



Supplements are issued on an occasional basis when the formal issue exceeds its size limit, and/or some special need arises. This continued item was noted in the Table of Contents for January. Our apologies that it arrives two months late! The February Supplement should follow in a few days with Part IV of *The Key Notebook*. The small page notations outside the margin indicate approximately where you are in the *facsimile* edition of the *Key*. EDS.



KEY NOTEBOOK

III

(Continued from December Issue)

(Section I— continued)

[Key, p. 2.]

Eclectic Theosophy was divided under three heads:

(1) Belief in one absolute, incomprehensible and supreme Deity, or infinite essence, which is the root of all nature, and of all that is, visible and invisible.

(2) Belief in man's eternal immortal nature, because, being a radiation of the Universal Soul, it is of an identical essence with it.

(3) Theurgy, or "divine work," or **producing a work of gods; from theoi**, "gods," and **ergein**, "to work." The terra is very old, but, as it belongs to the vocabulary of the **MYSTERIES**, was not in popular use. It was a mystic belief — practically proven by initiated adepts and priests — that, by making oneself as pure

as the incorporeal beings — i.e., by returning to one's pristine purity of nature-man could move the gods to impart to him Divine mysteries, and even cause them to become occasionally visible, either subjectively or objectively. It was the transcendental aspect of what is now called Spiritualism, but having been abused and misconceived by the populace, it had come to be regarded by some as necromancy, and was generally forbidden. A travestied practice of the theurgy of Iamblichus lingers still in the ceremonial magic of some modern Kabalists. Modern Theosophy avoids and rejects both these kinds of magic and "necromancy" as being very dangerous. Real divine theurgy requires an almost superhuman purity and holiness of life; otherwise it degenerates into mediumship or black magic.

Key, p. 3

The immediate disciples of Ammonius, Saccas, who was called **Theodidaktos**, "god-taught" — such as Plotinus and his follower Porphyry — rejected theurgy at first, but were finally reconciled to it through Iamblichus, who wrote a work to that effect entitled "De Mysteriis," under the name of his own master, a famous Egyptian priest called Abammon. Ammonius Saccas was the son of Christian parents, and, having been repelled by dogmatic spiritualistic Christianity from his childhood, became a Neo-Platonist, and like J. Boehme and other great seers and mystics, is said to have had divine wisdom revealed to him in dreams and visions. Hence his name of Theodidaktos. He resolved to reconcile every system of religion, and by demonstrating their identical origin to establish one universal creed based on ethics. His life was so blameless and pure, his learning so profound and vast, that several Church Fathers were his secret disciples. Clemens Alexandrinus speaks very highly of him. Plotinus, the "St. John" of Ammonius, was also a man universally respected and esteemed, and of the most profound learning and integrity. When thirty-nine years of age

he accompanied the Roman Emperor Gordian and his army to the East, to be instructed by the sages of Bactria and India. He had a School of Philosophy in Rome. Porphyry, his disciple, whose real name was Malek (a Hellenized Jew), collected all the writings of his master. Porphyry was himself a great author, and gave an allegorical interpretation to some parts of Homer's writings. The system of meditation the Philaletheians resorted to was ecstasy, a system akin to Indian Yoga Practice. What is known of the Eclectic School is due to Origen, Longinus, and Plotinus, the immediate disciples of Ammonius.

The object of this system was to inculcate certain great moral truths upon its disciples, and all those who were "lovers or the truth." Hence the motto adopted by the Theosophical Society. "There is no religion higher than truth." The chief aim of the Founders of the Eclectic Theosophical School was one of the three objects of its modern successor, the Theosophical Society, namely, to reconcile all religions, sects and nations under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities; thus demonstrating that all the world's religions are based on one and the same truth.

The "Wisdom-religion" was one in antiquity; and the sameness of primitive religious philosophy is proven to us by the identical doctrines taught to the Initiates during the **MYSTERIES**, an institution once universally diffused. "All the old worships indicate the existence of a single Theosophy anterior to them. The key that is to open one must open all; otherwise it cannot be the right key."

"Conceiving that not only the philosophers of Greece, but also all those of the different barbarian nations, were perfectly in unison with each other with regard to every essential point, Ammonius made it his business so to expound the thousand tenets of all these various sects as to show they had all originated from one and the same source, and tended all to one and the same end." "He adopted the doctrines which were received in Egypt (the esoteric were those of India) concerning the Universe and the Deity, considered as constituting one

great whole; concerning the eternity of the world ... and established a system of moral discipline which allowed the people in general to live according to the laws of their country and the dictates of nature, but required the wise to exalt their mind by contemplation."

Key, p. 6

"Ammonius taught that the religion of the multitude went hand-in-hand with philosophy, and with her had shared the fate of being by degrees corrupted and obscured with mere human conceits, superstitions, and lies; that it ought, therefore, to be brought back to its original purity by purging it of this dross and expounding it upon philosophical principle. He taught that the whole Christ had in view was to reinstate and restore to its primitive integrity the wisdom of the ancients; to reduce within bounds the universally-prevailing dominion of superstition; and in part to correct, and in part to exterminate the various errors that had found their way into the different popular religions."

"He had but to propound his instructions according to the ancient pillars of Hermes, which Plato and Pythagoras knew before, and from them constituted their philosophy. Finding the same in the prologue of the Gospel according to St. John, he very properly supposed that the purpose of Jesus was to restore the great doctrine of wisdom in its primitive integrity. The narrative of the Bible and the stories of the gods he considered to be allegories illustrative of the truth, or else fables to be rejected." "He acknowledged that Jesus Christ was an excellent man and the 'friend of God,' but alleged that it was not his design entirely to abolish the worship of demons (gods), and that his only intention was to purify the ancient religion."

Key, p. 7

The Wisdom-Religion Esoteric in all Ages

As in all living systems, Ammonius' School was divided into exoteric and esoteric teachings. The inner teachings of all — the **WISDOM RELIGION** — were ever one, and being the last word of

possible human knowledge, were, therefore, carefully preserved. This Wisdom Religion, the trunk of all branches, preceded by long ages the Alexandrian Theosophists, reached the modern, and will survive every other religion and philosophy.

Key, p. 8

Every ancient religious, or rather philosophical, cult consisted of an esoteric or secret teaching, and an exoteric (outward public) worship. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that the **MYSTERIES** of the ancients comprised with every nation the "greater" (secret) and "Lesser" (public) **MYSTERIES-e.g.**, in the celebrated solemnities called the **Eleusinia**, in Greece. From the Hierophants of Samothrace, Egypt, and the initiated Brahmins of the India of old, down to the later Hebrew Rabbis, all preserved, for fear of profanation, their real bona fide beliefs secret. Not one of the ancient nations ever imparted through its priests its real philosophical secrets to the masses, but allotted to the latter only the husks. Northern Buddhism has its "greater" and its "lesser" vehicle, known as the Mahayana, the esoteric, and the Hinayana, the exoteric, Schools. Nor can you blame them for such secrecy; for surely you would not think of feeding your flock of sheep on learned dissertations on botany instead of on grass? Pythagoras called his Gnosis "the knowledge of things that are," and preserved that knowledge for his pledged disciples only: for those who could digest such mental food and feel satisfied; and he pledged them to silence and secrecy. Occult alphabets and secret ciphers are the development of the old Egyptian hieratic writings, the secret of which was, in the days of old, in the possession only of the Hierogrammatists, or initiated Egyptian priests. Ammonius Saccas, as his biographers tell us, bound his pupils by oath not to divulge **his higher doctrines** except to those who had already been instructed in preliminary knowledge, and who were also bound by a pledge. Finally, do we not find the same even in early Christianity, among the Gnostics, and even in the teachings of Christ? Did he

not speak to the multitudes in parables which had a two-fold meaning, and explain his reasons only to his disciples? "To you," he says, "it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables." "The Essenes of Judea and Carmel made similar distinctions, dividing their adherents into neophytes, brethren, and the **perfect**, or those initiated." Examples might be brought from every country to this effect. Ancient Theosophists claimed, and so do the modern, that the infinite cannot be known by the finite — i.e., sensed by the finite Self — but that the divine essence could be communicated to the higher Spiritual Self in a state of ecstasy.

Key, p. 10

Real ecstasy was defined by Plotinus as "the liberation of the mind from its finite consciousness, becoming one and identified with the infinite." This is the highest condition, says Prof. Wilder, but not one of permanent duration, and it is reached only by the very **very** few. It is, indeed, identical with that state which is known in India as **Samadhi**. The latter is practiced by the Yogis, who facilitate it physically by the greatest abstinence in food and drink, and mentally by an incessant endeavour to purify and elevate the mind. Meditation is silent and **unuttered** prayer, or, as Plato expressed it, "the ardent turning of the soul toward the divine, not to ask any particular good (as in the common meaning of prayer), but for good itself — for the universal Supreme Good" of which we are a part on earth, and out of the essence of which we have all emerged. Therefore, adds Plato, "remain silent in the presence of the **divine ones, till** they remove the clouds from thy eyes and enable thee to see by the light which issues from themselves, not what appears as good to thee, but what is intrinsically good."

This is what Prof. A. Wilder describes as "**spiritual photography**": "The soul is the camera in which facts and events, future, past, and present, are alike fixed; and the mind **becomes conscious** of them. Beyond our every-day

world of limits all is one day or state—the past and future comprised in the present." ... Death is the last **ecstasis** on earth. Then the soul is freed from the constraint of the body, and its nobler part is united to higher nature and becomes partaker in the wisdom and foreknowledge of the higher beings." Real Theosophy is, for the mystics, that state which Apollonius of Tyana was made to describe thus: "I can see the present and the future as in a clear mirror. The sage need not wait for the vapours of the earth and the corruption of the air to foresee events. ... The theoi, or gods, see the future; common men, the present; sages, that which is about to take place." "The Theosophy of the Sages" he speaks of is expressed in the assertion, "The Kingdom of God is within us."

The reason Theosophy has remained so unknown to the nations of the Western Hemisphere is due to a loss, for long centuries, of real spiritual insight, and even interest, owing to their too great devotion to things of sense and their long slavery to the dead letter of dogma and ritualism.

Thus real Theosophy has ever been kept secret because:

Firstly, the perversity of average human nature and its selfishness, always tending to the gratification of personal desires to the detriment

of neighbours and next of kin. Such people could never be entrusted with divine secrets. Secondly, their unreliability to keep the sacred and divine knowledge from desecration. It is the latter that led to the perversion of the most sublime truths and symbols, and to the gradual transformation of things spiritual into anthropomorphic, concrete, and gross imagery — in other words, to the dwarfing of the god-idea and to idolatry.

Key, p. 12

Theosophy is not Buddhism.

Thus theosophists are of no sect, not even **Buddhism**, Gautama's religious philosophy. Buddhism, the religion founded by the Prince of Kapilavastu,

and **Buddhism, or "Wisdomism"** are very different; as different in fact as that between the secret teachings of Christ, which are called "the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven," and the later ritualism and dogmatic theology of the Churches and Sects. **Buddha** means "the Enlightened" by **Bodha**, or understanding, Wisdom. This has passed root and branch into the esoteric teachings that Gautama imparted to his chosen Arhats only.

Buddha's esoteric teachings were simply the **Gupta Vidya** (secret knowledge) of the ancient Brahmins, the key to which their modern successors have, with few exceptions, completely lost. And this **Vidya** has passed into what is now known as the **inner** teachings of the **Mahayana** school of Northern Buddhism.

The ethics of Theosophy are identical with those taught by Buddha because these ethics are the soul of the Wisdom-Religion, and were once the common property of the initiates of all nations. But Buddha was the first to embody these lofty ethics in his public teachings, and to make them the foundation and the very essence of his public system. It is herein that lies the immense difference between exoteric Buddhism and every other religion. For while in other religions ritualism and dogma hold the first and most important place, in Buddhism it is the ethics which have always been the most insisted upon. This accounts for the resemblance amounting almost to identity, between the ethics of theosophy and those of the religion of Buddha.

One **great distinction** between Theosophy and exoteric Buddhism is that the latter, represented by the Southern Church, entirely denies

(a) the existence of any Deity, and

(b) any conscious **post-mortem** life, or even any self-conscious surviving individuality in man.

Such at least is the teaching of the Siamese sect, now considered as the purest form of exoteric Buddhism, and it

is so, if we refer only to Buddha's public teachings; the reason for such reticence on his part I will give further on. But the schools of the Northern Buddhist Church, established in those countries to which his initiated Arhats retired after the Master's death, teach all that is now called Theosophical doctrines, because they form part of the knowledge of the initiates — thus proving how the truth has been sacrificed to the dead-letter by the too zealous orthodoxy of Southern Buddhism. But how much grander and more noble, more philosophical and scientific, even in its dead-letter, is this teaching than that of any other church or religion. Yet Theosophy is not Buddhism.

Key, p. 16

II.

EXOTERIC AND ESOTERIC THEOSOPHY

Theosophists: True and False.

We hold to no religion, as to no philosophy in particular: we cull the good we find in each. But here, again, it must be stated that, like all other ancient systems, Theosophy is divided into Exoteric and Esoteric Sections. Thus the members of the Theosophical Society at large are free to profess whatever religion or philosophy they like, or none if they so prefer, provided they are in sympathy with, and ready to carry out one or more of the three objects of the Association. The Society is a philanthropic and scientific body for the propagation of the idea of brotherhood on practical instead of **theoretical** lines. These [Key p. 20] members may, or may not, become Theosophists de **facto**. Members they are, by virtue of their having joined the Society, but the latter cannot make a Theosophist of one who has no sense for the divine fitness of things, or of him who understands Theosophy in his own — if the expression may be used — sectarian and egotistic way. "Handsome is, as handsome does" could be paraphrased in this case and be made to run: "Theosophist is, who Theosophy does."

Even Inner Members are not necessarily real Theosophists until they have proven themselves to be such. They have entered the inner group and pledged

themselves to carry out, as strictly as they can, the rules of the occult body. This is a difficult undertaking, as the foremost rule of all is the entire renunciation of one's personality — *i.e.*, a pledged member has to become a thorough altruist, never to think of himself, and to forget his own vanity and pride in *the* thought of the good of his fellow-creatures, besides that of his fellow-brothers in the esoteric circle. He has to live, if the esoteric instructions shall profit him, a life of abstinence in everything, of self-denial and strict morality, doing his duty by all men.

If the real programme is carried out by the inner members, they will derive much help from mutual aid and sympathy. Union is strength and harmony, and well-regulated simultaneous efforts produce wonders. This has been the secret of all associations and communities since mankind existed.

The inner group does not necessarily learn directly under a great Master of Wisdom. The personal presence of such masters is not required. Suffice it if they give instructions to some of those who have studied under their guidance for years, and devoted their whole lives to their service. Then, in turn, these can give out the knowledge so imparted to others, who had no such opportunity. A portion of the true sciences is better than a mass of undigested and misunderstood learning. An ounce of gold is worth a ton of dust.

Thus Theosophist of the **inner life** band together under the **aegis** of a great Teacher, or one so instructed. In doing this they prefer to follow the proven natural law of the tradition of the Sacred Science.

While the aims of Theosophy are several, the most important of all are those which are likely to lead to the relief of human suffering under any or every form, moral as well as physical. And we believe the former to be far more important than the latter. Theosophy has to inculcate ethics; it has to purify the soul, if it would relieve the physical body, whose ailments, save cases of

accidents, are all hereditary. It is not by studying Occultism for selfish ends, for the gratification of one's personal ambition, pride, or vanity, that one can ever reach the true goal: that of helping suffering mankind. Nor is it by studying one single branch of the esoteric philosophy that a man becomes an Occultist, but by studying, if not mastering, them all.

Help to achieve these aims is given even to every **lay** member if he only wants it; but few are willing to become what is called "working members," and most prefer to remain the **drones** of Theosophy.

Key, p. 25

The Difference Between Theosophy and Occultism.

A man may be a very good Theosophist indeed, whether **in** or **outside** of the Society, without being in any way an Occultist. But no one can be a true Occultist without being a real Theosophist; otherwise he is simply a black magician, whether conscious or unconscious.

A true Theosophist must put in practice the loftiest moral ideal, must strive to realize his unity with the whole of humanity, and work ceaselessly for others. Now, if an Occultist does not do all this, he must act selfishly for his own personal benefit; and if he has acquired more practical power than other ordinary men, he becomes forthwith a far more dangerous enemy to the world and those around him than the average mortal. This is clear.

He who is a **practical** and really learned Occultist is far more than simply one who possesses more power than other people. The studies that engage him are real, actual, and very dangerous sciences. They teach the secret potency of things in Nature, developing and cultivating the hidden powers "latent in man," thus giving him tremendous advantages over more ignorant mortals. Hypnotism, now become so common and a subject of serious scientific inquiry, is a good instance in point. **Hypnotic** power has been discovered almost by accident,

the way to it having been prepared by mesmerism; and now an able hypnotizer can do almost anything with it, from forcing a man, unconsciously to himself, to play the fool, to making him commit a crime — often by proxy for the hypnotizer, and **for the benefit of the latter**. Is not this a terrible power if left in the hands of unscrupulous persons? And please to remember that this is only one of the minor branches of Occultism.

Thus an Occultist is one who practises **scientific** Theosophy, based on accurate knowledge of Nature's secret workings; but a Theosophist, practising the powers called abnormal, **minus** the light of Occultism, will simply tend toward a dangerous form of mediumship, because, although holding to Theosophy and its highest conceivable code of ethics, he practises it in the dark, on sincere but **blind** faith. Anyone, Theosophist or Spiritualist, who attempts to cultivate one of the branches of Occult science — e.g., Hypnotism, Mesmerism, or even the secrets of producing physical phenomena, etc. — without the knowledge of the philosophic **rationale** of those powers, is like a rudderless boat launched on a stormy ocean.

The Difference between Theosophy and Spiritualism.

The spiritualism of the **hoi polloi** we decidedly reject, for we hold that the spirits of the dead cannot return to earth — save in rare and exceptional cases, of which I may speak later; nor do they communicate with men except by **entirely subjective means**. That which does appear objectively, is only the phantom of the ex-physical man. But in **psychic**, and so to say, "Spiritual" Spiritualism, we do believe, most decidedly. The Conscious **Individuality** of the disembodied **cannot materialize**, nor can it return from its own mental Devachanic sphere to the plane of terrestrial objectivity. That communications received from the seance room "spirits" show not only intelligence, but a knowleddee of facts not known to the medium, and sometimes even not consciously present to the mind of the investigator, or any of those who compose the audience does not

necessarily prove that the intelligence and knowledge emanates from **disembodied** souls. Somnambulists have been known to compose music and poetry and to solve mathematical problems while in their trance state, without having ever learnt music or mathematics. Others, answered intelligently to questions put to them, and even, in several cases, spoke languages, such as Hebrew and Latin, of which they were entirely ignorant when awake — all this in a state of profound sleep. As we can hardly suppose this to be done by disembodied spirits, the answer must be sought elsewhere.

Theosophy asserts that the divine spark in man being one and identical in its essence with the Universal Spirit, our "spiritual Self" is practically omniscient, but that it cannot manifest its knowledge owing to the impediments of matter. Now the more these impediments are removed, in other words, the more the physical body is paralyzed, as to its own independent activity and consciousness, as in deep sleep or deep trance, or, again, in illness, the more fully can the **inner Self** manifest on this plane. This is our explanation of those truly wonderful phenomena of a higher order, in which undeniable intelligence and knowledge are exhibited. As to the lower order of manifestations, such as physical phenomena and the platitudes and common talk of the general "spirit," to explain even the most important of the teachings we hold upon the subject would take up more space and time than can be allotted to it at present. We have no desire to interfere with the belief of the Spiritualists any more than with any other belief. The less so, as in the cases of purely **psychic and spiritual manifestations** we believe in the intercommunication of the spirit of the living man with that of disembodied personalities.

However, in such case as the last, it is not the **spirits** of the dead who descend on earth, but the spirits of the living that ascend to the pure Spiritual Souls. In truth there is neither ascending nor descending, but a change of **state or condition** for the medium. The body of the latter becoming paralyzed, or

"entranced," the spiritual Ego is free from its trammels, and finds itself on the same plane of consciousness with the disembodied spirits. Hence, if there is any spiritual attraction between the two they can communicate, as often occurs in dreams. The difference between a mediumistic and a non-sensitive nature is this: the liberated spirit of a medium has the opportunity and capacity of influencing the passive organs of its entranced physical body, to make them act, speak, and write at its will. The EGO can make it repeat, echo-like and in the human language, the thoughts and idea of the disembodied entity, as well as its own. But the non-receptive or non-sensitive organism of one who is very positive cannot be so influenced. Hence although there is hardly a human being whose Ego does not hold free intercourse, during the sleep of his body, with those whom it loved and lost, yet, on account of the positiveness and non-receptivity of its physical envelope and brain, no recollection, or a very dim, dream-like remembrance, lingers in the memory of the person once awake.

The Difference between Personality and Individuality

Though, we do not accept the Spiritualist's view of communion with the dead, our beliefs are all founded on man's immortal individuality. We make a distinction between personality and individuality, while Western psychologists have no clear distinction between the two. Yet, it is precisely that difference which gives the key-note to the understanding of Eastern philosophy, and which lies at the root of the divergence between the Theosophical and Spiritualistic teachings. It is Theosophy which is the **true** and unalloyed Spiritualism, while the modern scheme of that name is, as now practiced by the masses, simply transcendental materialism.

To avoid misunderstanding, we might expand this last statement in saying that though our teachings insist upon the identity of spirit and matter, and though we say that spirit is **potential** matter, and matter simply crystallized spirit (e.g., as ice is solidified steam), yet since the original and eternal

condition of all is not spirit but meta-spirit, so to speak, (visible and solid matter being simply its periodical manifestation,) we maintain that the term spirit can only be applied to the **true** individuality.

The distinction we make between this "true individuality" and the "I" or "Ego" of which we are all conscious is the same as that between the simple fact of self-consciousness, the simple feeling that "I am I," and the complex thought that "I am Mr. Smith" or "Mrs. Brown." Believing as we do in a series of births for the same Ego, or re-incarnation, this distinction is the fundamental pivot of the whole idea. You see "Mr. Smith" really means a long series of daily experiences strung together by the thread of memory, and forming what Mr. Smith calls "himself." But none of these "experiences" are really the "I" or the Ego, nor do they give "Mr. Smith" the feeling that he is himself, for he forgets the greater part of his daily experiences, and they produce the feeling of **Egoity** in him only while they last. We Theosophists, therefore, distinguish between this bundle of "experiences," which we call the **false** (because so finite and evanescent) **personality**, and that element in man to which the feeling of "I am I" is due. It is this "I am I" which we call the **true** individuality; and we say that this "Ego" or individuality plays, like an actor, many parts on the stage of life. Let us call every new life on earth of the same **Ego a night** on the stage of a theatre. One night the actor, or "Ego," appears as "Macbeth," the next as "Shylock," the third as "Romeo," the fourth as "Hamlet" or "King Lear," and so on, until he has run through the whole cycle of incarnations. The Ego begins his life-pilgrimage as a sprite, an "Ariel," or a "Puck;" he plays the part of a **super**, is a soldier, a servant, one of the chorus, rises then to "speaking parts," plays leading roles, interspersed with insignificant parts, till he finally retires from the stage as "Prospero," the magician.

This true Ego cannot return to earth after death simply because such a return to earth would be incompatible with any state of unalloyed bliss after death. Man suffers so much unmerited misery during his life, through the fault of others with whom he is

associated, or because of his environment, that he is surely entitled to perfect rest and quiet, if not bliss, before taking up again the burden of life.

Why is Theosophy Accepted?

There are several reasons for the interest aroused by Theosophy:

Firstly, the great reaction from the crassly materialistic theories prevalent among scientific teachers.

Secondly, general dissatisfaction with the artificial theology of the various Christian Churches, and the number of daily increasing and conflicting sects.

Thirdly, an ever-growing perception of the fact that the creeds *which* are so obviously self — and mutually — contradictory **cannot be true**, and that claims which are unverified cannot be real. This natural distrust of conventional religions is only strengthened by their complete failure to preserve morals and to purify society and the masses.

Fourthly, a conviction on the part of many, and **knowledge** by a few, that there must be somewhere a philosophical and religious system which shall be scientific and not merely speculative.

Finally, a belief, that such a system must be sought for in teachings far antedating any modern faith.

Theosophy is in no way to be regarded as a revelation, not even in the sense of a new and direct disclosure from some higher, supernatural, or, at least **superhuman beings**; but only in the sense of an "unveiling" of old, very old, truths to minds hitherto ignorant of them, ignorant even of the existence any preservation of any such archaic knowledge.

Theosophy has met with no **general** acceptance and much opposition, for several reasons, one of which is the hatred felt by men for "innovations," as they call them. Selfishness is essentially conservative and hates being disturbed. It prefers an easy-going unexacting lie to the greatest truth, if the latter requires the sacrifice

of one's smallest comfort. The power of mental inertia is great in anything that does not promise immediate benefit and reward. Our age is preeminently unspiritual and matter of fact. Moreover there is the unfamiliar character of Theosophic teachings; the highly abstruse nature of the doctrines, some of which contradict flatly many of the human vagaries cherished by sectarians, which have eaten into the very core of popular beliefs. If we add to this the personal efforts and great purity of life exacted of those who would become the disciples of the inner unselfish code appeals, it will be easy to perceive the reason why Theosophy is doomed to such slow, up-hill work.

It is essentially the philosophy of those who suffer, and have lost all hope of being helped out of the mire of life by any other means. Moreover, the history of any system of belief or morals, newly introduced into a foreign soil, shows that its beginnings were impeded by every obstacle that obscurantism and selfishness could suggest. "The crown of the innovator is a crown of thorns" indeed! No pulling down of old, worm-eaten buildings can be accomplished without some danger.

All this refers rather to the ethics and philosophy of Theosophy in general. It is only in the Arcane or "Esoteric" Section that Theosophists are bound by pledges. Sadly enough some members so pledged have, left loudly asserting their right to break such a pledge, but this only shows that their idea of honor is an imperfect one. "Suppose that a soldier is tried for infringement of oath and discipline, and is dismissed from the service. In his rage at the justice he has called down, and of whose penalties he was distinctly forewarned, the soldier turns to the enemy with false information, — a spy and traitor — as a revenge upon his former Chief, and claims that his punishment has released him from his oath of loyalty to a cause." Is he justified, think you? Don't you think he deserves being called a dishonorable man, a coward?

III

THE WORKING SYSTEM OF THEOSOPHY.

Key, p. 39

The objects of Theosophy are three:

(1.) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, colour, or creed.

(2.) To promote the study of Aryan and other Scriptures, of the World's religion and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old Asiatic literature, namely, of the Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Zoroastrian philosophies.

(3.) To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every aspect possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially. To accomplish these objects we must begin with the first and set to work in dead earnest to remove the causes which make Universal Brotherhood an Utopia at present. These impediments are: first and foremost, the natural selfishness of human nature. This selfishness, instead of being eradicated, is daily strengthened and stimulated into a ferocious and irresistible feeling by the present religious education, which tends not only to encourage, but positively to justify it. People's ideas about right and wrong have been entirely perverted by the literal acceptance of the Jewish Bible. All the unselfishness of the altruistic teachings of Jesus has become merely a theoretical subject for pulpit oratory, while the precepts of practical selfishness taught in the Mosaic Bible, against which Christ so vainly preached, have become ingrained into the innermost life of the Western nations. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" has come to be the first maxim of your law. Now, I state openly and fearlessly, that the perversity of this doctrine and of so many others **Theosophy alone** can eradicate.

It can do so by demonstrating on logical, philosophical, metaphysical, and even scientific grounds that:

(a) All men have spiritually and physically the same origin, which is the fundamental teaching of Theosophy.

(b) As mankind is essentially of one and the same essence, and that essence is one — infinite, uncreate, and eternal, whether we call it God or Nature — nothing, therefore, can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. This is as certain and as obvious as that a stone thrown into a pond will, sooner or later, set in motion every single drop of water therein.¹

¹ "At the close of the Middle Ages slavery, under the power of moral forces, had mainly disappeared from Europe; but two momentous events occurred which overbore the moral power working in European society and let loose a swarm of curses upon the earth such as mankind had scarcely ever known. One of these events was the first voyaging to a populated and barbarous coast where human beings were a familiar article of traffic; and the other the discovery of a new world, where mines of glittering wealth were open, provided labour could be imported to work them. For four hundred years men and women and children were torn from all whom they knew and loved, and were sold on the coast of Africa to foreign traders; they were chained below decks — the dead often with the living—during the horrible 'middle passage,' and, according to Bancroft, an impartial historian, two hundred and fifty thousand out of three and a quarter millions were thrown into the sea on that fatal passage, while the remainder were consigned to nameless misery in the mines, or under the lash in the cane and rice fields. The guilt of this great crime rests on the Christian Church. 'In the name of the most Holy Trinity' the Spanish Government (Roman Catholic) concluded more than ten treaties authorizing the sale of five hundred thousand human beings; in 1592 Sir John Hawkins sailed on his diabolical errand of buying slaves in Africa and selling them in the West Indies in a ship which bore the sacred name of Jesus; while Elizabeth, the Protestant Queen, rewarded him for his success in

The identity of our physical origin is proved by science, that of our spiritual origin by the Wisdom Religion. The First alone is not sufficient as a basis for Brotherhood. The identity of our physical origin alone makes no appeal to our higher and deeper feelings. Matter, deprived of its soul and spirit, or its divine essence, cannot speak to the human heart. But the identity of the soul and spirit, of real, immortal man, as Theosophy teaches us, once proven and deep-rooted in our hearts, would lead us far on the road of real charity and brotherly goodwill.

We explain the common origin of man by teaching that the **root** of all nature, objective and subjective, and everything else in the universe, visible and invisible, **is, was, and ever will be** one absolute essence, from which all starts, and into which everything returns. This is Aryan philosophy, fully represented only by the Vedantins, and the Busshist system. With this object in view, it is the duty of all theosophists to promote in every practical way, and in all countries, the spread of **non-sectarian** education.

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[TO BE CONTINUED]

this first adventure of Englishmen in that inhuman traffic by allowing him to wear on his crest 'a demi-Moor in his proper colour, bound with a cord, or, in other words, a manacled Negro slave.'" — *Conquests of the Cross* (quoted from the *Agnostic Journal*).