pity him and call him a rhinoceros Buddha - a Buddha of a thick and insensitive skin. There is, they say, by reason of his ancient effort, a previously attained stature he can resume, but if he tries to do it thus without compassion, his nirvana is a condition of negation, of rejection, as long as he can will it, of his bond with the rest of mankind. The great restoration of the high ones cannot be entered alone. It is a communal consciousness.

The Vedantin is amused if you talk of white and black magic. The greatest of the teachers have not been amused. White magic is the return of union: black magic is the inevitable pole of severance from the Oversoul and plays far too great a part in the struggle for the redemption of the race to be amusing.

The Vedantin says the soul cannot be destroyed or lost. Such an idea is unthinkable. Divine essence lost? Spirit is indestructible, eternal. And so it is, replies Plotinos, but it is not indivisible. If the Absolute has divided into many, such as you and I also break up into many others. Spirit is indestructible but soul is only an integration and its present integrity is not secure. So we find the old teachers of Yoga suggesting that when a man thinks all he has to do is unite himself with the Oversoul, he is flattering himself. His first task is to unite *himself* - to correct his own tendency to disintegration. He must draw himself out of the multitude of karmic forms into which he has poured his life and by which he is dismembered. When he has re-gathered his own fragments and become the Diamond Soul he may make the restoration of the Unity of which he is himself a fragment.

These are a few of the conflicts, all parts of the greatest battle in human thought. Every lesser conflict stems off from these. What am I to do about my divinity? Shall I go on alone and let the devil take care of the hindmost? This has been the practice of Calvinism and of our Puritan sects. Or shall I find some metaphysical formula that will give me the sweet assurance that the hindmost are softly pillowed in the Great Law and do not need my care? If I can find such a formula I shall have the gratitude of all the lazy, the rich, the top dogs, the feudal-minded, the people who profit by the distress of others. The Brahmin and the Pharisee long ago found such a formula but they pay a heavy price. Some vital current in them stops, their austerities and taboos increase and complicate, their philosophy becomes arid, circular and unserviceable. Filth, squalor and misery grow up around their doors, their world is peopled by pariahs, untouchables, Mlechchas, through whom they must thread their way as they go to prayers. They must spend their lives avoiding the evils they have made.

Or shall I measure my spiritual altitude only by the number of persons for whom I have made myself responsible ?