

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Modern Theosophy An Outline of Its Principles

by Claude Falls Wright, FTS

Published in 1894

This work was originally written for a well-known publishing house in New York. Prolonged delays in issuing the work and the eventual assignment of the house forced the author to withdraw the manuscript. It is now issued with some slight additions.

February 1894 - Claude Falls Wright

CLAUDE FALLS WRIGHT last visited Toronto in August, 1922. He was called in the January following to Nicaragua on a business trip, and left with the expectation of returning within a short time. He left his personal effects in his New York lodgings, and after his death by accidental drowning, as no one claimed his property and time passed on, his landlady sold what there was for the rent due. Among these effects were many books and manuscripts. The story of their dispersion may be told another time, but we are only concerned with Mr. Wright's book, *Modern Theosophy*. It was published in 1894, or attempted to be published, but only a few copies comparatively got into circulation. Most of them were destroyed in a fire. Mr. Wright had every intention of republishing the book with revisions, and we talked it over with him on his last visit to Toronto. Mr. Roy Mitchell, who was naturally interested in the sale of Mr. Wright's books and papers, when he heard where they were being disposed of, went and examined them and was fortunate enough to find a ragged old book with a cover pasted over it with the title "Gupta Vidya" taken from another volume. It covered Mr. Wright's own revised copy of *Modern Theosophy*. Mr. Mitchell bought it and has very kindly placed this corrected copy at our disposal, and the book will be reprinted in the pages of *The Canadian Theosophist* during the next ten months or so. It is a comprehensive though concise exposition of Theosophy as Madam Blavatsky presented it to the world in her writings, and will be appreciated by all students who desire such a lucid and effective account of the Divine Wisdom as Mr. Wright has written.

Editor *Canadian Theosophist*

November 1928

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

PREFACE

Chapter 1

THE ARCANES PHILOSOPHY

Chapter 2

COSMOLOGICAL

THE DAWN OF THE MANVANTARA

THE ULTIMATE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE

SPIRIT AND MATTER

THE ASTRAL LIGHT

Chapter 3

THE PLANETARY WORLD

SISTERS OF THE EARTH

PLANETARY EVOLUTION

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOON

THE SEVEN RACES

Chapter 4

ANTHROPOLOGICAL

THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN

LIFE AND DEATH

DEATH AND AFTER

KARMA AND REINCARNATION

PREHISTORIC RACES

THE MONAD

NIRVANA

Chapter 5

MASTERS OF WISDOM

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Chapter 6

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

The subject of Theosophy is so vast, and the tools of language are so inadequate, that any popular exposition of its doctrines must fall short of conveying to the ordinary reader, for whom it is written, a complete and satisfactory answer. This is not because the writer is unable to express himself, but in consequence of the newness of the subject to the mind of the day. This strangeness throws around the subject a mystery that is not inherent, a vagueness and remoteness which invade even the use of ordinary words. For as Theosophy opens up a new and vast vista for the thoughts to roam through, and reveals a scheme of cosmic and human evolution including the smallest detail, the language of the Anglo-Saxon has to be used in a double sense nearly all the time. But the new and wider scope that words thus acquire will reveal itself to those who read this book.

It brings forward no new scheme of either religion or science. No claims are made to original discovery, nor even to new arrangement. It is simply a new attempt to tell again of that which the never dying Brotherhood- the elder brothers of the "Great Orphan Humanity"- have preserved till now: the system which furnishes the key to every religion wherein is buried the truth about our nature and our destiny. And as a young servant of the great band of Silent Workers, the author has only followed in the steps of others who, like him, would wish the western nations to know themselves and to some extent the plan of that small portion of Cosmos in which this little globe swing round the sun.

So, with whatever faults, many or few, this book may have, both the author and I are glad of its appearance, for we firmly believe that this is but once more the sounding the same call to our fellows that we helped to sound before in prior lives on this poor globe, the least significant of the seven. For if through this volume but three immortal pilgrims shall be turned to the light held out by the great Brothers, they will be three more gained for the Army of the Future.

The hope of the author of this work- shared by many other earnest members of the Theosophical Society- is in the future, and in a brotherhood which includes within its bonds many living men, who, though unseen by the ordinary man, are powerful and wise enough to affect the progress of the races. They are the elder brothers of the great Human Brotherhood. They do not seek the applause of men nor a vindication for their policy. Many people do not believe that such things exist at all, but there are those members of the Theosophical Society, among them the author and myself, who hold firmly to the conviction that the highest examples of human development are not among the schools of Sciences, or Art, or Medicine, or Literature, or Statecraft, but indeed among the Unseen Brotherhood, and we have the courage to wait for the visible appearance, in a higher or better civilization, of some of these glorious Adepts. And that consummation we are approaching. The outer materialistic prophets of a civilization based on selfishness scoff at such a theory, but we, being firmly convinced of progress from within by repeated incarnations of the immortal Ego, must be preparing for a new Day. This book, then, is by way of such preparation.

William Q. Judge New York, June 1892

PREFACE

The Author particularly desires to disclaim credit for originality of thoughts in this work. Fragments from the mass of mystical literature which has crept out from its hiding place with the advance of theosophical thought have merely been put in order and rendered perhaps somewhat clearer by the freshness of rewriting.

The doctrine which it has been his effort to outline is not brought forward as a novelty, save in so far as the form or clothing in which old but forgotten truths are put may exact such denomination. Portions of it are to be found embedded in the substratum of truth upon which every form of religion is reared; its existence can readily be traced in the mysticism and philosophy which have graced human thought in every age. Therefore, also, it cannot be regarded as a "revelation". It does not even profess completeness, except to the extent to which, up to the present, it has been disclosed; this for the reason that as its dealing is with nature, a wholeness of divulgement would necessitate the breaking of all her seals- and there are many scrolls that cannot be opened until the time is ripe.

Briefly, it is the tragedy of the Soul; it hints at its origin, sketches its journeyings, shows the wherefore of its sufferings, and points to the when and how its apotheosis may be achieved. It is also the science of life; for its endeavour is to plunge into the profundities of nature, and to grapple with the mystery of Being. It may be called Truth herself; since it unveils all things to indicate her presence.

The age is a black one; and even if the light of Christianity be divine, it has failed nevertheless to disperse the Cimmerian darkness. Religious disputations and theological warfare, bigotry and hypocrisy, dogmatism and unholy discord have left their melancholy tokens, and many centuries must elapse ere they can be altogether washed away. Nor has materialistic science succeeded better. Invaluable to the age as the catalogue of facts presented by her votaries must be, yet the unhealthy disagreement between some of their most vital hypotheses has not failed greatly to damage the confidence reposed in them by their less learned brethren. A conflict of mind with mind, terminating in sectarian hostility, is the order of the hour, while the consequent drift of the masses to materialism and atheistic thought is leaving its impress on the times in nihilism and anarchistic reform. But as Night's darkest hour heralds the approach of Dawn, itself the messenger of the trans-plendent Noontide, so it is here and now that the true philosopher will look for the establishing of a brighter epoch; and Theosophy has stepped forward, as it does from age to age, to lay the foundation-stone.

The work which follows records the outline of some of the more important doctrines of the theosophical philosophy, which several years' personal instruction from Madame Blavatsky and a study of her works have taught the author. Well-knowing how many there are whose independence of thought forbids their acceptance of any of the various religious dogmas, and who are yet too spiritually-minded to descend to a materialistic view of existence, he has written it in the hope that it may be read by a few whom other theosophical works have failed to reach; and as a slight tribute to the memory of one who made more sacrifices for Humanity than the age can appreciate.

Claude Falls Wright

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

144 Madison Avenue, New York City

May 1892

CHAPTER ONE
THE ARCANE PHILOSOPHY

*This not a matter of today,
Or yesterday, but hath been from all times
And none hath told us when it came, or how*

Sophocles

*Divine origin does not mean here a revelation from
an anthropomorphic God, on a mount amidst
thunder and lightning;
but as we understand it, a language
and a system of science imparted to
the early mankind by a more
advanced mankind, so much higher
as to be divine in the sight of that infant humanity.*

H.P.Blavatsky

The Theosophical Society is an attempt to form the nucleus of a brotherhood at once fair and honorable, and just to all, depending for its very life on its kindness, straightforwardness and catholicity. Its aim is to unite all systems of thought and thus develop a philosophy that will include every phase of existence.

In this essay, it examines all views of life, seeking the good in each. The Hindu, the Buddhist and the Christian receive equally their just share of approval, their right proportion of condemnation. The merits and demerits of the materialistic schools are discussed side by side with the merits and demerits of the most idealistic and mystical. Hypnotism and even spiritualism receive a respectful and honorable attention.

It is hardly to be wondered at that with regard to such a society misconceptions prevail. The large majority of persons glean their general knowledge from the columns of the daily newspapers, which, however commendable for their zeal and candour, are hardly to be expected adequately to explain philosophy. Only those occurrences which, in the annals of Theosophy, might be construed as sensational, have been voiced by them, and therefore the masses have become more acquainted with its strangeness than with its truths. Some persons think the Society an organized propaganda of Buddhism; others connect with Hinduism or Mohammedanism. There are those who maintain it to be a Christian reform movement; others have asserted its anti-Christian nature. It has been regarded as a spiritualistic community. While some say that Theosophists are dreamers and idealists who utterly ignore practical life and work, others affirm them to be materialists and atheists. They have been called astrologers, alchemists, magicians, sorcerers, socialists, vegetarians. In almost the same breath the Society has been spoken of as a philanthropic institution and as an organization of impostors, dupes and charlatans, of thaumaturgists and agents of the devil. It may certainly have attempted the vindication of a few slandered beliefs and have tried to point out that there was sometimes to be found, under a mountain of fiction, a basis of truth; that it should, however, directly or indirectly have proclaimed itself as wholly in agreement with any one view of life to the exclusion of all others is entirely fallacious. The note struck by the philosophy is synthesis. The endeavour of its adherents is to gather truth from all sides, to unite all peoples and religions by the holy bond of brotherhood. But to show the public that the aim of an enlightened socialism, however mistaken its policy may be, is not altogether evil; to prove that the philosophy of Gautama Buddha had as much sincerity of purpose as the Christian religion; to hold that magic was not always the fable it now appears, does not in itself entitle one to the denomination of Socialist, Buddhist or Magician. Hence it has come about that the Theosophical Society, because it

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

regards with consideration and tolerance all men's opinions, endeavouring to extract the good therefrom, has been associated with many a movement it has not upheld, many a notion it has not approved.

However, closely identified with it, the Theosophical Society is not a promulgator of Theosophy. It is organized on such lines that it cannot represent any particular philosophy or religion. To be sure, its members, almost without exception, recognize Theosophy as the only system of knowledge that adequately explains the difficulties of the age; but the society which bears its name has no opinions of its own, and ever holds itself in a position to examine fairly and without bias every new view of life presented. Yet, strange as it may seem, while embodying fairly definite statements as to nature and man, Theosophy is perfectly in accord with the spirit of the Theosophical Society. Its essential principles are those common to every philosophy, and almost the first rule for its successful study is that the mind of the student be held open to receive knowledge and truth, no matter what the source. The philosophy, and its vehicle, the Society, are thus intimately related to each other. The Theosophical Society is an attempt to free men from the degrading influences of superstition, materialism, and the selfishness inculcated by our civilization, while Theosophy represents in general the position the mind naturally takes when thus emancipated. The philosophy has now to be explained.

Theosophy comes to us from the Orient- the birthplace of religions. For centuries this wisdom, the fruitage of the studies of greater nations that have passed out of existence or fallen into decay,- of the ancient Chinese, Egyptians, Hindus, Greeks, has been hidden from the younger peoples of the earth, jealously guarded by the Arahats or wise men of the East. At rare and long intervals a nation more favoured, because more advanced, has through the intercession of some high priest or seer or the work of some great sage been permitted the custody of a few of the lesser secrets for the benefit of its peoples. The knowledge that has thus from time to time leaked out into the world has been the origin of our countless religions, all of which, notwithstanding their hostile relationships, have yet sprung from the one source.

Across the snowcapped range of mountains that separates Nepal from Tibet, in haunts absolutely inaccessible to ordinary man, there is a body of philosophers, men who have passed beyond the stage of the normally human,- semi-divine beings, who hold in their mighty keeping the records of all the learning of the past, know the last word concerning the evolution of our globe, have solved the mystery of being and who possess a power over nature and knowledge of her secret laws not dreamed of as possible in our prosaic West. It is to Them, the true Founders of the Theosophical Society, that we are indebted for the philosophy which has been roughly outlined in the following pages, and which has already produced so great an effect in the world of thinking men. This is the oriental philosophy, the arcane wisdom of the East, some of the teachings of which have now, under the name of Theosophy, for the first time in all the ages been presented to the world at large, it having reached a stage of development when as a whole it was prepared to understand them. For long ages this wisdom has been the heritage of only the more spiritually advanced of the nations, or the elect of other less-evolved peoples who had struggled to a stage of progress beyond their brethren-- bound, however, under the strictest pledges of secrecy not to reveal their knowledge. India, for instance, at one time the most intelligent and civilized country of the globe, teems with works containing references to the wisdom of her ancestors, and even at this remote date much of the ancient science is to be found spread through her literature. But for the most part the learning has been kept very secret. Now, however, it, or a portion of it, is given to all nations.

Owing to the fact that the philosophy now given out has been kept so long secret, the names employed

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

to designate it have caused confusion in the minds of some. This, therefore, requires some explanation.

The esoteric philosophy, secret doctrine, occult science, or whatever name we may employ when speaking of Theosophy, cannot properly be said to be esoteric, secret or occult once it has been given to the world. But such titles as these really contain deeper meanings than those they may superficially present. Theosophy or the wisdom-religion is still esoteric, inasmuch as it has not all been made exoteric, and so long as this is the case, so long as any of it remains hidden from humanity, so long may the doctrine be called the esoteric or secret one. This will be the case while the race remains unfitted to receive all of the bright truths which are its heritage. It has ever been so. Each of the world's religions embodies but a different statement or expression of the arcane doctrine as given to different races and under different circumstances in all periods of time in accordance with man's needs for wisdom, by the guardians of that wisdom. There has always been a secret philosophy. Every true religion, eastern or otherwise, has had a dual existence from the moment of its birth to the hour of its decay; an external, conventional aspect for the masses, embodying little more than a code of ethics, and giving a few general facts concerning the origin of the world and the destiny of man- and an internal esoteric school, containing the real teaching or the science, from which the exoteric doctrine was extracted. Indeed it is a significant fact that all beliefs, when their outer garb of public superstition has been stripped off, and the naked frame restored in its original purity, are found to embody identical doctrines. This is only explainable by postulating the existence of a system of wisdom from which all the world religions have sprung, such a system at the same time affording a key to all of the various beliefs, and explaining the many allusions to a secret school which are to be found in the sacred books of all nations and scattered through thousands of volumes in every tongue.

Likewise is Theosophy still occult, because its science deals much with the inner, hidden nature of man. And this raises not a little difficulty in the mind of the western student. We in the west are so opposed to secrecy in any form, even in thought, that we find it almost impossible to believe anything true which bears this imprint. That anything should be "occult" seems to us improper. But there are some things which cannot be said, and others which it is impossible to explain, and such are the only ones which are truly occult. Thus music becomes occult or hidden to one who can hear in the harmony of its progressive chords only a rumble or a noise, and drawings and photographs equally so to those who perceive nothing save a forest of lines in the one, or a variety of shades in the other- as was actually the case which some Fiji Islanders. And the language of the soul must ever remain a mysterious lore to those who are unable to penetrate its depths or even believe in its existence.

The following pages contain a brief exposition of the philosophy as it is at present before the world. Purely eastern in its origin, the reader must bear with me if he finds it here presented more or less in eastern fashion- that is, without immediate attempt to prove , as we proceed, every assertion made. The eastern methods of teaching and of learning are as distinct from our own, as are the respective ideas of civilization in the occident and orient; for while we insist upon the pupil's being led up in his studies through a mass of facts and series of verifications to the full knowledge arrived at by his particular school, the oriental instructor, conceiving wisdom to be a result of the expansion of the mind rather than a training of the memory, contents himself with presenting his scholar with a general outline of the mass of learning to be achieved, forcing him to teach himself by filling in the detail. The master thus becomes a director or adjuster rather than a teacher, and having started the learner in the right way, leaves him to grow naturally and to reach what knowledge he can by his own aspirations and exertions.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

This is, whatever one may say, precisely the method adopted in learning any exact science. If we would be taught mathematics, for instance, we have to adopt the conclusions of our teacher, to believe in their verity, before we can proceed in our studies. We begin with general principles and descend to details. And in occult study the pupil is only given the broad principles of the science, the laws, and is then left by the master to teach himself. The secret doctrine strikes only a few notes; it tells us a few of the fundamental laws by which nature is governed, and shows in a variety of ways how they may be observed in their action in the different departments of Being. So that it must not be imagined that the philosophy is without proof. On the contrary, its tenets once fully grasped, abundant proof will be found in every field of nature and experience; and the author believes it to contain the only key to the many vital problems which in this age confronts us on all sides.

This leads us to the question "Whence the Secret Doctrine?", the answer to which we must preface by a short history of prehistoric man, clipped from the arcane records.

In ages past, when peoples far different from our present race walked the earth, greater in science, greater in art, greater in civilization, the one desire which held the human soul was the unquenchable thirst for wisdom. Earthly desires chained it not. It lived within the tabernacle of clay, not as prisoner, but as king, seeking only knowledge and power- to understand the laws and nature of the universe and to control its workings. The solemn and mighty nations who then ruled the earth made no difference between science and religion. They fathomed the mysteries of creation, not only by analysis, but by spiritual perception. They cultivated those ethereal parts of their natures which we now would fain destroy, and sought truth in spiritual regions at present barred to the human wanderer by ten thousand gates. Living in the body, they sojourned among the stars; reading the language of the mighty universe, they listened to the music of the spheres.

Yet man sought to learn too much. He tried to wrest from nature secrets she was not then prepared to give him- and fell; fell to depths of degradation as great as the heights to which he had previously attained. The present humanity is the descendant of those fallen ones, whose wisdom has been lost, their knowledge scattered to the winds, leaving only a few husks of their once brilliant sciences. A few, however, remaining true to their Godlike natures, retained their purity and power. These, sorrowing beyond measure at the sight of their fallen brethren, formed themselves into a body, resolving that they would not know rest until they had succeeded in restoring Man again to his true position as divine ruler of the planet. They or their descendants still walk the earth unnoticed and unknown by ordinary humanity, engaged in their life's work. Holding that everyone has latent in him all the power and greatness of his ancestors, and that any one who succeeds in purifying himself of his animal tendencies may rise to the position of a god, they have never lost hope of success. They have, up to the present, managed at intervals to swell their ranks by single individuals; which, added to the fact that the knowledge and power they possess has given them the ability to extend their lives considerably over the time usually allotted to man, has kept their school alive.

Once every hundred years, or thereabout, owing to the removal of certain restrictions imposed upon their labour by natural forces, these sages are able to work freely for the space of about twenty-five years, to send messengers from their Brotherhood to teach the masses and to raise the standard of mankind. At such times their work is effected in accordance with the exigencies of the age, and a glance back over the history of the world's progress will show distinct traces of what has been done in this direction about the close of each century. At certain of these periods, however, the restrictions are farther withdrawn than

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

at others; then greater teachers are sent by the school. Of such were Jesus and Gautama Buddha who did their work in times of great opportunity, and the effect of whose missions lives to this day. The close of the nineteenth century is one of these periods, and opportunities have afforded themselves among western nations, not before equalled for many an age. Hence the establishment the Theosophical Society, and hence the extreme energy with which the class of literature which sprang up with its formation has been spread the world over. The increasing refinement and spirituality of the world has entitled it as a whole to regain some of its lost knowledge, and much of that which up to now was secret has become public property, it remaining with the world as to how far it will profit by the chance offered.

All this will seem, no doubt, very fanciful to the reader. It will hardly appear credible to him that while our scientists and philosophers are busily engaged in endeavouring to solve the problems which must necessarily arise in the search for knowledge, there should actually exist all the while men who not only had attained to the knowledge, but who had long ago solved the problems. The fact is, however, that our western civilization is exceedingly young; we are scarcely developed. And as children are liable to fancy their knowledge as exceeding that of their elders, so the more modern nations,, not having reached their majority, look with scorn upon the older countries-China, India and so forth. But for all we can tell there may records among these containing some of the profoundest secrets known to man. Almost all our present-day knowledge has come from the East. We have to thank the older oriental nations for by far the greater part of our information concerning astronomy, chemistry, geometry; and indeed, anything we at present know is but a development of the few seeds of wisdom sown amongst us by our eastern brethren.

The flood of light that has been let in upon the origin of religions by oriental research has led not a few to fancy that there might have been at one time a single philosophy from which all creeds have sprung. It is worthy of note that although most creeds owe their origin to one teacher, yet in no case does that particular teacher start the creed afterwards associated with his name. He merely reforms an old one. Thus Buddha readjusts the Brahmanical doctrine of the time, and endeavours to purify it by doing away with caste; while Jesus comes to fulfill, not to destroy, the law of Moses.

The records of the eastern esoteric schools of Philosophy state that there was at one time such a universal system, and as evidence of their statement point to (a) the fact that all doctrines entitled to be called "religions", in contradistinction to mere ethical associations, maintain the tradition of mankind as at one time pure, but since fallen and degraded; and to (b) the underlying similarity of all creeds. Cleared of their dross of public error, all religions will be found to embody in essence precisely identical teachings; Brahmanism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, Gnosticism, the philosophy of the ancient Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Hebrews, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Greeks and all the systems, both ancient and modern, are more or less portions of the one arcane Secret Doctrine.

Ex oriente lux! It is to the East we have to look for what remains of the primeval philosophy; for the guardians of the secret wisdom. And we are not without statements from high-caste Hindus that all the knowledge which at one time belonged to the whole world has not yet rebecome our property. "When a prominent Cinghalese priest assured the writer (H.P.Blavatsky) that it was well known that the most important Buddhist tracts belonging to the sacred canon were stored away in countries and places inaccessible to the European pundits, the late Swami Dayanand Sarasvati, the greatest Sanskritist of his day in India, assured some members of the Theosophical Society of the same fact with regard to ancient Brahmanical works. When told that Professor Max Muller had declared to the audiences of his "Lectures"

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

that the theory- "that there was a primeval preternatural revelation granted to the fathers of the human race, finds but few supporters at present," - the holy and learned man laughed. His answer was suggestive. 'If Mr. Moksh Mooler,' as he pronounced the name, 'were a Brahman, and came with me, I might take him to a gupta cave (a secret crypt) near Okhee Math in the Himalayas, where he would soon find out that what crossed the Kalapani (the black waters of the ocean) from India to Europe, were only the bits of rejected copies of some passages from our sacred books. There was a 'primeval revelation', and it still exists; nor will it be ever lost to the world, but will reappear; though the Mlechchbas will of course have to wait'. Questioned further on this point, he would say no more. This was at Meerut, in 1880".

The "brothers", as the guardians of the secret wisdom are called, work in in various ways to produce the desired results in the uplifting and purifying of humanity. Owing to the fact that the masses tend to constantly materialize philosophical conceptions, to turn what are intended to be pure abstractions into concrete images, the necessity for periodically redirecting and reforming their religious ideas must be apparent, and we therefore find men coming forward- generally from the East- age after age, purifying the old religion, and starting it anew upon a more spiritual basis. The necessity for maintaining this purity for as long a while as possible has led each great teacher to divide his teachings into inner and outer schools. So that we find in Egypt and in Greece the greater and lesser mysteries of the temples, and in India the esoteric and exoteric philosophies; Buddha and Pythagoras teaching their direct disciples mysteries not revealed to the masses, and Jesus adopting a like course, just as Moses did with the elders and the people.

The teachings of these inner schools have always been identical; although their nomenclature may have varied, yet they have always been under the direct supervision of the same central school. The esoteric doctrines of any one religion will be found to be the same as those of all the others. Of all creeds, however, that which has most nearly retained in its outer organization its original purity, is the Buddhistic, this mainly owing to the fact that Gautama worked among a nation the most spiritual, and at that time the most highly civilized in the world. Hence Theosophy, because it upholds most of the Buddhistic tenets, and has to some extent adopted its terminology, has constantly been accused of being but Gautama's philosophy revived, and reappearing in another garb. It does not deny the accusation; it is the same as the real Buddhist creed, but it is also the same as the real Christian creed, and no more one than the other, and no more either, than it is Chaldean or Egyptian. The philosophy it upholds is to be found hidden under the glyph and symbol of every religion, and in the sacred books of every nation, distorted, perhaps, but still there.

This is its whole assertion. Like Jesus', its mission is to fulfill, not to destroy, to establish unity rather than division and discord; unity, not alone of religion with religion, and sect with sect, but of religion with science, and of philosophy with both. The Theosophical Society is then unique at least in this, that while other factions cry aloud that with them alone "truth" is to be found, it seeks rather to vindicate the truth of all, and, uniting them into one harmonious whole, to demonstrate a true Brotherhood of man.

We now approach the difficult task of placing upon paper in as clear a manner as is possible in a popular work, a sketch of the secret doctrine as revealed to the present day. In this we propose to commence with the general laws of life as laid down by the philosophy, following with a sketch of the nature of the universe and of the planets, and ending with an outline of the constitution, development and history of man. By such means we hope to escape the great difficulty hitherto experienced in putting forward the

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

philosophy- that of arrangement. The subject is so vast, embraces so many different fields of thought, that one scarcely knows where to begin, and it might really be written equally well from almost any point of view. But then it could only be understood from the point of view from which it was written, whereas the object here is to make it clear to all. Besides, as shown before, this is the eastern method- to commence with the general and descent to the particular, which of itself would be sufficient reason for employing it when writing on an eastern philosophy.

CHAPTER TWO COSMOLOGICAL

Everything harmonizes with me which is harmonious to thee, O Cosmos. Nothing for me is too early or too late which is due time for thee. Everything is fruit to me which thy seasons bring, O Nature. From thee are all things, in thee are all things, to thee all things return.

- Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, IV, 23

As few persons in the west take interest in discussing pure metaphysics, it is to some extent regrettable that we shall at first have to lead the reader into that domain; yet at the outset it is absolutely necessary so to do, that a correct idea may be formed of the fundamental conceptions upon which the doctrine rests.

Occult sciences teaches that we comprehend the nature of things outside our individual consciousness only in so far as we understand our own natures; that we, as well as all other beings, reflect in ourselves the whole cosmos, and that the closer we examine into the details of this reflection, the nearer we shall come to a clear understanding of the whole. To have a really just notion of what life is, we must draw our conclusions respecting it from a survey of our own position. Such is the only road to success in these matters; to travel any other will only lead to hopeless confusion and despair.

Individual consciousness is not possible without the two factors of subject and object, thinker and thought, perceiver and perception, or whatever we may choose to call them, and the oriental philosophy holds that similar factors must operate in universal consciousness. These must have come into play simultaneously at the very genesis of the cosmos- "in the beginning". What lies behind, what produced them, is a mystery as great as that which produced us, and cannot be immediately known. It is the abstraction of Being- Beness - and is something like the Absolute of modern metaphysics. Theosophists, adopting most of their terminology from the Hindus, know it under the name of Parabrahm - that which lies behind or beyond Brahm or the first cause- and it might well correspond to the impersonal God of some thinkers.

In the history of the Cosmos according to Occultism, the life-drama is opened with the coming into action of two principles, out of which interaction all else proceeds. These two are called in their universal sense, Spirit and Matter, the Hindus naming them Purusha and Prakriti- "Divine Thought" and "Primordial Substance". Their interaction weaves the whole fabric of universes, planets and beings, and finally effects individual existence. In other words, Divine Thought thinks out the plan upon which the cosmos will be constructed, and out of Substance it is fashioned.

We here must break for a moment the thread of our remarks to guard the reader against an error which will probably arise unless he be very exact in his mode of thinking. Arguments such as these have reference to purely metaphysical concepts, not to material, physical things. One of the principal reasons for establishing the Theosophical Society and for giving out the teaching the west has received through it, was to do away as much as possible with the tendency of the masses to materialize the most spiritual

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

ideas. The realistic, sensuous, non-imaginative, and iron method of regarding things, fashionable among our modern scholars,- a reaction from the superstition of the Black Ages,- is to be observed quite as much among exponents of religion as among those whom we dub "atheists". Entirely forgetting that spiritual knowledge and religion have their source in the faculties of intuition, imagination and veneration, they have sought to reduce the perceptions of the soul to the analytical thought of the brain. For example, the "Divine Thought" of Esoteric Philosophy is the same as the "Spirit of God" which is said to brood over the face of the waters in the genesis of the world according to the Hebraic philosophy- water in this, as in every religious system, being the same as Matter in its first condition, or "Primordial Substance", - and this "God" has now been materialized into a great Man! Truly an illustration of the "letter that killeth" the spirit (Romans 6,6; Corinthians 3,6). The "Matter" which is conceived of in Occultism as coming into existence with the dawn of life is only so-called for the want of a better name; it is Matter only in the sense of objectivity, not what we now know as such, as Spirit also is such only in the sense of subjectivity. Basically, they are one and the same thing- Parabrahm- and merely represent its two poles. The north pole of the magnet only exists because of the existence of the south pole; they are mutually dependent on one another. Spirit, or the root of subjective or thinking existence, only knows active life because of its opposite- substance, the root of material objective life: that of which these are the two poles is abstract Being- Parabrahm. Similar poles, call them by what name we will, must exist likewise in every entity in the cosmos. If we are to start fairly in tracing the "becoming" of the universe, we must begin with the most metaphysical ideas, materializing them later as is permissible when in the descending scale of thought we approach our own state of consciousness.

The two factors necessary for existence having been taken into account, the first picture of the panorama may be brought forward and the gradual construction of the universe shown. But before doing so we should answer a question which will by this time have formulated itself in the reader's mind. Granting the impossibility of understanding existence per se, granting that all that can be said of it is that it "was, is, and ever shall be", that we know nothing about its Cause, yet a survey of the shifting scenes around us shows everywhere constant birth, growth, decay and death, and it would be reasonable to conclude that this everlasting change was inherent in the nature of all things. Are we then to understand that the esoteric doctrine teaches that the cosmos itself was born, lives, and will eventually die? If so, how did it come into being, and what will become of it at dissolution?

Now without going into the exceedingly metaphysical question of Time, upon which these and such like enquiries properly turn- really an illusion, but perhaps difficult for us to comprehend as such, save by argument- let us at once say that the philosophy does hold that the universe has its birth-periods, living and dying like any other entity; but it does not pretend to say why. Every philosophy must have its fundamental propositions, and this is one of which the secret doctrine says--" let it be granted". But look around you: Search with your telescope the stars, or peer through your microscope into the tiniest drop of blood! Examine nature's workings in all her fields- in the mineral, animal, vegetable kingdoms! Gather together the facts attained through scientific investigation, in astronomy, in geology, in physiology, in chemistry, in every department! And everywhere you will find, without exception- I speak deliberately, without exception- the indication of one underlying law of cycles, alternation, or periodicity. Day gives places to night, and night to day- eternal sleeping and waking. Winter succeeds summer; summer follows winter. Year after year the trees put forth their leaves; year after year they die, and are born again. Life gives place to death and decay, death again replaces life. Such is the immutable law of being; nature reveals herself to us only through the unending sequence of ebb and flow. The universal tendency of everything is to complete a cycle of manifestation, returning eventually to the point from which it originally started. This constant alternation, this law of periodicity, of ebb and flow, we must accept as a

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

fundamental law of life. Therefore the secret doctrine holds that the self-same laws apply equally in the greater and lesser manifestations of nature, it teaches that the universe itself as a whole is also subject to this law of alternation, and has its periods of sleeping and waking. In other words, that while it exists eternally, it is only manifested periodically. These periods of manifestation and non-manifestation were called by the ancient Hindus the "Days and Nights of Brahma", or Manvantara and Pralaya, Manvantara being the Day, or period of waking, and Pralaya the Night or period of sleeping. And, if we would unveil the mysteries of the universe and tell the story of the birth and development of the myriads of worlds and beings, we shall have to commence with the dawn of a Manvantara, or with the first moment of the coming into manifestation of the dual principle of Spirit-Matter heretofore alluded to.

One other difficulty must be referred to. Neither religion nor science would be asked to give a reason for the wherefore of the whole drama of life, because one recognizes in both these great divisions of thought an imperfectibility of development; but Theosophy, because it is supposed to hold itself competent to explain everything, and give a reasonable answer to every query concerning life, will certainly be the target for questions like this, and it may be well to meet them, as far as possible, at the outset.

Theosophy, no more than any other philosophy, can give a reason for existence, as such. It does not pretend to do so; all it can is to offer an explanation for things as they are. The question has been asked age after age, and of every philosopher and sage that has ever lived, and it never has been, never will be answered in such a way as to satisfy the human mind. But Theosophy does give a reason for individual life during a Manvantara, or period of manifestation. It says: "the universe comes into existence in order that it may understand itself", and it may be added that since the root of nature- Spirit-Matter - exists as a unity in duality from the dawn of the Manvantara to the close, the myriads of individual lives thrown into being as the result of this dual existence have each to experience and to understand the whole. We are all but scintillations of one Universal Mind or "Over-Soul", which has incarnated in order to gain experience of material life, so as to understand itself; in which sense "God goes to school". The secret doctrine affirms that each soul, once separated from its fountain head as a spark may be thrown out of a flame, has to act its part in the play during the whole tragedy of life. It regards us as "Pilgrims" wending our way round the cycle of "necessity" or experience, who, having passed through the mineral, vegetable and animal stages, have issued into the human, with many before us high up on the road, many others following behind.

It will be well at this juncture to sum up the three fundamental propositions formulated by the philosophy.

(a) The Nature of existence: In this we find "an omnipresent, eternal, boundless and immutable PRINCIPLE, on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude", which expresses itself by its two aspects of Spirit- or consciousness- and Matter, or Divine Thought and Substance- subject and object, the two factors necessary for the manifestation of life; which two factors, by virtue of necessity, must be reflected in some condition or another in every entity in the universe, as in the universe as a whole.

(b) The Method of existence: In this we see the law of cycles, of alternation, ebb and flow, a fundamental law in life, and the consequent periodical appearance and disappearance of the myriads of worlds and universes in the deeps of space.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

(c) The Purpose of existence: This is to enrich the whole, through the individualized experience of its parts. It must here be remembered that the secret doctrine "admits of no privileges or special gifts in Man - intellectual or spiritual - save those won by his own ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations." [The Secret Doctrine, Vol. -1-, page 17) This is the pivotal point of the esoteric doctrine, which finds no room for vicarious atonement.

And now, having formulated our propositions, let us return to the history of cosmological development.

THE DAWN OF THE MANVANTARA

Intelligences are without beginning.

From: Oracles of Zoroaster.

The writer does not propose to bring before his readers the variety of metaphysical states through which Being is supposed to pass before the first film of individual life appears on the shoreless ocean of space; for such they must refer to volumes more complete than this. The awakening of visible worlds commences with a vibratory thrill which impels itself throughout all space; motion thus becoming the first and the greatest god of all - he who works untiringly and unceasingly from the beginning to the end of time. Spirit and Matter are next described as arising one within the other, springing, as they divide, a "web" (the language is of course metaphorical), which may be said to be connected with Spirit above, with Matter below. This web, as will be at once seen, both divides and unites the two poles of life; it is indeed nothing less than the universe itself, brought into being by such separation. In its meshes are afterwards woven the innumerable worlds and systems, the process of construction lasting until the twilight of the Day of life.

But there is another agent which comes into being at the same moment. It is that incomprehensible link between mind and matter which must be held to exist if we would reason well; and in the occult system is called Fohat. The necessity for such a link in any philosophical system must above all things be manifest to the thinking and intelligent individual.

Thought, for example, a purely immaterial and spiritual thing, could have no effect on matter unless there were some mediums existing in nature by which it was joined to that matter. We have command over every sinew of our frame; by the power of thought we are enabled to raise an arm or move a finger. But we do not thus dominate the whole of nature; beyond our bodies our will-power normally fails us. This shows a definite connection existing between the body and the mind or soul which has incarnated in it, - some principle by which they are joined together. In the Cosmos as a whole the Spirit or Deity which incarnates in or inspires Matter is, in like manner, linked to that Matter by a medium operating between the two. This is Fohat, which is simply the energy which causes the advance and motion and evolution of nature. Behind this energy stands Deity or Divine Thought. "Fohat is the steed; the thought is the rider". On the terrestrial plane Fohat appears as electricity in the widest sense. It is the basis of all the multifarious forces which are apparent, though unseen, throughout nature. The electric current which flows between the positive and negative poles, the heat generated by the flame, gravity, will, the mesmeric fluid, are all aspects of this principle.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

The universe is indeed but one grand school of opposites, positive and negative, Thoughts and Substance, linked by the fohatic medium. Coming into life with the manifestation of these two poles at the awakening of Being, in its more comprehensive sense Fohat is the host of gods and powers which call the worlds into existence - "the transcendental binding unity of all cosmic energies, on the unseen as on the manifested planes, the action of which resembles- on an immense scale - that of a living force created by will, in those phenomena where the seemingly subjective acts on the seemingly objective and propels it to action... On the earthly plane its influence is felt in the magnetic and active force generated by the strong desire of the magnetizer. On the cosmic, it is present in the constructive power that carries out, in the formation of things - from the planetary system down to the glowworm and simple daisy - the plan in the mind of nature, or in the Divine Thought, with regard to the development and worth of that special thing". (Plane is a term used by Theosophists to indicate the field in which such and such a mode of consciousness operates. Thus we may speak of the Mental plane, or the field of the mind's play; the Physical plane, or field of material action; the Dream Plane, etc.). From every aspect it is the errand-runner between the spiritual and the material sides of nature, the "messenger of the gods".

The universe comes into being on seven planes (Plane is a term used by Theosophists to indicate the field in which such and such a mode of consciousness operates. Thus we may speak of the Mental plane, or the field of the mind's play; the Physical plane, or Field of material action; the Dream plane, etc.). The esoteric doctrine has not, so far, presented us with a reason as to why the number seven, which plays so important a part in the whole system, should be that employed. But it may be remarked that one proof of the basic identity of all creeds might be found in the observance of the constant recurrence of this number throughout all scriptures, and it has been said that it is the basic number of present period of evolution in this solar system. These seven planes naturally partake of the two qualities of Spirit and Matter, since in their totality they embrace every phase of consciousness in the universe. Three of them are spiritual, and four material - or, in other words, the subjective, inner side of nature is held to exist on three planes of consciousness, while the objective, visible part, is constructed on four.

With the dawn of life, the gods or intelligent forces in nature - the various aspects of Fohat - are brought into being on all planes of consciousness in seven classes. These are the greater fashioners of the planets and systems; the lower orders - the "builders" - moulding the worlds in obedience to the direction of their superiors, those of the essence of the Thought Divine.

A full and proper treatment of that portion of the esoteric philosophy dealing with Fohat and the birth of the gods or builders, is of the greatest importance in demonstrating the harmony of the whole; nevertheless it can only be briefly touched upon at the present stage of this work. The whole of space is held to be filled with countless myriads of these "builders" of all degrees of development and experience, whose work lies in the "drawing-out" or expanding of the occult side of nature into the visible or known world. The growth of external forms may indeed, as the biologist tells us, be the result of the interaction of natural forces, but Theosophists demur to the statement that such forces are "blind". The secret doctrine holds that there is no force without its intelligent guide or director, and that the least as well as the greatest of the gods are indispensable in the "Creation" or calling into visible being of the universe.

But it must be remarked that the universe throughout the whole Manvantara is in the "act of becoming" in answer to the Thought which impressed itself in Matter at the commencement of the drama, this Thought afterwards retiring into "silence and darkness", - because it becomes immersed in that which is produced. This Thought is "Grand Architect of the Universe" of Freemasonry the architect, understand,

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

he who plans, not he who creates, for, according to the ancients, creation is the work of many gods or forces, not the labour of one; man himself, yea, and every entity in space, down to the least of the animalcules, is a creator in his sphere. Thus the occult philosophy believes in no such things as unintelligent matter; each congeries of atoms has its ruler or lord, who guides it more or less intelligently - according to its degree of consciousness - during its passage through life. This subject will be more fully treated under another section of this chapter (The Astral Light) and it only remains to be said meanwhile that, grouped all together, these primal gods and forces are known under the generic name of the "Dhyan Chohans" corresponding to the "Heavenly Hosts" of the Bible.

Although seven planes are affirmed, yet each of these is again subdivided into seven, and this subdivision is continued ad infinitum, the septenary being in every instance divided into two parts - three (relatively) subjective, and four objective, or the everlasting duad of Spirit and Matter. At present, however, we are dealing only with the general cast of the universe, and our concern is therefore only with the seven major divisions, but it must be remembered that the greater and lesser of these divisions have always an exact correspondence with one another. The author has however, neither intention nor desire to discourse at any length on "Planes of Consciousness", and only touches on the subject just in so far as is absolutely necessary to give a general outline of the secret doctrine, purposely omitting all names and correspondences. But an observation of correspondences of this nature is indeed a most important one to the student of the esoteric philosophy. The "Microcosm is a reflection of the Macrocosm", said the ancient Kabalists, meaning by this that the least thing in nature contains in itself the potentiality of all, and is to this extent a copy of the greater being in which it lives. That which we find to be true concerning ourselves will prove to be equally true concerning the universe and the planets. Therefore only the broad outline of that which occurs at the awakening of the Manvantara is given. For at the birth of the planet at the birth of man himself, as of all creatures, precisely the same play is enacted as at the birth of the cosmos. Were we able to remember and place on paper the various changes of state and condition we pass through before birth and in childhood during our gradual development and awakening into this life, we should have a complete description of the genesis of cosmos.

The "builders" alluded to, set to work to create, and from the lowest elemental kingdom in nature to the highest and most perfect, carry on the work of construction from the beginning to end of the Manvantara. Leaving them for the time being to their labours, let us consider some other aspects of the doctrine necessary for a correct conception of what is to follow, returning later to view their handiwork in a description of the planets and spheres, according to eastern philosophy.

THE ULTIMATE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE

*Lower than hell,
Higher than heaven, outside the utmost stars,
Farther than Brahm doth dwell,
Before beginning and without an end,
As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a power divine which moves to good,
Only its laws endure*

-From The Light of Asia by Edwin Arnold

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

It was said that the pivotal doctrine of the philosophy ordained that no special gifts were possible in man, or indeed in any entity in the universe, save as the result of individual effort, and consequently of merit. Yet we have seen that with the very commencement of the Manvantara, the "builders" or creators- the Dhyani Chohans- come into existence, and proceed to construct that universe. Here, then, an apparent contradiction will be noticed, and the point will require some elucidation.

The solution of the difficulty is, however, simpler than might at first appear, if it be recollected that the universe is itself subject to the aforesaid conditional progress. The dawn of each Manvantara witnesses the revivifying of all those entities who disappeared at the commencement of the preceding Pralaya; they are resurrected and are ready to continue their upward march along the line of evolution. Day after day of life they reawaken merely to continue the journey onward.

We are aware that a question naturally follows from this concerning previous Manvantaras, as to the number of these, and how, for instance, life arose in the first. But Theosophy says that there never was a first: Time in the eastern philosophy, exists solely as a relative thing, and has no existence outside the period of manifested life; once this manifestation takes place, however, we descend within its circle. The ancients symbolized life by a serpent swallowing its tail, intending thus to illustrate that it never had a beginning and can never end; so that we must understand an infinite number of Manvantaras to stretch behind and an infinite number to be awaiting us.

The law which regulates the progress of each entity in cosmos, and of the universe itself, is the law of equilibrium, called by the Hindus "Karma", and it is this law which may be said to be the ultimate Law of Laws - the fountainhead, all others being traceable to its operations; by its action Manvantara after Manvantara come into being. So that on reawakening after their long period of sleep, all beings that arise take their positions of importance and necessity in accordance with the equilibration or balancing of their record, in a previous Manvantara - this is their Karmic record, the volume of results and causes, the "Judgment Book".

The operations of this law are more elaborated in a succeeding chapter, and the question is only briefly referred to here in order to clear up any possible difficulties arising in the reader's mind.

SPIRIT AND MATTER

Mere intellectual enlightenment cannot recognize the spiritual. As the sun puts out a fire, so spirit puts out the eyes of mere intellect.

W.Howitt.

As the whole of the theosophical position rests on a correct conception of the two bases of life, Spirit and Matter, I find it absolutely necessary to return for a while to the subject, and to endeavour, by more fully explaining what is meant by these, to do away with any misconceptions that might otherwise arise.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

It will be remembered that we showed at the opening of this chapter, the necessity for two poles of Being, which we then named Thought and Substance. Owing however to the fact that there are really many manifestations of these, although they ever remain but two in essence, it becomes necessary to speak concerning these manifestations. Here also we shall be compelled to introduce the reader to many of the eastern terms employed in the philosophy - employed for the reason that the English language, having developed chiefly from materialistic thought, is without words to express very many ideas conceived by eastern nations. This, we may add, is the excuse offered by the Theosophists for the use of strange words in dealing with these subjects.

"Spirit" and "Matter", "Thought" and "Substance", "Purusha" and "Prakriti", are words used to express the root-nature of those elements which compose life. The perception of existence on the part of the human being is readily divisible into two factors - (a) the thinking part of his being, and (b) those things about which he thinks. Destroy the harmony existing between these two sides, and there will be no human beings. When the spirit or thinking part of the man is withdrawn, we say that he is dead; but no less dead would he be if the whole of that complicated series of images and objective forms which he daily regards, and those things about which he thinks, were deducted from his sphere of being; unless a man thinks, in some way or other, he does not live. Therefore we see that his being is made up of these two principles, and we must consider their relation, if we would understand Being in the abstract.

Some philosophers have sought to explain life by hypotheses which made of the external world around each man is merely the production of his thoughts. But were this so, we should be always able at will to alter the appearance of things, which manifestly we are not. The oriental students of the occult sciences explain nature by showing that the principles of "thinker" and "thing thought of" which compose human life are not first principles, but have their roots far back in the life of the cosmos. To find the true sources of life by "trying back" both in the subjective spheres of their own being, and in those of the external world, has been the effort of sages and seers for ages.

The relation of "thinker" and "thing thought of" obtains in some degree and kind throughout the whole process of life, like principles being found operating in every existing thing. [The action of thinking being an active agency - a force, and the things thought of constituting the passive substance in which the thought works, we see a direct and immediate analogy with the Energy and Matter of the physicist.]. At the very beginning of things this relation on the part of the fundamental principles of the cosmos must have existed. Hence the necessity of an active Deity of some kind becomes apparent - "Deity" and "nature", - the "Spirit of God" and the "waters of space". From the work of God in nature, the action of Spirit on Matter, arises all the motion, change and growth we see around us. But Spirit itself can never really identify itself with Matter; it merely inspires it. Fire cannot associate itself with water, but water placed near the fire will boil, becoming inspired with the heat. This heat is not of the same consummating nature as the flame, although its source is in the latter; it is transformed into an energy of a different kind, one which acts directly with the water. The water itself is thus endowed with the dual nature of energy or heat, and matter. So with the true "Spirit" or "Purusha"; it merely impregnates "Matter" or "Prakriti", which thereupon itself becomes endowed with a dual nature, much akin to that of "Spirit" and "Matter". The inspiring process is repeated again in the latter couplet - the Spirit impregnating the Matter; so on almost indefinitely. The states thus produced constitute the different planes of Being, which, while they rest in seven great divisions, yet by virtue of their quality of subdivision, are indefinite in their extent.

These being the fundamental principles of the cosmos, they are reflected in every manifested thing in the

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

universe; that is, nothing can have existence without their cooperation. As we descend the scale of Being, however, greater differentiation of necessity takes place: Matter triumphs over Spirit, and the quality of that inspiring fire is so changed in its reflections from plane to plane, that in the lowest terrestrial state it is scarcely recognizable as the original essences. Here the physicist knows it as energy. This energy stands therefore as the agent of the true Spirit and is at the same time the link between that and Matter; regarded in a universal sense, it is called Fohat. The reflection of the fundamental principles of the cosmos in every manifested thing is the cause of the well-observed fact that nothing in nature is producible without the coming into contact of two poles - positive and negative, active and passive, male and female, subject and object; that force which both joins these two poles together and is thrown off by their action on one another, is Fohat.

At the dawn of the Manvantara, and just before the breaking of the day of life, Being is said to slumber in absolute consciousness - virtually for us one and the same thing as unconsciousness, as we cannot cognize it. Inherent in it is the "first cause" - that which is as unexplainable as the absolute itself. This has been called the logos (The "Divine Thought", or "Spirit".) - the first logos, rather, for three are recognized. It is that which is spoken of in that exceedingly metaphysical little treatise called the "Gospel according to St. John", where in the opening chapter the author writes, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". As the awakening process continues, the two poles of Spirit and Matter come into existence - not yet however as two separate principles, but as one, which we may speak of as Spirit-Matter. This is called the second logos. From it springs immediately the third, or manifested word which is the coming into being of the universe. Spirit separates from its shadow, Substance, and then overshadows or inspires that. This overshadowing process being reflected from plane to plane, as shown above, causes the segregation of Substance- or Akasha, as the Hindus call it - into seven natures or principles, in all degrees of matter from the most refined to the most material. The highest is called Mahat - Universal Intelligence, or Cosmic Ideation, called also Maha-Buddhi - the "First product of Pradhana, Akasha; [See the Secret Doctrine, Vol. 1., page 256] it stands as the proxy of the Absolute Spirit. The lowest is the soul of our terrestrial world - the "Astral Light". "In this manner", says the Vishnu Purana "were the seven principles of Prakriti reckoned from Mahat to Earth... At the time of Pralaya (pratyahara) these seven successively reenter into each other. The Egg of Brahma (Sarva-mandala) is dissolved with its seven zones, seven oceans, seven regions,....[See Vishnu Purana, Book VI, chapter IV].

In Occultism, the above is always spiritual to the below. Unless this is understood it will be hard for the reader to grasp the idea that the highest conceivable thing- Mahat - is itself Substance, a differentiation of the Akasha. But as a vehicle or upadhi of the One Unknown - absolute consciousness - it must be of the nature of Substance, although infinitely transcending all physical phenomena. It is (abstract) Substance from the standpoint of the Absolute, though to us true Spirit. To put it plainly: Spirit cannot express itself without some basis to focus upon, any more than fire can burn unless it consume some material stuff "There can be no manifestation of consciousness, semi-consciousness, or even "unconscious purposiveness", except through a vehicle of Matter." The Akasha then is the whole universe, in which the one eternal PRINCIPLE has incarnated; it is Substance in the abstract, in all possible degrees from Mahat to the soul of our world. The above being spiritual to the below, the poles of Spirit and Matter are to be found relative to everything in the universe; their action and interplay produces the whole cosmos; the universe hangs between these two poles of Being. The modern metaphysician tells us that the "cooperation of subject and object results in the sense-object or phenomenon", which is the same as saying that Mind and Matter, or Spirit and Substance, acting upon each other, or "cooperating", produce what we know as objects of perception. "But", some will ask, "why say produce

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

these - are not these sense-objects themselves gross Matter?"Yes; and no; according to Theosophy. Yes; if we understand Matter to be merely that which we may call Substance in a state of vibration or motion. No; if by Matter is meant this Substance itself. If we wave a lighted stick rapidly to and fro in the air, we shall see what appears to be a band of red fire; but we are aware that this band is merely an appearance, the effect on the eye of the motion of single point of fire. This will help us to understand what Matter as we see it really is, namely, that which we have called Substance, or the atom, in vibration. And, therefore, let our chemists search as they may for the atom, it will never be found through the use of weights or measures, because it exists on another plane of consciousness. In the words of Madame Blavatsky: "Atoms are called 'vibrations' in Occultism; also 'Sound' collectively" This does not interfere with Mr. Tyndall's scientific discovery. He traced, on the lower rung of the ladder of monadic being, the whole course of the atmospheric vibrations - and this constitutes the objective part of the process in nature. He has traced and recorded the rapidity of their motion and transmission; the force of their impact; their setting up vibrations in the tympanum and their transmission of these to the stolithes, etc., etc., till the vibration of the auditory nerve commences - and a new phenomenon now takes place; the subjective side of the process or the sensation of Sound. Does he perceive or see it? No; for his specialty is to discover the behaviour of matter. But why should not a psychic see it, a spiritual seer, whose inner eye is opened, and who can see through the veil of matter? The waves and undulations of science are all produced by atoms propelling their molecules into activity from within. Atoms fill the immensity of Space, by their continuous vibration are that motion which keeps the wheels of Life perpetually going. It is that inner work which produces the natural phenomenon called the correlation of forces. Only, at the origin of every such 'force', there stands the conscious guiding noumenon thereof - angel or god, spirit or demon - ruling powers, yet the same.

"As described by seers - those who can see the motion of the interstellar shoals, and follow them in their evolution clairvoyantly - they are dazzling, like specks of virgin snow in radiant sunlight. Their velocity is swifter than thought, quicker than any mortal physical eye could follow, and, as well as can be judged from the tremendous rapidity of their course, the motion is circular... Standing on an open plane, on a mountain summit especially, and gazing into the vast vault above and the spacial infinitudes around, the whole atmosphere seems ablaze with them, the air soaked through with these dazzling coruscations. At times, the intensity of their motion produces flashes like the northern lights during the aurora borealis. The sight is so marvellous, that, as the Seer gazes into this inner world, and feels the scintillating points shoot past him, he is filled with awe at the thought of other still greater mysteries, that lie beyond, and within, this radiant ocean...(The Secret Doctrine, Vol. 1., page 633)

The ancients held that the world as we see it - that is, as perceived by our five senses, is an illusion; truly as the mere vibration of the ether or lowest principle of the Akasa it is nothing else. The Christian tells us that no man can see God, which is only another way of saying that the roots of life can never be viewed - God in this sense being both Spirit and Matter, neither of which can ever really see the other, because they are in truth essentially but one thing. But by their cooperation they raise the great tabernacle of life, and in its forms they meet and see each other, but never face to face. The plants, the animals, and all the images in the garden of nature are but symbols of the Spirit which hides behind them; all our most scientific examination of life's structures will not reveal her hidden springs, any more than will the minutest dissection and microscopic scrutiny of the letters of a word tell us what it means.

(a) Atomic life then is true Substance, the Ether [In physics, a hypothetical medium of extreme tenuity and elasticity supposed to be diffused throughout all space (as well as among the molecules of which

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

solid bodies are composed) and to be the medium for the transmission of light and heat] of modern physics; its underlying root is called Akasha, the Aether of the ancient Greeks; while Matter as we view it, is simply Substance in a state of vibration.

(b) Its opposite pole is Universal Ideation or Mahat, the basis of individual mind. It is that which underlies the whole of the inner side of our being.

But the mystery of the relationship between the subjective (inner) and objective sides of Being can never be wholly told; it is occult, in the truest sense of the word. Until these two are merged together in each one of us, we cannot be said to truly know. Even then we stand before the veil of "that yet more awful riddle, before which even the highest Dhyan Chohan must bow in silence and ignorance - the unspeakable mystery of that which is called by the Vedantins the Parabrahm", - the Absolute, the ever Unknown God.

THE ASTRAL LIGHT

Nature is a perpetual circulatory worker, generating fluids out of solids, fixed things out of volatile, and volatile out of fixed, subtle out of gross, and gross out of subtle. Thus, perhaps, may all things be originated from Ether.-

Newton, Hypoth. 1675

Theosophy holds that the whole of nature is wrapped about in a highly ethereal substance, a plastic and sensitive medium, which is diffused universally throughout space. This has been called the Astral Light, adopting the title from the medieval Kabalists, who so christened it on account of its luminous appearance when sensed clairvoyantly. It is the basis of all manifested nature, that which lies within, underneath and about all things; and therefore, although unseen with the physical organ of sight, and although the finer forms which exist in it are so ethereal as to be outside the range of our normal senses, yet it is material and not spiritual. It is, indeed, that aspect or grade of the Akasha which is nearest to objective nature, and therefore includes the ether of the scientific schools.

We have pointed out that objectivized matter, according to the occult hypothesis, and indeed also according to that of many eminent physicists, is the effect of the vibratory motion of the true element which exists beneath. We have also spoken of clairvoyance, the power of seeing through or within the walls of this objectivized matter, and it is easy now to see that such is little other than the altering of the rate of vibration in the etheric medium which forms the basis of the physical body, so as to make it conform to the rate of that of the object seen through.

Some people are so organized nervously as to be unable to control their own state; they are continually passing into this negative condition and therefore constantly and involuntarily are viewing abnormal states of matter - abnormal, at least, so far as the physical vision is concerned. With others the power is the result of special training; it can be developed in anyone who sets to work in the right way. But unless one has previously prepared himself in other directions, nervous and hysterical conditions like those of

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

many a natural clairvoyant are certain to be induced. Therefore, in the properly organized occult schools, clairvoyance relating to the Astral Light and to this physical plane is the very last thing developed.

It is easy to believe that persons who themselves are not thus gifted, or who have not had cases of clairvoyance under their direction observation, will not be generally prepared to admit the existence of a state such as that of which we speak, or that the surrounding space contains anything more than empty air. But the pythoness of old was no more a fable than is the medium of the modern seance-room, and the phenomena of hypnotism present us with so many cases of "clear vision", that at this close of the nineteenth century the most unbelieving are rapidly becoming at any rate semi-credulous. The true scientist of the day draws hourly nearer and nearer to the occult view of nature, and, having hypothesized his "ether", has only to add "anima mundi", to fall into full agreement with the theosophical position.

To discuss fully the several properties of the Astral Light, even so far as we know of them, would require a volume of considerable bulk. In its aspect as the ethereal basis of objective form, it is the storehouse of nature, for from it are produced all the images we see around us. But it is much more than this. As the "soul of the world", it is as readily responsive to the influence of thought as the sensitive plate of the photographic camera is to that of form. According to theosophical teaching, which is that of the ancient philosophers of every nation, not a single thought, no matter how subtle, that has ever passed through the mind of man is lost to the world, but is indelibly and eternally "fixed" in the aura of the earth; hence it is that thoughts are, in the occult philosophy, considered to be even more productive of evil, or more potent as agents for good, than the actions which they may inspire. The thought is the cause, the action merely the effect. Man, as well as all the greater of those beings and gods which control the workings of this planet, is, through the medium of the Astral Light, in the long run largely responsible for the forms which nature may produce. His conscious, or even unconscious thought impressing itself in the soil of this natural bed, becomes the ethereotype of those images which afterwards blossom into full objectivity on the physical plane; the seed is sown in this astral or ethereal stuff, and the nurturing processes of the hothouse of nature force it to put forth its energy and later to sprout into a goodly plant. Therefore also it is that man is often entirely responsible for his environment. Many of the thoughts which emanate from the brain during a lifetime, may, according to Theosophy, in some future life appear in the consciousness as objective entities, returning to their creator to attack or assist him according as they have been evil or good.

In this, Theosophy is not altogether so much at variance with modern scientific thought as might at first be supposed. The author (W. Stanley Jevons, M.A., F.R.S.) of "Principles of Science" believes concerning thoughts, that, inasmuch as they displace the molecules of the brain, setting them in motion and scattering them abroad in all directions, they must produce effects reaching to the utmost limits of the universe, and moreover that each "particle of the existing matter must be a register of all that has happened". (Vol. II, page 455. See also Babbage; the "Ninth Bridgewater Treatise, page 115") If this be so, then each thought, once loosed from the human mind, wanders throughout the universe in its vehicle of molecular life, the "brain particle" in which it resides. Shall we be laughed at if we beg permission to add that we believe it possible for one to review the unexpressed thoughts of persons other than himself? Not three generations ago the discoverer of photography was about to be confined in a lunatic asylum for maintaining that he could "nail" his shadow to a plate! Scarce fifty years since and we should have smiled at the enthusiast who might speak to us of the phonograph and of its powers of unflinchingly preserving sounds! Will anyone then be so presumptuous as to cry out against a possible future day when our

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

mental actions shall also be recorded? For thoughts are things, so much so that already we hear whispers of the invention of a machine which shall record their forms *

* Along the same lines, the magazine Light, for August, 1893 reports an interview with Mr. Graham Bell, the inventor of the improved telephone, who, after expounding his method of "seeing by electricity", as we now hear by it in the telephone, discussed seriously the possibility of thinking at a distance by electricity. Prof. Bell premises that the human brain is a kind of electrical reservoir and that thinking is an electrical disturbance. Therefore the possibilities of setting up in one brain a disturbance corresponding to what is going on in another, so that through the persons be a thousand or ten thousand miles apart the one receives instantly the thoughts of the other, appears to him mainly to depend on the discovery of suitable medium. This medium has long been "discovered" by the Occultists. It is the "Astral Light".

In the astral substance of the world, it is held, are constructed all the forms which are afterwards handed out into full view here. Were we possessed of the power to glance behind the scenes - as many have done - we should see innumerable forms awaiting their turn to pass into physical existence. We should see the thoughts of all beings, of the gods, of men, of all past ages as well as of the present moment, photographed on this sensitive-plate of the universal camera, and in process of development into physical, tangible appearances. Consequently not alone would the past be within our ken, but we should be also able to read the future, since this is but the outcome of the past. We should see the thoughts of the present humanity, weak, vague, indefinite, impure, slowly shaping themselves into equally indefinite and sickly forms, and, in their quickening, transforming the world into an abode of vice, disease and death. We should see the thoughts of the gods, the divine humanity, the heroes of old, and trace their present action in the laws which govern our planet. Lastly we should see the primal Universal Thought out of whose energy originate the planets, suns, systems, and universes themselves.

As we have builders to construct the universes, so have we also workers in the astral sphere which surrounds our earth; but the former are the master-masons, the latter only the semi-intelligent labourers. These are really but centres of action existing in the astral substance; like every active centre in nature they assume forms corresponding to the degree and kind of their activity. Persons therefore viewing them in the psychic or trance condition would regard them as objective entities, as on the astral plane they certainly are, although invisible so far as the physical world is concerned.

In this teaching we have an explanation of the worldwide belief in "nature-spirits", variously known as fairies, elves, devas. Apart from his philosophy, the rationalistic view of things which it is the endeavour of the Theosophist to preserve, would of itself convince him that a belief so universal as that appertaining to those invisible beings known under the generic name of "spirits", could not be without some foundation in fact, however slight. But his philosophy demands their services for its completion. It scorns the belief that anything, of even the most trivial kind, should be produced without efficient cause, holding the causes usually assigned to the production of any natural entity - blind forces - to be not only entirely inadequate, but manifestly absurd, and that more intelligent labourers than the human brain can conceive of are needed to bring into existence the simplest form in nature, more individual efforts still to achieve its destruction.

Nature abhors a vacuum; she has no room for empty space. In the beautiful language of Bulwer (Sir Bulwer Lytton); " In the small as in the vast, God is equally profuse of life. The traveler looks upon the

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

tree, and fancies its boughs were formed for his shelter in the summer sun, or his fuel in the winter frosts. But in each leaf of these boughs the Creator has made a world; it swarms with innumerable races. Each Drop of the water in yon moat is an orb more populous than a kingdom is of men. Everywhere, then, in this immense design, science brings new life to light. Life is the one pervading principle, and even the thing which seems to die and putrefy, but engenders new life, and changes to fresh forms of matter. Reasoning then by evident analogy - if not a leaf, if not a drop of water, but is, no less than yonder star, a habitable and breathing world- nay, if even man himself is a world to other lives, and millions and myriads dwell in the rivers of his blood, and inhabit man's frame as a man inhabits earth, commonsense (if your schoolmen had it) would suffice to teach the the circumfluent infinite which you call space - the boundless Impalpable which divides earth from the moon and stars - filled also with its correspondent and appropriate life. Is it not a visible absurdity to suppose that Being is crowded upon every leaf and yet absent from the immensities of space? The law of the Great System forbids the waste even of an atom; it knows no spot where something of life does not breathe. In the very charnel house is the nursery of production and animation. Is that true? Well then, can you conceive that space, which is the Infinite itself, is alone a waste, is alone lifeless, is less useful to the one design of universal being than the dead carcass of a dog, than the peopled leaf, than the swarming globule? The microscope shows you the creature on the leaf; no mechanical tube is yet invented to discover the nobler and more gifted things that hover in the illimitable air. Yet between these last and man is a mysterious and terrible affinity. And hence, by tales and legends not wholly false nor wholly true, have arisen from time to time beliefs in apparitions and spectres. If more common to the earlier and simpler tribes than to the men of your duller age, it is but that with the first the senses are more keen and quick. And as the savage can see or scent, miles away, the traces of a foe, invisible to the gross sense of the civilized animal, so the barrier itself between him and the creatures of the airy world is less thickened and obscured". (Zanoni).

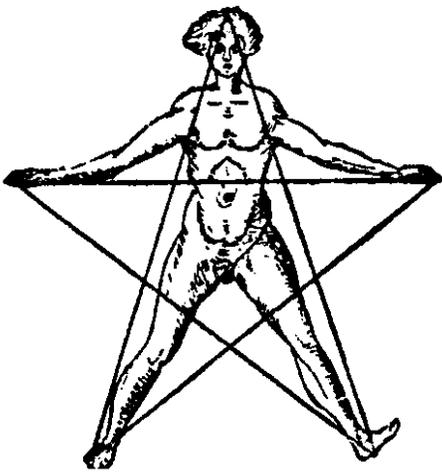
I is well to understand that Occultism is only at variance with physical science in some of the theories that the votaries of the latter have propounded, as the outcome of the deductions drawn from observed facts; certainly not in those facts themselves. And foremost of all stands the conception of blind forces. This no Theosophist will agree with. He sees consciousness in every atom in the universe; a vast intelligent Whole, planned with care, produced with mathematical exactness, its kaleidoscopic changes themselves but the energies for new life and being, replete with innumerable beings who think, direct, builds and weave, all having conscious existence and their set duties to perform. Biologists may speak as they will of forces generated by matter, or modes of motion - Theosophy sees in all effects in nature the work of intelligent labourers. Everything, it hold, contains within itself the duality of mind and matter, the soul or drive on the one side, and on the other its body or chariot, the vehicle through which it expresses itself. But, "of course we shall never agree with the American Substantialists, who call every Force and energy, whether Light, heat, electricity or cohesion- an 'entity'; for this would be equivalent to calling the noise produced by the rolling of the wheels of a vehicle an entity, thus confusing and identifying that 'noise' with the diver outside, and the guiding master Intelligence within the vehicle. But we certainly give that name to the 'driver' and to these guiding Intelligences, the ruling Dhyan Chohans as shown. The 'elementals', the nature-forces are the acting, though invisible, or rather imperceptible, secondary causes and in themselves the effects of primary causes behind the veil of all terrestrial phenomena. Electricity, light, heat, have been aptly termed the 'ghost or shadow of matter in motion' i.e., supersensuous states of matter whose effects only we are able to cognize. To expand them the simile given above: The sensation of light is like the sound of the rolling wheels - a purely phenomenal effect, having no existence outside the observer; the proximate existing cause of the sensation is comparable to the driver - a supersensuous state of matter in motion, a nature-force or elemental. But, behind even this, stand - just as the owner of the carriage directs the carriage from within - the higher and noumenal causes, the Intelligences from whose essence radiate these states of matter', generating the countless millions of

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

elementals or psychic nature-spirits, just as every drop of water generates its physical infinitesimal infusoria" [The Secret Doctrine, Vol. I, page 146]

Thus those to us normally invisible beings called elementals are but the souls or intelligences of the elements. In this repetition of ancient philosophy we see the reason why our forefathers recognized so many gods. For invariably spoke of the "spirit" or god of any given element, not of that spirit's gross body or manifestation, the element which represented it, or through which it functioned. Directly this fact is recognized, we do away with the standing reproach of the ancients by men of science that they "supposed their element simple or indecomposable". For if this be the case, then why had almost all their gods and goddesses so many sons and daughters, brothers and sisters? Such represented but the various aspects or "divisions" of the elements from which they sprang, and cases could be cited without number, drawn from every philosophy and mythology, to prove the truth of this assertion.

Of the seven principal elements which go to produce the manifested world, four are visible or sensible, three invisible; such division into quaternary and triad repeating itself in every septenary in Occultism. These are but the seen aspects of the fohatic force. The four which are objective or sensible are known under the general titles of fire, air, earth and water; and, consequently, the "nature-spirits" or natural elementals which build our world, innumerable as are their tribes, may be conveniently divided into classes corresponding to these; each class being again divided into three degrees, corresponding to the three subjective planes of our being. The Rosicrucians- the hermetic brotherhood from which developed the latter-day Freemason - found them very necessary factors in their study of nature, and used to know them under the names of salamanders - spirits of the flame, sylphs - spirits of the air, gnomes - spirits of the earth and undines - spirits of the water; and traces of the ancient wisdom from which these philosophers derived their knowledge may be found among the popular beliefs of all the older nations, now degraded however among most of them into superstition of the worst kind.



It must be remembered that the elementals of which we have spoken are the "nature" spirits, or those concerned with the building up of the visible universe, everything in which is supposed to spring out of a combination of the four elements above named. There are however many other kinds of elementals besides, such as (a) those formed in the astral substance by every action whether of thought or of deed. (b) those created by the presence of human beings, reflecting to some extent the intelligences of their creators, and (c) those thousands of forms, endowed with more or less consciousness of purpose and existence, thrown into being upon the death or change of state of any organic entity- called variously spooks, elementaries, and the like. The latter can never become men, save under exceptional circumstances, but must fade away in course of time.

The nature-spirits will all become such, only, however, after many ages of evolution, and by passing up through all the kingdoms, mineral, vegetable, and animal.

CHAPTER THREE THE PLANETARY WORLD

And after having thus framed the Universe, he allotted to it souls equal in number to the stars, inserting each in each; and then as it were placing them on a vehicle (whereon to travel through the heavens) he pointed out the nature of the Universe and announced to them its laws. -

Plato, Timaeus, xvii

The heavy-moving stars are many, and each has an Intelligence, a Soul, a Body. And in like manner every distinct division of the heavens and planets, hath its Intelligences and Souls. The Desatir, or Sacred Writings of the Ancient Persian Prophets.

The book of the Prophet, the Great Abad; 23, 24

The esoteric philosophy presents us with a view of nature sufficiently novel to permit of little comparison with so-called scientific hypotheses, although the recorded facts of western science bear out the doctrine in every details. The writer, therefore, cannot be surprised if he finds that the statements which follow are regarded at first as a result of fanciful speculation, or even as the wildest romance. Nevertheless, like his brethren and coworkers, he is convinced that the secret doctrine embodies a mass of entirely trustworthy knowledge and teachings, by means of which we can piece together all surviving fragments of ancient philosophies, finding at the same time a solution for all the present social and scientific difficulties. A bold claim, perhaps; but the latter-day discoveries of the various schools have altered not a little the position of many of the world's most eminent scholars toward the Society, and it may be prognosticated safely that the twentieth century will not break without some substantiation of it.

Carried to its extreme limit, the "doctrine of correspondences" is the method by which everything, according to eastern teaching, may be known. In order to understand the nature of the universe, we must apply to it our knowledge of ourselves. If we compare ourselves as individuals to the universe as a whole, we shall have to imagine that whole as intelligent, perfect, conscious in its wholeness, but only one of many other "universes", themselves again portions of a still greater Whole - the process being continued indefinitely, because of the infinity of natural manifestations. If, on the other hand, in our comparative study, we set ourselves to examine our own frames in order to understand the nature of the greater lives which exist outside us, we shall find our bodies to be composed of thousands of little worlds and centres of individual life, of bacteria and microbes, each of which, in the system wherein it plays its part, may be a veritable sun to the numbers of attendant planets and satellites that we might perhaps find existing around it, had we but lenses strong enough to conjure them before our eyes. Man's body is a composite being built up and preserved by the work of thousands of lives as far removed in the scale of nature from his real self - or ego, the soul - as the firefly is from the sun; nevertheless as dependent on him for the excellence of their work as a company of soldiers is dependent on its captain. The inner man is the general to the armies of lives that build, rebuild and compose his body. Practical occultism teaches the laws that govern their movements and evolution.

We cannot here refrain from calling the attention of our readers to one of the latest productions of

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

physical science- Alfred Binet's *Psychic life of Microorganisms* (Translated from the French by Thos. McCormack; American Edition, 1889) in which the author has, to our thinking, conclusively shown that intelligent existence is to be found among the more primary of the organisms which go to build the bodies of either animals or plants. Not only are they shown as living and dying, feeding and reproducing, but also as exercising choice in such matters, a choice indicative of intelligent life. "The more closely the phenomena of life are scrutinized", writes M. Binet, "the more carefully they are studied in their various aspects, the more certain does the conclusion become that the processes attributed to physico-chemical forces in reality obey much more complicated laws" than mechanical phenomena; pointing out that as physiology advances the tendency is not, as the modern opponents of vitalism have it, to relegate all phenomena nominally physiological into the domain of physics and chemistry, but the reverse. "If the existence of psychological phenomena in the lower organisms is denied, it will be necessary to assume that these phenomena can be super-added in course of evolution, in proportion as an organism grows more perfect and complex. Nothing could be more inconsistent with the teachings of general physiology, which shows us that all vital phenomena are previously present in non-differentiated cells (see preface). Then, concluding a work which is from first to last an unintentional tribute to occult science by a modern biologist, the author quotes from his own letter to M. Richet. Differing from the latter in his theory of chemical irritability as being the sole law which conditions the movement of simple organisms, Binet adds: "Psychic life, like its substratum, living matter, is, when closely studied, an exceedingly complex subject. This fact is with me a profound conviction, not upon abstract ideas and methods, but upon the observations that I have given, observations that are not founded upon my own personal authority alone, but which are drawn from the highest authorities, and most of which I have been able to verify with my own eyes. "

Occultists have long known living matter to be an "exceedingly complex subject", but they recognize no other sort of matter. And they go much further than M. Binet; they find "psychic life" and intelligence to exist in every speck in space. Again, if biology shows us that each individual is a "universe" to the multiplicity of infusoria which complete his body, what objection can there be to what we may term the corollary of this: that each of us constitutes but an infusorium of the planet in which we have our home, each planet again being but a "micro-organism" in relation to the universe in which it cycles? It is but the logical outcome of our premise - Intelligence in all things. In Theosophy the worlds and planets are all looked upon as individual entities, having their duties to fulfill, their times of health and disease, their periods of birth, maturity, decay and death; and- following out our law of the duality of mind and matter- the actual corporeal abodes of ensouling intelligences, which we may conveniently call their Archangels or Chohans. This is a very old belief; Plato considered the earth an animal, and represents it as having all the tendencies and properties of such; the Egyptians and Hindus always so regarded it- so that Theosophy in this particular is but reflecting the knowledge of the ancients. But the teachings of the moderns point to a like notion. Says Mr. N.S. Shaler, professor of geology in Harvard University: "The conception of the earth as inert held in the minds of naturalists even down to our own generation. Only in the divine Kepler do we find a philosopher strong enough to conceive this sphere as essentially organized. To him this world is so endowed with activities that it is to be accounted alive. In his reflections on the order of nature, he holds to the doctrine that the earth is animated in the fashion of an animal; he finds in the tides an evidence of its slow breathing. Critics have found in this fancy of Kepler proof of a disordered mind, of an imagination which outran the limits of scientific inquiry; but.... it seems likely that his divining imagination brought him nearer the truth than the hardmindedness of other naturalists." (Nature and man in America - Page 2)

The truth is that there is a complete ladder of progression and evolution in nature, stretching from the

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

infinitesimal microorganism of our bodies upwards to God himself- or whatever name we may give to the fons et origo of all things; and each being or class of beings progresses along the lines marked out by its intent and experience. Prof. Huxley has lately said that: "without stepping beyond the analogy of that which is known it is easy to people the cosmos with entities, in ascending scale, until we reach something practically indistinguishable from omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience". (See Essays upon some Controverted Questions) . May we add that the more acceptance of this one hypothesis would forge the long desired link between? Religion and Science; and lead to the eventual discovery of those forces and laws of nature known to ancient philosophy, but concealed from all in this age but the practical occultist?

Now although we are still dealing with universals rather than particulars, it is yet natural that all we have to say shall still centre around man; we may best commence, therefore, with a general description of the earth, his home, and when we come to the chapter on "Anthropology" it will readily be seen wherein lies the correspondence between the planets and man in their respective constitutions as sketched by occult science.

SISTERS OF THE EARTH

Thus Time moves on seven wheels; he has seven naves; immortality is his axle. He is at present all these worlds

-Atharva Veda, Hymn xix, 53

This light is above all the Seven Worlds, as a Monad before or above the triad of the Empyrean, Ethereal and Material Worlds.

Proclus (cited by Simplicius on the Zoroastrian oracles)

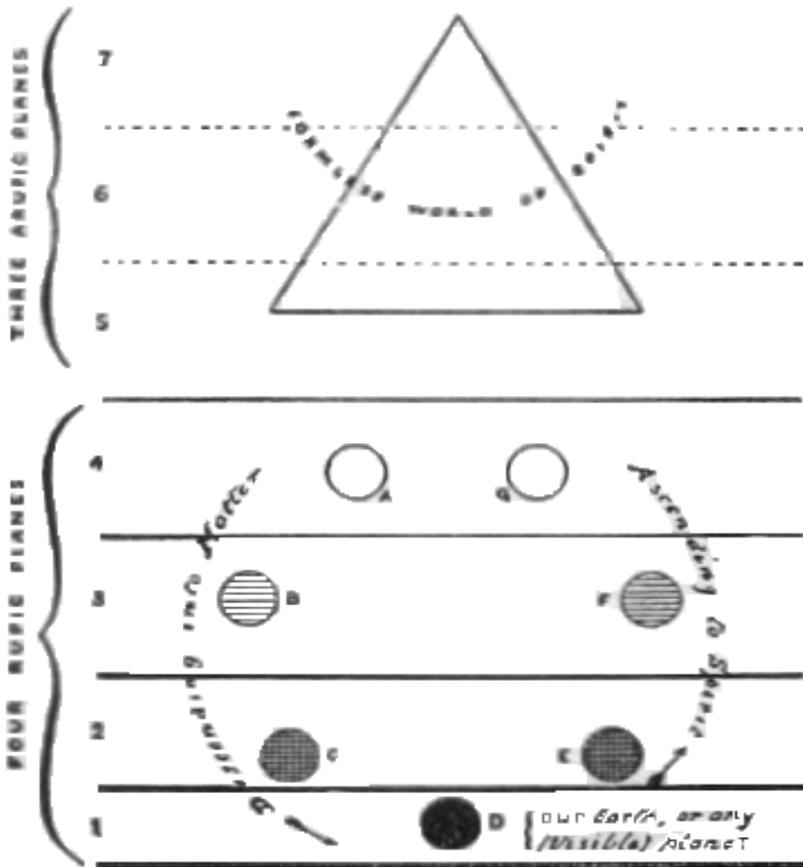
The seven worlds became in Persia the seven Karshvare of the earth; the earth is divided into seven Karshvare, only one of which is known and accessible to man, the one on which we live, namely, Hvaniratha.

James Darmesteter, Intro. Vendidad, page lx

Reference was made in the preceding chapter to the constant use of the number seven throughout the whole of the esoteric system; we shall now see it in its application to our earth. It was said that the universe with its forces, psychic nature and the like- the whole of its machinery, exists on the four lower of the seven great planes of consciousness and being, and we have now to add that, correspondently, the earth and every planet is conscious on four planes, or better, perhaps, lives in three other conditions or states besides the physical state- the material condition in which we view them. The three might be known as the Astral, the Higher Psychic and the Spiritual. They are those states referred to in the philosophy of Paul, called the three "heavens" in Biblical terminology. (II Corinthians 12; 2) Everything in nature according to the philosophy is septenary; that is to say, is divisible into seven elements or principles- and hence the earth and every planet is one of a family of seven globes, six of them existing

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

on the three planes above the terrestrial one in which their bodies or gross forms function. Let me be explicit. Theosophy holds that everything in the universe embodies a sevenfold entity, not merely a unit. Thus there are seven men in every man, seven trees in every tree, seven globes in every planet. But is not meant, however, that there are seven bodies one within the other like a set of Chinese puzzle-boxes, but that there are seven aspects or sides to the nature of each thing, through any of which it may be seen and examined; two existing on each plane of consciousness outside the physical plane. Perhaps we might say with more precision that there are seven worlds within each planet, seven states of matter in any of which its consciousness might be awakened. But these seven, although existing on different planes of consciousness, yet, so far as each plane is concerned, embody actual forms [H.P.Blavatsky once illustrate this by saying that if she were to draw the gross matter out of an article - a goblet, for instance - it would no longer be visible to those whose perceptions were limited to the five senses; but the clairvoyant, psychic power developed, and the vision corresponding to the next - the astral - plane, opened, and the goblet would again come into view.] Not unlike their terrestrial counterpart. It is from this arcane teaching that have sprung all the myths and fables regarding worlds above us, some religious systems openly speaking of "seven heavens". The diagram underneath will render this clearer.



Here it will be seen that the lowest of these globes, or the fourth in the alphabetical order adopted, is what we know as our earth, but is nevertheless its physical gross envelope or shell only. Directly the evolutionary progress which carries us along in its wave shall have advanced far enough to develop in us finer senses than those which we now possess, others of these worlds will become visible.

These seven worlds or globes being interlinked constitute what is called a "chain", and, as will be shown, form the centres of life through which the spiritual essence functions during its incarnation in matter, the three which precede and the three which follow ours- the fourth-being, in a sense, portals for entrance and exit, to and from the physical world we live in, - that state of consciousness in which we at present know life.

Thus the consciousness of the planet as a whole, first awakened in world or state A, then in B, then C, finally expanding into physical being on the lowest material sphere D. Its period of physical existence ended, its consciousness will travel back to the more ethereal regions through states or worlds, E, F and G. The correspondence between human life and planetary existence in this respect is too evident to need much comment. Each of us having passed through the waking stage of daily life, when we have our being on this, the physical plane, normally rest. In sleep we loose the bonds which tie us to earth, and our

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

consciousness travels further and further from it. First we dream, then fall into deeper sleep, then into profoundest trance, and, rounding the cycle of phases of consciousness, return to waking in the reverse order. It is the same in life and death. Our physical body is merely the vehicle of our consciousness on this plane, which consciousness, however much materialists may disbelieve it, has descended from other spheres at birth, and has never known a break. At death it will reascend as though we slept, and cycling round its own celestial spheres, will be in due time reborn. The consciousness of the planet as a whole is merely the sum total of the consciousness of the individual units of which it is composed. So that to say that it centres its existence in each of the states or spheres outside the physical one, before finally issuing into the latter, is to say that all its "parts" do so likewise. The passage of the consciousness of the whole from one state to another, also is, as in the case of every normal awakening, gradual. If now for the sake of convenience we therefore divide the planetary body into the various kingdoms - mineral, vegetable, animal, human - we can best trace the awakening or development of the globe by reference to these as in the following section.

PLANETARY EVOLUTION

They divided the interminable periods of human existence on this planet into cycles, during each of which mankind gradually reached the culminating point of highest civilization and gradually relapsed into abject barbarism... These cycles do not embrace all mankind at one and the same time.

H.P. Blavatsky

We do not propose at present to carry the reader back to what may have occurred before life on this planet became manifested as we know it, but to deal wholly with an account of its expression from from the moment of the world's awakening. It may be briefly stated, however, that the nature of the earth's existence is an effect of causes generated in life in another planet, just as each person's present life is by Theosophy held to be the outcome or continuance of his life in a past age and in another body. We must now suppose the life-essence or planetary consciousness, to arrive from some other world, and to be first of all centered in globe A.

Here it gradually awakes in all the kingdoms- mineral, [at the immature stage of planetary evolution of which we write, the word "mineral", as applied to what we ordinarily know as that kingdom, is inadequate; but the term is held to as it is that which will afterwards become the physical mineral state. The same applies to vegetable, animal, and human.] Vegetable, animal and human - in turn. Only when it has completed its development so far as globe A is concerned, does it pass into globes B, C, and the rest, repeating the process around the whole chain. Each globe, as this life-consciousness leaves it, falls again into sleep.

Before this teaching can be further developed, and in order to remove any possible misconceptions concerning planetary consciousness, we must briefly refer to what is termed the monad or ego. We have said that the individual consciousness of any body is, in a sense, the representative of the sum-total of that of its parts- the lesser bodies of which it is composed; so that any one of the lesser bodies may be said only to reach the height of its cognizing powers upon expansion into those full lives becoming "one with the oversoul" of that planet to which it belongs. This is the explanation of the saying in Occultism that

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

all things are basically one - in their last analysis a unit. But at a certain stage of differentiation so far removed is this idea of oneness, that we must conceive of many egos or monads- in progression; and, without altogether ridding ourselves of the conception of One, as regards the ultimate soul of our planet, yet continue to trace its evolution through that of its individual parts. Then, in reference to these individual monads, "the reader is asked to bear in mind that eastern philosophy rejects the western theological dogma of a newly-created soul for every baby born, as being as unphilosophical as it is impossible in the economy of nature. There must be a limited number of monads evolving and growing more and more perfect through their assimilation of many successive personalities, in every new Manvantara. This is absolutely necessary in view of the doctrines of Rebirth, Karma, and the gradual return of the human monad to its source- absolute Deity. Thus, although the hosts of more or less progressed monads are almost incalculable, they are still finite, as is everything in this universe of differentiation and finiteness". [The Secret Doctrine, Vol.1, page 171)

We may now carry on our sketch of planetary evolution through that of the monads or souls which incarnate on earth, the evolution of these and of that latter being so closely interblended as to be practically one.

The life-wave of souls passing through the different kingdoms, does not cycle around the chain of globes once only, but seven times, before completing its period on this earth. The reader must not however for a moment imagine that each of these "Rounds" contains identical experiences for the monads who travel them. Nothing could be further from the fact. Nature never allows us the same experiences twice; even though she may often repeat her punishments or her kindnesses she never does so under precisely identical circumstances. Her line of work is ever that of a circle, or cycle, and she invariably returns along her original paths, working into herself again and again. Yet each time she traverses the road she evolves a greater perfection. Her labour is therefore a sort of spiral process, retravelling constantly over the same ground, but on an ever higher and higher scale. And this is exactly the teaching of Theosophy concerning the globe rounds; the life-wave more than once passing over the same ground each time on a loftier stage of the spiral - while the complete experience of every phase of life on any given planet is said to be obtained after seven cyclings.

The monads which compose the lifewave do not however arrive from the preceding globe in equal stages of development. In the vast scheme of evolution presented by the esoteric philosophy, a chain of globes constitutes but a very minute portion of the whole road to be traveled by the "Pilgrims" before perfection is attained. Nor in the process of development is it to be supposed that all will remain in line. Every degree is recognized, the occult doctrine never for a moment supposing such a possibility as strict equality, except in essence. In the myriads of forms produced by nature, no two are alike. "Throughout all creation, from the archangel to the worm, - from Olympus to to the pebble, - from the radiant and completed planet to the nebula that hardens through ages of mist and slime into the habitable world, the first law of nature is inequality". Each individual's place in the universe can be held by him alone; no two persons can stand exactly abreast on the same rung of the ladder.

Therefore it is that the life-wave of souls or monads arriving with the earth at the hour of its birth, or commencement of its Manvantara - for the terms Manvantara and Pralaya are applicable equally to planets as to the Cosmos - are to be considered as divisible into seven classes, according to their degree of evolution and consciousness; in other words, Occultism recognizes seven kingdoms of nature rather than only those four which we have named, human, animal, vegetable and mineral. The additional three

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

are those less developed even than the mineral, and are really the elemental or nascent kingdoms of which we have spoken in the section the "Astral Light".

Now the lowest or least developed of these elemental kingdoms incarnates on globe A of this chain at the time of the earth's birth, the "builders" of which it (the kingdom) is composed, proceeding at once to their evolutionary work. After enormous periods of time they have evolved the globe sufficiently to place it in readiness for the next class, who forthwith make their appearance, taking up their work in the substance prepared for them by the lower order. Then, in course of time, the third or highest class of elementals arrive, and prepare the now highly evolved "world-stuff" for the monads of the mineral kingdom, the arrival of these latter being again followed in evolutionary order by those of the vegetable, animal, and finally human kingdom. Then, just as the hierarchy of human monads arrives on the globe, the time has come for the first elemental kingdom to pass forward into the next and denser globe, B. Here it is followed by all the kingdoms in succession. And so on step by step around the entire chain. [This is but the general outline of the evolutionary process as carried on through the "Rounds"; it differs in different Rounds and cycles. The full teaching concerning the development of life in the planetary Rounds has not been given out by the Adepts, but is kept from the world "until the time comes". The author has not thought it necessary in a small volume like this to piece together the few imperfect, fragments of instruction that have been given. He has confined himself to the mere outline of the process of planetary evolution; and would refer the reader, who desires more information, to the Secret Doctrine, Part I]

Thus it will be seen that as soon as the first class arrives on globe C the life-wave has completely left the planetary sphere called globe A, which forthwith "sleeps", or becomes nonexistent for a period, to reawaken when the wave again reaches it, which it does only after it has passed through the intervening series of globes. So that when the wave reaches the fourth globe - the one we are at present on - it has descended through three other spheres of increasing density, and when it leaves this fourth, it will pass upward through others of gradually increasing ethereality. Therefore, if we consider our globe especially - it being that with which we have most concern, - since the life-wave passes seven times round the whole chain, it passes seven times through this particular sphere, leaving breaks of immense periods of time between each passage, during which the monads are working their way round the cycle composed of the other globes, and slowly carrying on their evolutionary progress on each.

Now as life on any planet constitutes but a very small link in the great evolutionary plan laid out by the arcane philosophy, it is easy to see that the Occultism can never be at one with the biologist in his theories concerning the descent of man. While our scientists, following along the lines of investigation suggested by Charles Darwin, have undoubtedly made important discoveries, they have understood but a very small portion of a great truth, of which the occultists have enjoyed possession for ages. Although the esoteric philosophy denies entirely a possible descent from the anthropoid - a creed indeed, as the saying goes, "more Darwinian than Darwin", for the great scientist never suggested such a probability - yet it by no means throws aside the evolutionary process of natural law. It holds, indeed, that growth or development is at once the first and the last object of life, but, in so doing, it maintains that evolution as it is now known is but half of the real truth; the other half being metempsychosis or reincarnation. "The Stone becomes a plant, the plant an animal, the animal a man, and the man a god", is an old occult aphorism, but does not mean that the stone will evolve into the plant, or the animal into the man, but that entity ensouling the lower phases of nature will eventually pass into the higher, thus gaining experience of all. For the form taken on by matter is almost wholly the impress stamped upon it by the intelligence or mind which stands behind, and is not, and cannot be, something inherent in the molecules themselves.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Otherwise, why is there diversity of form? Or why, indeed, form at all? There is nothing more manifest, more self-evident in nature than the existence of mind as the basis of material form; we cannot divorce the twin. And whether we call this basis God or Nature, or attribute the variety of images to our own super-conscious Thought, is of little actual consequence.

Yet, it may be argued, even supposing that the intelligence standing behind matter itself causes the change and variety of imagery existing, still, if the theosophical system be a true one, we must suppose that mind would impress matter in so orderly and progressive a manner as to effect a gradual change of form and state from one kingdom of nature, to another. We can hardly imagine the intelligence, which had just ensouled the stone, springing forward along the path of experience and knowledge so rapidly as to be able immediately after to inform a plant; nor can we fancy egress from the vegetable as implying immediate incarnation in the animal - yet no links can be found. The border-line on either side may here and there be closely approached, but the division still remains clearly marked; and it is this division which has always been the puzzle and stumbling-block to the evolutionists- the everlasting "missing link".

The theosophical theory, however, completely effaces all difficulties of this nature. Seven classes of monads cycle round the globes, representing seven distinct degrees of experience in the hierarchy of souls inhabiting the chain of worlds called "earth". These seven by reason of a certain law, remain always distinct from one another, although they follow each other through almost identical experiences. Briefly then, the reason why no absolute link can be traced between the kingdoms, is because this link is formed on the other globes. It is the spiral character of the progress accomplished by the life impulses that develop the various kingdoms of Nature, which accounts for the gaps now observed in the animated forms which people the earth. The thread of a screw, which is a uniformly inclined plane in reality, looks like a succession of steps when examined along one line parallel to its axis. The spiritual monads, which are coming round the system on the animal level, pass on to other worlds when they have performed their turn of animal incarnation here. By the time they come again they are ready for human incarnation, and there is no necessity now for the upward development of animal forms into human forms - these are already waiting for their spiritual tenants". [See Esoteric Buddhism, page 83, Sixth American Edition]. So that although there is a continual development and evolution of each of the seven classes spoken of, and a consequent approach of any given one towards the position occupied by the one next above it in the scale, yet as this latter is itself progressing at an equal rate, the distance between the classes remains ever the same. Only in individual cases does an ego strike out a path for itself in advance of its class, and instead, as it were, of going round the road of the spiral, takes a short cut upward on to the path above it. These are the pioneers of their class; the majority of monads keeping slowly in the winding march of evolutionary progression. This will be better understood, however, after we have dealt directly with the evolution of man; meanwhile, we have to say a few words concerning the last chain of globes around which the life-wave cycled before issuing on to this planet.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOON

I have consumed forty years of my pilgrimage.... seeking the philosopher's stone called truth. I have consulted all the adepts of antiquity - Epicurus and Augustine, Plato, and Malebranche, and I still remain in ignorance... All that I have been able to obtain by comparing and combining the system of Plato, of the tutor of Alexander, Pythagoras, and the Oriental, is this: Chance is a word devoid of sense. The world is arranged according to mathematical laws.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Voltaire. Dictionnaire Philosophique: Art Philosophie

Many theories have been formulated concerning the genesis of the moon, and its position in the solar system, the one receiving most favour in scientific circles being that which supposes it to have been thrown off from our earth when the latter was rotating at a rate of extreme rapidity. Now, without going into all the difficulties suggested by such a hypothesis, it may at once be said that the occultists have always held an exactly opposite theory, our world according to them being the child and not the parent of the moon, the latter having given to the earth all but her corpse. Apart from the statement that this is the position held concerning it by the greatest sages of the world for ages, we may say that it is quite as reasonable as any put forward by modern science; for the "astronomical conclusions are theories based on data so uncertain that while in some cases they give results incredibly short, like that of fifteen million of years for the whole past process of formation of the solar system, in others they give results almost incredibly long, as in that which supposes the moon to have been thrown off when the earth was rotating in three hours, while the utmost actual retardation obtained from observation would require 600 millions of years to make it rotate in twenty-three hours instead of twenty-four ". [Samuel Laing; Modern Science and Modern Thought, page 48]. If men of science disagree among themselves to so great an extent in their theories concerning the lunar orb, there can be no harm in advancing a new theory - new, at any rate, to them - the reverse of the old one.

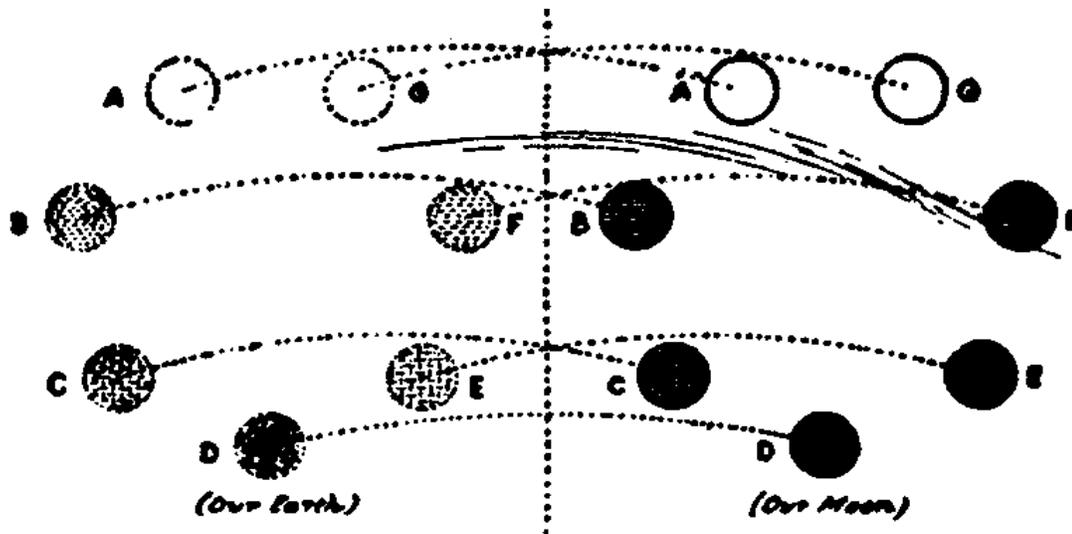
In support of the statement that there is an occult connection between the earth and the moon, it is almost needless to remark on the great influence that the latter exercises over the former. The tides, perhaps the most important of the natural phenomena of the earth, are almost entirely the result of her influence. That she affects vegetation is well known [See the Bulletin of Miscellaneous Information, issued from the Botanic Garden, Grenada, February 1893, for proof of this.] -even to the extent of the sap in some of the plants rising and falling with her motions. The crises of certain diseases are well observed to coincide with the lunar phases; their influence on human gestation and conception being also marked. So that we can scarcely be called to task even if we make the broad assertion that the moon exercises more influence over the earth and its inhabitants than the latter does over her satellite, which influence, so far as science knows, does not extent beyond the physical attraction that causes her to circle round the earth. Now that the phenomena of animal magnetism and hypnotism have become accepted facts, and the existence of occult forces in nature demonstrated, perhaps the day will come when we shall hear of the moon being once again, as in the day of old, regarded as an important factor in the evolution of our earth, and even astrology may eventually rebecome a science; [Not, however, as it is now known.] For, "if certain aspects of the moon effect tangible results so familiar in the experience of men throughout all time, what violence are we doing to logic in assuming the possibility that a certain combination of sidereal influences may also be more or less potent?"

But let us see what Occultism has to say concerning the moon and its effect upon the evolution of the monads at present cycling around our chain. It has been said that each planet in universe is credited with six companions spheres, around which seven spheres the life-waves washes seven times. As soon as it has passed from globe A to globe B the former gradually fades and goes into obscurity, to reawaken only on the return of the monads after their journeying around the other spheres; thus for seven Rounds. But at the last of these, as soon as the life-wave has left any given globe, that globe, instead of falling again into obscurity, or sleeping- dies, and in so doing transfuses its life-essence or "principles" into a neutral centre in space, which thus commences the formation of a new chain; so that when the life -wave

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

again reaches what should be globe A it has to pass on to a new chain of worlds.

Now the moon was the fourth globe in the chain of worlds last inhabited by us. At her death, which occurred incalculable ages ago, her life-essence was transferred to a centre in space, around which our earth was formed; the souls (ourselves) inhabiting her separated gradually from their world, and after a period of obscurity or Pralaya, reawakened in their new home, our earth. This period of obscurity is the "Nirvana" which awaits all at the close of their journeyings around a chain, and before their incarnation on a new planet. The "Pralaya" of a globe however, should not be confounded with the great Pralaya of the universe, or even with that of the solar system.



"Imagine the six fellow-globes of the Moon - aeons before the first globe of our seven was evolved - just in the same position in relation to each other, as the fellow-globes of our chain occupy in regard to our Earth now. And now it will be easy to imagine further globe A of the lunar chain informing globe A of the terrestrial chain, and -

dying; globe B of the former sending after that its energy into globe B of the new chain; then globe C of the lunar creating its progeny sphere C of the terrene chain; then the moon (our satellite) pouring forth into the lowest globe of our planetary ring - globe D, our Earth - all its life, energy and powers; and having transferred them to a new centre becoming virtually a dead planet, in which rotation has almost ceased since the birth of our globe. The Moon is now the cold residual quantity, the shadow dragged after the new body, into which her living powers and "principles" are transfused. She is doomed for long ages to be ever pursuing the Earth, to be attracted by and to her progeny. Constantly vampirised by her child, she revenges herself on it by soaking it through and through with the nefarious, invisible and poisoned influence which emanates from the occult side of her nature. For she is a dead yet a living body. The particles of her decaying corpse are full of active and destructive life, although the body which they had formed be soulless and lifeless. Therefore its emanations are at the same time beneficent and maleficent - this circumstance finding its parallel on earth in the fact that the grass and plants are nowhere more juicy and thriving than on the graves; while at the same time it is the graveyard or corpse emanations which kill. And like all ghouls or vampires, the moon is the friend of the sorcerers and the foe of the unwary. From the archaic aeons and the later times of the witches of Thessaly, down to some of the present tantrikas of Bengal, her nature and properties were known to every Occultist, but have remained a closed book for physicists". [The Secret Doctrine, Vol. 1, pages 155-156]

Thus it will be seen that the occult doctrine teaches that all beings now on earth, have come from the moon, that, in fact, the lunar chain is nothing but the seven rungs below our earth, of the vast spiral around which the monads or souls are slowly ascending and that the earth is literally and actually the

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

reincarnation of the moon. For although the body or gross physical shell of the latter still remains, yet she is dead physically and spiritually, and her inner "principles" or forces have been gradually transferred to our earth. This affords an explanation of the constant reference in Indian literature to the lunar pitris (Fathers) or "lunar ancestors". They are our ancestors truly, inasmuch as from them we have sprung; but having incarnated on this globe, they are also - ourselves. It also removes from the Hindus the odium of worshipping these "spirits". They do not worship them, but rather reverence their wisdom, since those of the pitris that are not yet incarnated here are in a sense those real inner principles of man which have to be transferred to him in some future Round, the life-wave having so far only reached the middle of the fourth Round. Hence it has been said that the wisdom of all ages is locked up in the moon, and until she has delivered herself of it she cannot entirely disappear from the sky.

THE SEVEN RACES

The mythical traditions of almost all nations place at the beginning of human history a time of happiness and perfection, a "golden age" which has no features of savagery or barbarism, but many of civilization and refinement-

Rawlison, The Origin of Nations

Of the song, the order of the sixth race close.

-Orphic Line.

Some idea of the history of the earth, as written in the arcane scriptures and occult works, must now be sketched, the time having come when the reader can appreciate some of the figures indicative of its age and of the degree of evolution reached by man. If we consider that class of monads the bulk of which have, in their cycle of evolution on earth, reached the human stage, we shall find them passing through all the kingdoms of nature in the Rounds that preceded ours, finally issuing a man on this fourth globe in the middle of the fourth Round. The order of class evolution is not the same in every Round, however. Arrive on earth in the fourth Round, "Man is the first form that appears thereon, being preceded only by the mineral and vegetable kingdoms- even the latter having to develop and continue its further evolution through man. During the three Rounds to come, Humanity, like the globe on which it lives, will be ever tending to reassume its primeval form, that of a Dhyana Chohanian Host. Man tends to become a God and then- GOD, like every other atom in the universe".

In the passage through the globes seven distinct degrees or experiences are recognized which we may call "races" and the human units have to live through all of these and pass through each many times. Thus if we directly consider our own physical globe, the fourth of the series, and that with which we have most concern at present, we shall find that several races have already appeared thereon, before ours, the present one, was born. The most highly developed of the earth's peoples are at present going through the fifth race, the evolution of this fifth having commenced nearly a million years ago. So that the reader will now begin to form some idea of the age of the world according to the esoteric philosophy, which finds itself under no obligation to limit its calculations concerning our planet to a few thousands of years, a period of time, indeed, utterly insufficient to meet the demands of either geologist or

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

archaeologist.

Each of these races is again subdivided into seven, and even then the limits of sectional possibility can hardly be said to be reached. But as their periods considerably overlap one another, the close of one not being finally effected until many thousand years after the birth of its successor, it suffices to recognize the main races, and that sevenfold division of them called their "sub-races". The present pioneers of the globe, or those monads furthest developed - and as we understand the term- compose the fifth root-race, and it may be added, the fifth sub-race of that root-race. There are, however, a few exceptions, which will be referred to later.

If the reader has born in mind the second of the fundamental propositions of the Secret Doctrine, which postulated the universal necessity for cycles or circles, the law which occasions the gradual change of day to night, and vice versa , throughout the whole cosmos he will,have seen, long ago, an exemplification of it in the cycling of the monads around the chain of globes. Beginning with the most spiritual, the life-wave flows through spheres of gradually increasing materiality into the densest and most physical, the fourth, and then as gradually returns to its more ethereal homes. And presently we shall see a similar drama played in the history of the seven races, the earlier and later of which are ethereal and spiritual, the intervening ones being more or less material. The fourth, the race which immediately preceded our own, will therefore be seen to have been that one most deeply sunk into and bound by physical life, while we are now launched upon the upward arc of the cycle.

Although seven successive races are mentioned, the reader must not fancy that each of these has sole possession of the earth during its period of development; they lap over one another to a considerable extent. Thus, for instance, although the fifth sub-race of the fifth root-race is the furthest advanced, and is that holding dominion over the world at present, yet "the majority of mankind belongs to the seventh sub-race of the fourth root-race.. Chinese and their offshoots and branchlets (Malayans, Mongolians, Tibetans, Javanese) - with remnants of other sub-races of the fourth and seventh sub-race of the third race". [Extra from a letter from one of the "Brothers" quoted in *Esoteric Buddhism*.]

The gradual development of a race is from its first sub-race to its seventh, and it reaches its zenith of perfection only at the close of this last; the period of its glory being followed, like every thing else in the universe, by obscurity. In other words, having developed its highest civilization or possibility, and being unable to go any higher in its own particular cycle, the great law compels it to return back again along its path, - the monads composing it being able to gain the higher knowledge they crave only on the upward arc of the succeeding cycle. No race as a whole indeed can ever be allowed to "encroach on the knowledge and powers in store for its successor", and any attempt to do so is regarded as an unpardonable sin against the law, nature then taking the matter into her own hands and destroying the race. "The approach of every new obscurity is always signaled by cataclysms of either fire or water. But apart from this, every root-race has to be cut in two, so as to say, by either one or the other. Thus, having reached the apex of its development and glory, the fourth race- the Atlanteans- were destroyed by water; and you find now but their degenerate fallen remnants, whose sub-races nevertheless, each of them, had its palmy day of glory and relative greatness. What they are now, you will be some day, the law of cycles being one and immutable".

The cataclysms which periodically overthrow each race at its close are alternately of fire and water. The

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

last one, which destroyed the great bulk of the fourth race, was of water - the land of that race, Atlantis, sinking under the ocean; hence the almost universal tradition of a flood. The one which will destroy the present race when it has reached the summit of its progress, in about another million years, will be of fire; hence, again the many prophecies of the destruction of the earth by fire.

Here the description of the general laws governing planetary and human evolution must end; later we shall outline the history of racial development on this globe. In summing up the section we may add the following from a letter of an Adept, quoted in the Secret Doctrine (Vol.1., Page 188)

"Man, in the first Round and first race on globe D, our Earth, was an ethereal being.... non-intelligent, but super-spiritual; and correspondingly, on the law of analogy, in the first race of the fourth Round. In each of the subsequent races and sub-races... he grows more and more into an encased or incarnate being, still preponderatingly ethereal. ...He is sexless, and, like the animal and vegetable, he develops monstrous bodies correspondent with his coarser surroundings.

"II Round. He (man) is still gigantic and ethereal, but growing firmer and more condensed in body, a more physical man. Yet still less intelligent than spiritual, for mind is a slower and more difficult evolution than is the physical frame...

"III Round. He has now a perfectly concrete or compacted body, at first the form of a giant ape, and now more intelligent, or rather cunning, than spiritual. For, on the downward arc, he has now reached a point where his primordial spirituality is eclipsed and overshadowed by nascent mentality. In the last half of third Round his gigantic stature decreases, and his body improves in texture, and he becomes a more rational being, though still more an ape than a Deva....

(All this is almost exactly repeated in the third root-race of the fourth Round.)

"IV Round. Intellect has an enormous development in this Round. The (hitherto) dumb races acquire our (present) human speech on this globe, on which, from the fourth race, language is perfected and knowledge increases. At this half way point of the fourth Round (as of the fourth root, or Atlantean race), humanity passes the axial point of the minor Manvantaric cycle.... the world teeming with the results of intellectual activity and spiritual decrease...."

CHAPTER FOUR ANTHROPOLOGICAL

In the earliest ages, Philosophy descended not to the business and homes of men. It dwelt amid the wonders of the loftier creation; it sought to analyze the formation of matter- the essentials of the prevailing soul; to read the mysteries of the starry orbs; to dive into those depths of Nature in which Zoroaster is said by the schoolmen first to have discovered the arts which your ignorance classes under the name of magic-

Sir Bulwer Lytton in Zanoni

By a natural descent from universals to particulars we have at length arrived at the consideration of that part of the esoteric philosophy which deals especially with man, and which of necessity must prove to be of the widest interest to students of esoteric lore; for, however deeply Occultism may have searched the mysteries of nature, the schools have ever held that, "the greatest study of mankind is man", and that through the understanding of Self alone, can anything true be known.

Here perhaps it will be of advantage to state briefly what Occultism considers to be the real work of the human individual, and his position as regards the planet on which he lives. It should be remarked that whereas in previous Rounds man, or that class of monads which are destined afterwards to become human, issues on the first and succeeding globes of the earth-chain only after the evolution of the lower kingdoms, yet on this fourth Round, or at least on this lowest globe of the fourth Round, man is the first to appear; and, it may be added, the evolution of the other kingdoms from this point is carried on under his direct guidance. He is, or should be, absolute lord of his planet.

Eastern science teaches that man, and indeed every visible entity, is a centre or repository for the innumerable life-atoms which whirl through space- a veritable vortex of life. Resting for a moment in each body, they are thrown off and disappear or are attracted to other forms- but they carry with them the reflection or impress of everything they have passed through. Hence it is held that by reason of this constant change of atoms, each person is in a measure responsible for the character and tendencies of the persons he may live amongst, in many other ways than those of example or training. His very thoughts reflected as they are in the characteristics of his organism, are caught up by the fleeting atoms and sown in other bodies, and, through these, affect other minds. Murderous intent, even though unfulfilled, may bring about its committal by persons weaker than the would-be offender; vicious thoughts may have their expression in others outside the man of desire; while philanthropic and beneficent purposes will have an infinitely greater effect for good than even the actions they may inspire in the individual who evoked them. Motive, then, is of far more account than action.

But the atoms that pass of from man go also to build up all visible nature, and hence, since he is the only being on earth capable of conscious progression, he alone can help on its evolution. His duty from the first was to raise all beings, to train and educate them, and to lift them to higher levels. Instead he has adopted in the majority of his kind, a course of selfishness, ending in vice, and has become by his gross pursuits absolutely unconscious of the tremendous effect that he exercises on all around him. Yet,

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

however much nature may have turned against him for this- however much she may have inspired each to raise his hand against his brother- she is still kind to the innocent in heart , and in those countries where the poorest peoples dwell is often sweetest and most luxuriant, while the inhabitants are happier and, if we but recognized it, more highly developed. One can understand in the light of this doctrine how little it matters what form of religion one professes, so long as he is true to his highest calling; how it may be that those nations which seem to be less civilized, may yet, in the purity of the lives they lead, do greater services for their race and for the world at large than even their more enlightened brethren; and though their only guidance be but a simple, perhaps a foolish faith.

So that in Occultism finds for man more work to do than simply "preparing himself to die". Human existence and destiny is, in its view, something more than "eating, propagating and rotting". There was a time when man had such power over the elements that he could actually create, or call into physical being, animals, birds or plants, by hurrying forward the evolution of the germ. But in the dark cycle through which he is just now passing, these powers are lost to him, he is degraded almost to the level of the brutes, and it will not be until he has worked his way once more upward into the light that they can be regained.

Before we can really say much concerning man, we shall have to see what his constitution or make-up is according to Theosophy, and to trace the origin of all the various elements which enter into his being.

THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN

Oh man, the machine of boldest nature!

Oracles of Zoroaster.

The problem of life is man. MAGIC, or rather Wisdom, is the evolved knowledge of the potencies of man's interior being; which forces are Divine emanations, as intuition is the perception of their origin, and initiation our induction into that knowledge... We begin with instinct; the end is OMNISCIENCE. -

A. Wilder

In the last chapter it was said that Occultism recognized every entity in the universe, not as one, but as seven; that these however were not to be considered as bodies one within another, but as seven aspects through which the entity might be regarded, or better, as seven phases of consciousness through which it functions. Man is no more exempt from this septenary division than is anything else. Seven distinct elements, or "principles", as they are called, enter into the composition of the being we call human; he may be said to live and breathe in seven different ways.

Every age has known its philosophers; individuals who have sought to fathom the human soul and understand the workings of the mind, with greater or less success, and all have agreed that in order to achieve any result whatever in this department of knowledge, a metaphorical division- simple or complex

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

as the case may be - of the individual into certain constituents is necessary; a resolution, as it were, into more simple factors. The Occultist would be the last to break this time-honoured rule. Even the metaphysician of our own day is forced to adopt this method, and separately to consider memory, will, imagination, although no one would for a moment accuse him of not being perfectly aware that these were in reality but aspects of one thing - not separate pieces of the structure, which could be microscopically examined apart from the whole. So, too, must we regard the theosophical sevenfold division of man.

Although seven main principles are put forward in Theosophy as entering into the composition of man, yet the dividing process is by no means to be considered as having its limits in these, the possibility being really an infinite one. Simplification, however, is as desirable in occult study as in any other, and for such purpose the easiest division has been adopted; but, as will be seen, once the main elements are grasped it is advisable to subdivide some of these again, so as to render their function and nature more clearly.

The chief religion of the West - Christianity - has always regarded man as a trinity of body, soul and spirit; but save in the Roman Catholic fraternity the duad of body and spirit, or body and soul, seems only to be recognized - soul and spirit being apparently synonymous with most of the other sects. Protestantism, indeed, no matter what we may otherwise think of it, has now degenerated into little more than a pseudo philosophy, although among "High Church" adherents attempts is made to retain some of the old rites and religious observances, all of which had originally an actual occult effects and meaning; but year by year these become more and more a meaningless mass of ritualism. Like a branch that would live apart from the three which produced it, the "reformed" church has separated from the mother church, and death and decay can be its only award. But if this be said of Protestantism, in what light shall we regard its parent, the Church of Rome? The Gnosticism which inspired its doctrines is not now to be found there, pure and intact, for the ghost of Eusebius hovers among the books and manuscripts of the Vatican. Retaining the original truths in its keeping, it has managed, in order to suit the several objects of various Popes and Jesuits, so to deface them as to allow of little comparison with the first teachings, and nothing now remains but the husk or shell of a once great school of mysticism.

Theosophy seeks to restore the lost harmony, to bring order and sequence out of discord, confusion and chaos. Hence it shows us that these three, body, soul and spirit, constitute but a crude division of the human principles, which are to be found far more fully tabulated in the Hindu, Chinese, Egyptian, Hebraic and Hellenic systems, each of which specifies either a six-fold or a sevenfold division.

Like all other septenaries, that of which we are now about to speak may be separated into three higher and four lower constituents; three-spiritual, eternal, and indissoluble; four-terrestrial, transient and perishable. Thus we see an immediate correspondence with the "planes" and "globes". As in nature we observe the crocus growing year after year from the same bulb, itself hidden, so also the four terrestrial principles- representing man as we ordinarily view him - constitute the periodical expression or blossoming of his permanent and spiritual elements, themselves the hidden "root". Hence each individual is said to appear and reappear on earth, growing age after age more and more perfect, until the hour of the Pralaya strikes.

In order to familiarize the student with the sevenfold classification, it will be well to preface with a

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

tabulated statement:

Leaving aside any consideration of the nature of the root principles in man for the present, let us first examine the four which compose his terrestrial personality, dealing afterwards with the more permanent elements.

ELEMENTS		PRINCIPLE	SANSKRIT TERMS	OTHER TERMS	ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS
Transitory		1	STHULA SHARIRA		Physical Body
		2	LINGA SHARIRA		Astral Body
		3	PRANA	Etheric	Vital Essence
		4	KAMA	Emotional , Desire	Animal Soul
Permanent	Lower Mental	5	MANAS -is the link between Matter and Spirit (the ego per se the "I Am I")		Human Soul
	Antaskarana (being the bridge between the lower and higher mental)				
	Higher Mental			Causal body	
	The Monad	6	BUDDHI	Intuition	Spiritual Soul
	the true Ego also called the Pilgrim	7	ATMA (pure spiti)		Spirit

These four are: (1) physical body; (2) its ethereal double, or wraith, the astral body; (3) the vital essence; (4) the principle of desire, or the animal soul.

(1) **Physical Body**. - This is simply the gross material frame, composed of bones, flesh and blood; the individual man as he appears on the lowest plane. It is called in Sanskrit, Sthula Sharira, literally, a "sheath" of differentiated and conditioned matter, which sheath according to occult philosophy is constructed by nature solely for use as the instrument of the incarnating intelligence, dissolving directly the latter is withdrawn. For this reason, and because of its exceedingly transitory nature, it never was regarded by the ancient philosophers as worthy of much investigation - its double or wraith being, according to them, the real vital body, and the one for study. As will be seen later, this "double" is the true basis or mould of the physical body, the latter being simply an appearance produced by the molecules or particles of matter massed around the said mould; hence the constant change which physiologists observe in the "life-atoms" of the body, some schools affirming that- apart from the bone structure - every

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

man has a completely new frame, through which to function, every three months, while only seven years are considered for a renewal of the bones. However this may be, we are well aware of the constant loss of substance undergone by our bodies, and of the need of replenishment; the whole process of physical life being little more than a matter of *rebuilding*.

(2) **The Astral Body**, double, doppelganger, or wraith, is, counting from below, the first principle of importance in occult philosophy. In Sanskrit terminology it is called Linga Sharira. As the lingam is little else than a symbol of creation, the Linga Sharira (or creative sheath) may be regarded as the creator of the physical form, being the mould, as said, upon which are thrown the innumerable "life-atoms" which build up and constitute the body. It is therefore the true "vital body", the eidolon of the Greeks, and is an exact counterpart of the physical body, growing and developing with the latter. It is formed out of the astral stuff which is the basis of all manifested nature. It is born before the terrestrial frame is formed about it, and only entirely fades away into the ethereal elements of the earth, upon the complete dissolution of that frame. Owing again to the fact that it has the property of enormous extension - being, according to the Hindus, capable of assuming any size or shape - it has been called the "protean" or "plastic" body; it exists in the womb while the foetus is being created or built around it, as well as in the full grown man. It is also capable, to some extent, of separation from the physical body during life - an occurrence usually the result of weakness- but even then it can only stray a few yards away. It is well known that persons in the last stages of consumption often see themselves, as it were, from the other side of the room in which they are lying, and numerous cases of like nature are on record as occurring in moments of great fatigue. Theosophists hold this to be merely the partial separation of the Linga Sharira from the body, persons in such instances maintaining their consciousness in the "double" instead of in the physical frame. The astral form may nevertheless leave the body without the consciousness of the individual. But in any such cases, it is liable to injury of one sort or another through accidents to it, which, of course, at once impress themselves upon the body, and thus we have an explanation for those accidents to the body which sometimes occur to weak persons when they are asleep, the astral in these instances having probably separated from the physical frame, and received a cut or puncture. The astral body again is the basis of the materialized forms which appear at spiritualist seances. However much the phenomena of these seances may be coloured by fraud and deception, no one can doubt the genuineness of many of many of them; the others being but imitations of the real article. It is concerning these very materializations that Theosophists differ from Spiritualists; the latter maintaining them to be the actual "spirits" of persons passed away, the former teaching that they are but the shades or doubles of the deceased, galvanized into life by the astral body of any one present who may be in a sufficiently weak and passive condition to allow of its separation from his body; such a person being technically termed a "medium".

The double has thus two principal aspects; one, that which constitutes the mould or form of the physical, and the other that which can be separated from it. It is not, however, to be understood that these are two different bodies, but merely two aspects of the one. To make this clear, it may be said that, owing to its plastic nature, the Linga Sharira has been called the "fluidic body", being capable of almost infinite extension. A portion of its substance "drawn off", so to speak, from the main body, will assume the form of the whole, unless it goes to strengthen the eidolon of another individual, dead or alive, in which case it takes on the form it inspires. Thus it oozes out from the physical frame, the organs through which this is accomplished being the spleen, where the Linga Sharira is said to be "curled up". The Linga Sharira proper, however must not be confounded with the body in which a person may, consciously or unconsciously, travel invisibly to places far distance, and observe what is going on there, without, apparently, having himself moved. This is called the *Mayavi Rupa*, or thought-body, and is not a

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

"principle" at all, but is a combination of two principles.

At death the astral body separates entirely from the physical form finally dissolving with the disappearance of the last vestige of the decaying body. In certain atmospheric conditions it may be seen hanging over the graves of the dead; from this have arisen all the stories concerning ghosts and ghouls. The luminosity of its appearance under such circumstances being probably one reason for its name, the astral- or starry - body.

(3) The Vital Essence - This is the third element necessary for the composition of the human body. Having endowed it with substance and form, if we would have it a living thing we must add vitality. But life is inherent in all things, and Theosophy recognizes no such thing as dead substance, therefore the reader must understand by this third principle, *individual* as opposed to universal life, or that which distinguishes organic from inorganic matter. Prana is the name given to it by the Hindus, Jiva being the name for the universal essence, the great ocean of life in which all things are plunged. Madame Blavatsky used to draw the distinction between Jiva and Prana by the analogy of a sponge in water; the sponge being held to represent an individual, the water - Jiva, or the universal ocean of life, while that portion of the water which flowed through the sponge indicated Prana or individual vitality. Thus it will be seen that, as the sponge can contain a greater or less supply of water, so we can be filled to a greater or less extent with the vital essence, and here it is that Occultism advances a theory, not known to Science. It holds that death is the result of too much life. The atoms carried by the life-waves into the mould of the physical body constitute its material structure, but owing to the fact that these wave rush with constantly increasing intensity a time comes when we are not any longer able to endure their power, and nature then comes to our aid and we do what is usually called "falling asleep". During sleep the excess of vitality is allowed to escape, and the waking stage is arrived at when the life-waves have readjusted themselves to the molecules of the body. But when the life-waves become too powerful for us to stave them off, death results; and with the dissolving body Prana once more becomes Jiva. For this reason it is that the Occultist say that the body would be kept alive much longer, if we could avoid the necessity for sleep; in other words, if we were better able to battle with the life-waves, we could live longer. And, accordingly, the greater our degree of strength, the less sleep we require.

(4) Kama. The three foregoing principles are those which are common to all living forms on the terrestrial globe, whether of the vegetable or the animal kingdoms. But the animal has something which renders it quite distinct from the plant; this is the element of desire, instinct or the animal soul, called in Theosophy-Kama. It is this principle which man has in common with the brute, and to which must be traced all such instincts as eating, sleeping, procreation and the like. Owing to the fact, however, that man has something in him which no animal possesses, namely, mind, or the mental fire- the fifth principle - he is able by thought or "suggestion" to govern or control the animal soul, and becomes in consequence responsible for its deeds. If left entirely to itself, the physical body of man will act as any other animal; but directly the mind functions in it, it at once makes obeisance to the higher power. Hence man is the only animal that has the power at any time to call into play his animal passions, first on the mental plane, and afterwards for physical gratification. In such case they are not the outcome of natural instincts, but constitute indulgence and lust; it is the prostitution of this power that has caused all the suffering of the age, arising as it does out of greed, drunkenness and sexuality.

It will now be seen that a perfect animal has been formed, of substance, form and vitality; and the soul having been added, we must imagine the whole composition evolved to the highest point possible in this

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

age, and having the most perfect of nature's forms. It then becomes a fitting tabernacle for the dwelling of a god, whom we shall now see in the three higher principles of man.

The four transitory, mortal elements having been considered, it next becomes our duty to speak of the root nature of man; the latter being permanent and immortal.

In this case we shall for good reasons begin with the most transcendental of the divine trinity which constitutes man's higher parts, ending with the third of these, the fifth principle. These three are (7) Atma, pure spirit; (6) Buddhi, spirit soul; and (5) Manas, human soul.

(7) *Atma*, or pure spirit: of this little can be said without once again returning to the metaphysics of the second chapter. Neither spirit nor matter per se can be held really to enter into the constitution of man, and can therefore hardly be called "principles" at all, but as they are the basis of his make-up they are tabulated. Atma is the name given by Theosophists for the pure spiritual essence, the light, as it were, from which the higher rays of his being spring: it is his HIGHER SELF- the god above rather than within him.

(6) *Buddhi*, or spiritual soul, is the first emanation from this light and is its vehicle or body. In spiritual clairvoyance it is impossible to ascend higher than this, or rather than Buddhi in conjunction with Manas- the causal body- or divine consciousness. It is the spiritual soul as distinguished from pure spirit.

Atma and Buddhi together constitute what has been called the Monad, or the spiritual part of man which experiences; the "Pilgrim"

(5) *Manas*, the human soul, the fifth principle, is by far the most important of the seven. It is the ego per se, the "I am "I" consciousness within us, and it is the link between spirit and matter in the human individual, the point where heaven and earth may be said to kiss one another. Man is greater than any being on earth because he is able to understand both spiritual and material life, although in this age the latter alone is comprehended.

Soul is a generic name: we have spoken of the of the spiritual and animal souls, and likewise soul has been applied to the Monad or Atma-Buddhi, the Pilgrim which has to experience individual existence. Now we shall have to mention another- the human Soul, Manas. As neither Atma (pure spirit) nor Buddhi, its vehicle or soul, can comprehend matter, and as on the other hand matter has no power to understand spirit, a link is wanted before true experience is possible. This link is Manas, possessed on this earth by man alone. He, of all creatures, is the only one who can dwell either among the gods or with the brutes, who in the self-consciousness of his mentality can grasp, draw together, study and understand all sides of nature. Verily an incarnate god, in this age he has permitted himself to degenerate almost to the level of the brute.

Manas is a Sanskrit word derived from man, the root of the verb "to think", and therefore conveys essentially the idea of a thinker. [Our word "man" has its root in this.] It is the perception of egoity within,

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

and according to Occultism it is alone the heirloom of man, the animals being conscious, but not self-conscious. So that Manas is not simply the mind, but it is rather the perception of "I am-ness", that from which the faculty of comparison, analysis or thought proceeds. It is the direct emanation from Mahat.

Now if we suppose the root of man's nature - the spiritual trinity out of which he springs, to be prepared to experience earthly life for a period, we shall see the manasic portion of it about to incarnate in the animal child born of terrestrial parentage. But it has not the power of fully entering into the life on earth; only the lowest phase of its being can be said to really do so, and this enters the man-child and forthwith assumes the lordship over it. And from the moment of his birth, every human being has two selves, his "ego and alter ego", one of which reigns on earth, the other dwelling in the heavenly abodes; these being apparently divorced from one another, but really forming one individual. At night, when his body is sleeping, if undistracted by the dreams of the Deva-world, his terrestrial self may once again become "one with the Father in Heaven"; it is said, however, that he can recall but little memory of such conjunction unless he has passed through an Initiation [been initiated into some of the mysteries of his own nature. The word is here used in the mystic sense familiar to all Kabalists, Neo-Platonists and other students of the soul-sciences. Derived from the Latin *initio*, meaning literally to go into, or to enter upon, a new condition, it hence signifies here, and in theosophical literature, a change of being, through a clearer perception of the soul and of the essentials of nature. In the ancient Temple-Mysteries of Egypt, India and Greece, various ceremonies were attended by the Candidate for Initiation, symbolic of the changes of state experienced by his soul].

Manas is, for these reasons, to be considered as divided into two, or as having two aspects, called respectively Higher and Lower Manas. The link between them, the mode of consciousness by which the self changes from one to the other is called *Antaskarana*, which can only be said to exist for the lower self when it is conscious of higher aspirations than those which are drawn from its contact with earthly objects. So that the Theosophist holds that nothing of a spiritual nature, no matter of what kind, can reach man save as an influence sent by his Higher Manas to him. However badly such messages may be translated because of the veil of earthly nature through which they must filter, yet we owe to them anything of an order higher than animality which enters the heart of man.

Thus we see that the Lower Manas, our own conscious self, suffers through being bound in the animal frame, unless it succeed in fully dominating the brute to which it is tied. It is the old story of the two thieves: Jesus, the soul - Lower Manas- is crucified between the two thieves, the brute and the god, each of which would fain steal him for himself, but only to one can he say "thou shalt be with me in Paradise".

This must complete our description of the seven principles for the present; as the work proceeds it will be seen how important a part they play in explanation of the phenomena of the birth, life, and death of the creature we call human. One point, however, needs elucidation. It is not to be imagined that the perfect seven-principled man could be produced at nature's first effort. Man is the flower of his planet, and it has taken ages to evolve him even to the height of imperfect development he has reached. All the different forces that play in this system- all the "gods"- had to combine together to produce man; he had, as will be seen, not one, but many "creators" being literally built up by the power of the different energizing essences. These, however, have been educated or instilled into him gradually - one additional principle alone becoming active during each of the seven races- first as natural effect, but afterwards as the result of his own self-devised efforts. Now at present man is - on this planet (the earth) and in this Round (the fourth) - in the fifth of these races, and therefore, without recognizing his development as a whole, we

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

shall find him to be generally in possession of fivefold attributes. We see him a creature of five extremities, a veritable "five pointed star", as the Rosicrucians symbolized him- with five fingers, five toes, five senses, five organs of sense. His development is not therefore above the fifth stage- that of the human soul or the mind- having as yet as little perception of the sixth, or spiritual soul, as he has of a sixth sense. To put it in other words; the Monad or true ego, has succeeded, after many ages of effort, in evolving, or perceiving in itself, those qualities pertaining to the first five "principles", and it has yet, before it can claim permanent rest after its toils, to evolve the other two. But man is only in the fourth Round on this planet, and although a partial development of the whole seven principles is made in each Round, yet the keynote for the period will be the principle corresponding to that Round. Therefore, as this is the fourth, so also the fourth principle that of Desire - for good or for bad- is the real keynote of man's being at present. Great indeed is he who can surmount it, and , passing ahead of his time, become a Buddha!

From all this it will be evident that with a full comprehension of each of the "seven men" which are bound together in the human being, an understanding of their nature, and a knowledge of their heredity, man becomes a god, having dominion over the seven elements of nature- each of which is powerfully related to a "principle"- and reflecting in himself the whole cosmos. For "as man is a sevenfold being, so is the universe; the septenary microcosm being to the septenary macrocosm but as the drop of rainwater to the cloud from which it has dropped, and to which in the course of time it will return. In the One are embraced or included so many tendencies for the evolution of air, fire, water, etc. (from the purely abstract down to their concrete conditions), and when those latter are called elements, it is to indicate their productive potentialities for numberless form-changes or evolutions of being.

"Let us represent the unknown quantity as X : that quantity is the one eternal, immutable principle; and *a, b, c, d, e*, five of the six minor principles or components of the same- viz., the principles of earth, water, air, fire and ether (*Akasha*) , following the order of their spirituality, and beginning with the lowest. There is a sixth principle answering to the sixth principle (called in the east Buddhi) in man (to avoid confusion, remember that in viewing the question from the side of the descending scale, the abstract All, or eternal principle, would be numerically designated as the first, and the phenomenal universe as the seventh, whether belonging to man or the universe- viewed from the other side, the numerical order will be reversed); but we are not permitted to name it except among the Initiates. I may, however, hint that it is connected with the process of the highest intellection. Let us call it *N*; and besides there is, under all the activities of the phenomenal universe, an energizing impulse from X- call this *Y*. Algebraically stated, our equation will therefore read: $a+b+c+d+e+N=Y=X$. Each of the first six letters represents, so to speak, the spirit or abstraction of what you call elements (your meagre English gives me no other word). Thus spirit controls the entire live of evolution around the entire cycle of cosmic activity, in its own department, the informing, vivifying, evolving cause, behind the countless manifestations in that department of nature.

"Let us work out the idea with a single example. Take fire: *D*, the primal igneous principle resident in X , is the ultimate cause of every phenomenal manifestation of fire on all the globes of the chain. The proximate causes are the evolved secondary igneous agencies which severally control the seven descents of fire on each planet, every element having its seven principles, and every principle its seven sub-principles, and so these secondary agencies have in their turn to become primary causes.

"*D*" is a septenary compound, of which the highest fraction is pure spirit. As we see it on our globe, it is in its coarsest, most material condition, as gross in its way as is man in his physical encasement. In the next preceding globe to ours, fire was less gross than here; on the one before that, less still. So the body

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

of flame was more and more pure, and less and less material, on each antecedent planet. On the first of all in the cyclic chain, it appeared as an almost pure objective *shining* - the Maha Buddhi, the sixth principle of the *eternal light*.... On each globe of the chain there are seven manifestations of fire, of which the first in order will compare, as to its spiritual quality, with the last manifested on the next preceding planet; the process being reversed, as you will infer with the opposite arc. The myriad specific manifestations of these six universal elements are in their turn but the offshoots, branches, or branchlets of the one single primordial tree of life" [Letter from an adept, quoted in "*Man; Fragments of Forgotten History*".]

It is upon a correct understanding of the "seven principles of man" that rests a knowledge of Occultism. The principles are each drawn from one of the seven planes of the cosmos. Man is therefore a veritable copy of the whole universe and through a complete understanding and rendering active of his seven natures he becomes acquainted with all the laws of Being. No other entity on this globe is perfect; - the fire of Manas is wanting in the animal, Kama is absent from the plant, Prana does not exist in the mineral. Atma-Buddhi, the Monad, is of course present in all things, but is not individualized save in the higher organisms. Even in the animal there is wanting that which can form a self-conscious link between its lower nature and its spirit. Only in man does this exist, and it is Manas. This principle in man is an incarnate god, and, as will later be explained, has come from other spheres to help on the evolution of this globe. Each of us therefore in his inmost self, is a foreigner on this planet, with definite labour to perform; we have to educate all things below us. Few of us have realized this. But even ordinary man, little as he follows the high calling of his life or heeds his higher nature, is yet helping forward nature's work. He touches a plant, and it is cultivated; an animal, and it is tamed! Wherever he goes he dominates and changes the face of the globe. But he will only have quite fulfilled his mission on that day when he has endowed everything with the power of his own soul.

LIFE AND DEATH

There is a principle of the soul, superior to all nature, through which we are capable of surpassing the order and systems of the world. When the soul is elevated to natures better than itself, then it is entirely separated from subordinate natures, exchanges this for another life, and, deserting the order of things with which it was connected, links and mingles itself with another.

Iamblichus

The house of life hath many chambers.

Rossetti

It is seldom indeed in this age of precipitancy, impetuosity and confused activity, that one comes to question himself without bias as to the wherefore of his curious life. Religionists are prone to rely entirely on the creed they have come to by inheritance, and therefore constantly tend to throw back their powers of thought into the beliefs formed in their infancy. Little inquiry is made; less advance possible. So-called scientific investigators, on the hand, fall into an equally obvious error. The training of youth is ever to regard externals as finalities; to take heed of appearances, rather than of whatever reality may lie behind

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

them. This analysis of surroundings, carried to its furthest limits, and into the vigorous thought of mature age, is what is usually, though improperly, denominated "scientific investigation". How if both sides be wrong? What if the beliefs of the religionist be based upon error; the "discoveries" of the biologist upon a wrong conception of life? What if each person's life be nothing but a nightmare dream? Of little avail then would be doctrinal knowledge, or scientific examination of the surrounding shadows. Yet no one can positively affirm that such is not the case.

The philosopher, however, is not content with shadows, whether for belief or investigation, but tries to find a key to the situation by a study of himself in relation to life at large, analysing his own mind to find from whence its inspirations spring, and reaching down into the depths of his conscious being to discover a rock whereon to base some absolute knowledge.

In such search it is but natural that he should advance along the lines followed by his predecessors in the same field. However varied human natures may be, all follow approximately along the same road of experience, and it is decidedly to the advantage of those who are thinking in certain directions to have access to the record of experiences of others who have gone before. Theosophy is little more than the recorded experiences of thousands who have dived into and studied the workings of the human mind, of seer after seer who have for ages sought truth in this domain; if such be the claim of the science, it deserves consideration at least at the hands of earnest thinkers.

We ordinarily fancy that the life we spend here, the waking state, or physical being, is the only one of which we are properly conscious any other state we may pass through being regarded as abnormal or of no account. Strange that we should hold to this when we have almost daily testimony to the fact that we know next to nothing about this consciousness at all. Case after case has been recorded where persons have lived through seemingly long periods in a second of time. De Quincey mentions one where sixty years were passed through in less than a minute! Abernethy affirms that on a certain occasion, when sitting with one of his pupils in his study, a hand-bell fell from off the table on to the floor, and during the short space of time that it took to pass through the air, the student dreamed that he had committed a crime, had been sentenced to twenty years of penal servitude, and had served his time. He saw the years go by with their sorrow and pain. On the last day he heard the gong sounding to call him in from work. It was the bell striking the floor! If we have such problems as these to deal with in life, who shall say what our normal state is, since the sum-total of our present life may, from another aspect of thought, or plane of consciousness, be passed through in a *second of time*.

The whole problem of consciousness may be well expressed in the anecdote of the Persian philosopher, who, seated one day writing in his garden, observed a butterfly moving to and fro among the flowers; and watching it intently, he fell into a trance and fancied himself a butterfly also. He flitted about among the plants, around the garden, and finally flew away into the woods. Half an hour later he suddenly awoke to find himself seated before his writing. Then reasoned the sage thus: "Was I then a philosopher fancying myself a butterfly; or am I now a butterfly who imagines himself a philosopher?"

Let us see what Theosophy has to say for human consciousness. Every person dreams, although not every one remembers having done so. This is because the various organs through which the thinking part of man functions, are not always coordinated. Each individual is conscious physically, psychically and spiritually, and every one of his experiences in each of these states is of equal importance in his

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

evolution as a whole. But the memory of one state is not ordinarily carried into the next.

Occult training teaches how to coordinate these states. Modern discoveries in hypnotism have conclusively proved that freedom of mental action, or clearness of vision, is often much greater during sleep than at other times, giving to the somnambulist knowledge of events and even of languages not possessed by him when awake. The dullest intellects are sharpened to a degree far exceeding the average; clairvoyant powers are established; and even cases of prophetic vision recorded. But hypnotism is only a dishing-up of the arcane theurgic practices, of sorcery and the magic of old. And but a very small portion indeed has been revived. The "discovery" the schools have made in this instance constitutes only one of the many ways of coordinating two states of consciousness, and not by any means the best way either, for the subjects rarely, if ever, remember the experiences they have passed through, upon being awakened out of the trance. Still hypnotists have made some discoveries, and if what they say be true, can anyone yet deny the possibility of wakefulness on other planes of being, during sleep, or the periods of unconsciousness here?

Through experiments and training, based upon a greater knowledge of natural laws than we of the west have, the eastern occultists have discovered how to coordinate the various states of consciousness, to reflect into the brain any knowledge gained during trance or sleep, and thus to carry it into the subsequent waking stage. They teach us as follows: during an incarnation- the period of time that we are associated with any one physical body - the states of consciousness which are proper to the Lower Manas, or "I am" principle in us, divide themselves roughly into:

Sanskrit Terms	English Equivalent
Yagrata	Waking
Svapna	Dreaming
Sushupti	Trance

These without taking cognizance of the fourth or highest spiritual state.

The only one of these three which is not generally known to us is the dreamless or trance state. All those confused memories which we bring back from our nightly slumbers, all the various states pertaining to catalepsy, lethargy, somnambulism, must be grouped under the class called svapna or dreaming, which constitutes the link between the Sushupti and the Yagrata. But each condition is walled off from its fellow by a barrier which is with difficulty broken down, and only under circumstances bringing about an abnormal arrangement of the principles. The three states may roughly be compared to three chambers leading into one another through spring doors. Directly anyone passes from one room to another, the door diving them shuts, cutting off the communication and allowing no view of the room just left. Room No. 2 lying midway between the other two, must be passed through in getting from No. 1 to No. 3, or vice versa, and we can see by this analogy that the intermediary state of svapna or dreaming has to be passed through before one can enter the Sushupti, or trance state, from the waking, or Yagrata. Again, directly we pass from one to another, the doors close, and we have no memory of what we have left behind. But by certain processes the doors may be held partially open, and then it is possible to retain the memory of the other states, at least to some limited extent. Glimpses can be caught through the half-open door of what the next chamber is like, and what it holds.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

So that although when we sleep we pass into states transcending the Yagrata or waking consciousness, yet when we again return here, it is a rare occurrence for us to carry back any recollection of what we may have been doing or experiencing. That we have dreamed, however, without immediately recollecting it, is often proved by the fact that after the lapses of many hours or even days, some trivial instance may serve to stir the chords of memory, establishing a momentary link between our waking and sleeping consciousness and enabling us to recall some incident of the dream. The avenues leading from the waking to the dreaming, or from the dreaming to the trance states may be held open by the use of certain drugs, by such processes as hypnotism or mesmerism, or by an idiosyncrasy of the individual, but normally none have consciousness on the physical plane or in the ordinary waking state, of what has occurred in other conditions.

Few persons have the power in ordinary everyday life of relating their ego sum to anything else than chairs and tables, rooms and people. Consequently they are not assured of the fact of their immortality; living only a life of relativity's, they know nothing outside their impermanent and transitory existence. They have no fixed point, no stronghold within themselves where they can retire at will "far from the madding crowd", no real "home". Nevertheless, belief in his immortality, in what has been loosely called an "after-state", is strong in the breast of man, and this alone would prove a powerful factor in any argument in favour of it. But what need for argument; if it be true that we retain our consciousness, our egoity, from sleeping to waking - and there is no conceivable reason why we should regain it upon again rising from our slumbers if we do not - then who can object to the statement that it is eternal, that it has existed and will exist everlastingly, and that the only reason why we are at present bound within the walls of time, knowing a beginning, a future and a past, is because of the materiality of our conceptions?

That fact is, that while our consciousness, or that pertaining to the real self within - the higher aspect of Manas - is eternal, yet as a manifestation only of the One Supreme, it- during a Manvantara - is subject to the same great law of cycles, which underlies the workings of all things in the universe. So that it has its greater periods of waking and sleeping, as well as its lesser, each knowing an almost infinite subdivision into smaller and smaller cycles. For a period it manifests here, and we call that Life; for a period it sleeps, and we call that Death. They are but transitory phases of the everlasting consciousness. Life, however, again divides itself into the alternation of day and night, during the latter of which, in sleep, the ego once more frees itself from the cares of this world and ascends to purer regions; and it is said that once in seven nights at least, man has reunion with his god.

Thus life is a journey, a march around the great cycle of experience; this cycle being but one step of a spiral composed itself of thousands of lesser and ever lessening spirals. Each "Pilgrim" has to pass through cycles of waking and sleeping, of life and death, of races, of globes, of Rounds, of planets, of systems, of universes, in an ever upward climb, ever enlarging its knowledge of existence, ever placing at greater distances the boundary mark of its finite perceptions; so to an eventual merging in the pure essence of life, the fount at which it had drawn its being.

DEATH AND AFTER

The soul leaving the body, becomes that power which it has most developed.

Plotinus

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

When we die we shall find that we have not lost our dreams; but that we have only lost our sleep.

Richter

But the various phases or states of consciousness of which we have been writing, refer only to the period of incarnation, or life as associated with the physical plane. And as our consciousness of any state runs, as said, in cycles, sooner or later our perceptions of this present existence end, and we pass away, as from waking to sleeping, to a condition, more or less prolonged, of rest.

Ordinarily speaking, death is the destruction of the physical body. Occultism says it is far more. It is the dividing-up of all the principles of which the human being is composed, and the return of each to its respective source. Death is the portal to rest; but it would be absurd to fancy that such rest is only for the self-conscious lord of the numberless beings that harmonized together in the building called man. Each of these rests also, and from this point of view we may define death as the return of all the constituents elements composing any being, to their respective homes. The physical body gradually dissolves after the separation from it of the astral body or Linga Sharira, the latter itself slowly fading out. Prana rebecomes Jiva, and the Kamic element is dissipated in its own sphere. The Lower Manas, or human soul, thus freed from the four chains which bind it down to earth, escapes into the spiritual world and claims reunion with its alter ego - its "Father in Heave".

But before describing the actual processes undergone, during death, according to the occult philosophy, some description of the different lokas, abodes, and states through which the soul passes in its upward flight, and those to which its destiny will eventually lead it, are necessary.

Modern Christianity, or at least the Protestant fraternity, recognizes but two after-death states - "Heaven" and "Hell". Roman Catholicism has in addition that of "Purgatory". But those of the esoteric philosophy, like those of the Egyptians and the Greeks, and of all the great religious systems are almost innumerable. While this is so, however, it names only "three principal lokas, so called - namely, 1, *Kama loka*; 2, *Rupa loka*; 3, *Arupa loka* ; or, in their literal translation and meaning -1, world of desires or passions, of unsatisfied earthly cravings- the abode of "Shells" and Victims, of Elementaries, and Suicides; 2, the world of Forms - *i.e.*, of shadows more spiritual, having form and objectivity, but no substance; and, 3, the *formless* world, or rather the world of no form, the incorporeal, since its denizens can have neither body, shape nor colour for us mortals, and in the sense that we give to these terms. There are the three spheres of ascending spirituality in which the several groups of subjective and semi-subjective entities find their attractions. All but the suicides and the victims of premature violent deaths go, according to their attractions and powers, either into the Devachanic or the Avitchi state, which two states form the numberless subdivisions of Rupa and Arupa lokas- that is to say, that such states not only vary in degree, or in their presentation to the subject entity as regards form, colour, etc., but that there is an infinite scale, of such states, in their progressive spirituality and intensity of feeling; from the lowest in the Rupa, up to the highest and the most exalted in the Arupa-loka The student must bear in mind that *personality* is the synonym for limitation; and that the more selfish, the more contracted the person's ideas, the closer will he cling to the lower spheres of being, the longer loiter on the plane of selfish social intercourse". [Extract from an Adept's letter, quoted in Esoteric Buddhism, page 141].

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

We are thus immediately brought to a consideration of the two principal states into which the souls of the dead enter, to rest during the period intervening between incarnation and incarnation.

Devachan claims our first attention. Although literally the "abode of the gods", it is a state rather than a locality, and is that pure, spiritual condition of rest which is the lot of the average man after he has "shuffled off this mortal coil". It will be recollected that the manasic principle, during the period of incarnation, is divided into two parts, or better expressed, perhaps, has two aspects- a higher and a lower; and that the latter constitutes the real human soul or personal being. The transitory period of life ended, the two Manases or selves rebecome one, and are virtually the same as before life, but with this addition- the recollection or association of the experiences passed through by the lower. Spirit must have a material basis through which to express itself; the noumenon is unseen save through the phenomenon, and in this way we can understand the impossibility of any spiritual enjoyment by the personality without an association of its consciousness with the memory of the things it had left behind. Consequently the aroma of the life, the most divine thoughts, everything that approached, however remotely, to aspiration, is one with the Devachanee, together with the same environment and friends as in the earth-life. "We say that the Bliss of the Devachanee consists in the complete conviction that it has never left the earth, that there is no such thing as death at all". [See H.P. Blavatsky's Key to Theosophy page 146]

The illusion is perfect. It can only be compared to a prolonged refreshing dream, in which the sleeper has every wish gratified, every hope fulfilled, every aspiration realized, where, surrounded by all he loved, he lives and breathes in an atmosphere of purity and bliss, forgetting *absolutely* that anything ordinarily termed sorrow exists or ever did exist, or that he had ever suffered.

The great cause of pain and sorrow to the human being on earth arises out of his severance, during lifetime, from the spiritual half of his nature- the Higher Manas. The *half*-remembrance of that blissful state of completeness and purity is ever before him, and while this is so there is little rest. Filled eternally with an indefinable longing, an indescribable yearning for a something unknown, he seeks here and there, laying hold of this or that thing, in the everlasting search after happiness; but not until his higher consciousness is fully known to him can there be any bliss for mortal man.

Union of the Higher and Lower Egos may take place either during earth-life, at the time of an Initiation, or afterwards in the Devachanic state - and sometimes during sleep, as before spoken of. Evolution or progress, as we understand the term, is only possible during earth-life, and it will therefore be seen that in the instance of this union being effected before the separation of the four lower principles, or at death, the experiencing possibilities and consequent progression of the individual are not thereby hindered, but enormously increased; whereas after death nothing new can be added, and in Devachan he simply lives over and over again his past life, only with a blissful unconsciousness of sorrow or sadness, and a conscious realization of all his spiritual hopes and longings.

To the ordinary mortal his bliss in Devachan is complete. "The *Devachanee* lives its intermediate cycle between two incarnations surrounded by everything it had aspired to in vain, and in the companionship of everyone it loved on earth. It has reached the fulfillment of all its soul-yearnings. And thus it lives throughout long centuries an existence of *unalloyed* happiness, which is the reward for its suffering in earth-life. In short, it bathes in a sea of uninterrupted felicity spanned only by events of still greater felicity in degree". [Key to Theosophy, page 148]

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Readers, however, unacquainted with the harmony of the esoteric doctrine, will doubtless offer ready objections to a heaven such as that depicted above. It may be urged that such a "fool's paradise" can be of no real benefit as a rest, since the shock of waking to the terrible realities of life must be increased proportionately to the intensity of the blissful illusion.

But waking means nothing other than rebirth. Once we have passed the threshold leading into earth-life, the draught of Lethe has been taken, and no shock whatever is encountered, since the soul has no more recollection of its Devachanic experiences than we have of what our consciousness has been during a night spent in deep sleep. One we rise with a sense of refreshment and revivification.

Again, "It is such a waste of time". Yet nature does not consider it waste of time to sleep. Nothing more lawful or necessary can be conceived of, and this period of rest between two earth-lives, in the theosophical systems, is really but one more tribute to the harmony of the whole Devachan, though a rest, is not altogether the waste of time one might at first suppose. It is a period of spiritual gestation, when all the ideal qualities of the mind, of which the hurried and busy everyday life of civilized man permits but little or no expansion, find opportunity to grow and develop. "For that dream-life is but the fruitage, the harvest time, of those spiritual seed-germs dropped from the tree of physical existence in our moments of dream and hope- fancy-glimpses of bliss and happiness, stifled in an ungrateful social soil, blooming in the rosy dawn of Devachan and ripening under its ever-fructifying sky. If man had but one single moment of ideal experience, not even then could it be, as erroneously supposed, the indefinite prolongation of that 'Single moment'. That one note, struck from the lyre of life, would form the keynote of the being's subjective state, and work out into numberless harmonic tones and semitones of the spiritual phantasmagoria. There, all unrealized hopes, aspirations, dreams, become fully realized, and the dreams of the objective become the realities of the subjective existence..."

But enough has been said to explain the nature of the devachanic state, which is one of rest and spiritual enjoyment. We must pass on to consider its antithesis- that of Avitchi.

Like Devachan, Avitchi is a state, not a locality, and is one of the most "idea Spiritual wickedness, something akin to the state of Lucifer, so superbly described by Milton". But true Avitchi is not possible to the humanity of this globe; only the black magician, and perhaps to some extent the most absolutely depraved among soulless men, can reach anything approaching this condition. All others receive whatever punishment may be their due, on earth. As will be seen in the section "Karma and Reincarnation", the good and evil deeds of one earth-life entitle the doer to a just reward or punishment in the next, or in succeeding incarnations, and all our suffering here is, according to the esoteric philosophy, the direct outcome of our previous misdeeds. So that the only hell known is on earth. "There are no hells but the man-bearing worlds". Few indeed are those who are so absolutely without a single high thought during an incarnation as to render a devachanic rest impossible after death, and far, far fewer are those who are so spiritually depraved as to merit a condition of Avitchi. "Not many are there who can reach it.. And if it be urged that since there is Devachan for nearly all, for the good, the bad, and the indifferent, the ends of harmony and equilibrium are frustrated and the law of retribution and of impartial, implacable justice, hardly met and satisfied by such a comparative scarcity if not absence of its antithesis, then the answer will show that it is not so. 'Evil is the dark son of Earth (matter), and Good- the fair daughter of Heaven' (or Spirit), says the Chinese philosopher; hence the place of punishment for most of our sins is the earth- their birthplace and playground. There is more apparent and relative than actual evil even on earth, and it is not given to the *hoi polloi* to reach the fatal grandeur and eminence of

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

a 'Satan' every day". [letter from an Adept, quoted in Esoteric Buddhism, page 143].

Definition of the state of the normal individual between the two earth-lives - the devachanic- having been accomplished, further elucidation of the after-death conditions will be best carried on along illustrative lines. Let us fancy a man to be dying; then, as the soul wings its flight to other spheres, let us see what becomes of it, and of the body and the remaining principles thus freed and separated from each other and their lord.

No idle speculation is it that the dying recalls every detail of his life. As at the moment of birth the child is said to prospect its future, so at death the ego looks back over the road it has come and notes all the incidents that have befallen along the way. Anyone of mature age, reviewing his past, will find that he has lived out his whole span of years to learn but one great lesson. Throughout all the vicissitudes, changes and experiences; embedded in the tangled maze of thoughts and ideals, of unfulfilled soul-yearnings, unrealized desires; and finding its way out from under the rare glossing of felicity which shows out here and there, there runs a long dark vein, as unsolved problem, which seems to carry in it also the key to the whole life. Just above it, appearing and reappearing simultaneously with it, is line of thought which may be said to embody the sum-total of the highest aspirations, the individual's idea of the grand purpose of life. At the moment of death, as each deed and even rush through the brain, these lines stand out brighter than the rest; all other thoughts, the aroma of every past deed, fall in harmony with them, and the vibration organ sounds as it were but one prolonged note. And upon the final emission of the soul it carries with it this thought-summation which shall determine the nature of its future birth.

"At the last moment the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners, picture after picture, one event after another. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong, supreme impulse; and memory restores faithfully every impression that has been entrusted to it during the period of the brains' activity. That impression and thought which was the strongest, naturally becomes the most vivid, and survives, so to say, all the rest, which now vanish and disappear forever, to reappear but in Devachan. No man dies insane or unconscious, as some physiologists assert. Even a madman, or one in a fit of delirium tremens, will have his instant of perfect lucidity at the moment of death, though unable to say so to those present. The man may often appear dead, yet from the last pulsation, and between the last throbbing of the heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body, *the brain thinks*, and the ego lives in those few brief seconds his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye who assist at a deathbed, and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death! Especially have ye to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting its reflection upon the veil of the Future!...

The Hindus hold that if a man pronounces the name of Rama at the moment of death he will go to the Supreme. And the writer has been assured by travelers in India, that the more ignorant of the people may be often seen lying on their backs at certain hours of the day, crying constantly "Rama, Rama, Rama,..." hoping that death might come upon them while they pronounced the sacred name. But what is really meant by this mystic teaching is that he who at the moment of death has in his brain only the one dominant thought of aspiration to unity with the Supreme, will have such aspirations realized. In other words, such bliss is only for him who has held no other thought during his whole life.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

The link which binds the ego to the physical body having snapped at the moment of death, the Linga Sharira separates from it, and its parts straightway commence to fall asunder, only a few months being required for it to decompose and return to its mother element, the earth. This decomposition sets free, the Prana or life-essence which it has held, and this is one reason perhaps why dead substances often impart to living organisms such life-giving properties; why, for instance, the grass is always greenest on the grave.

Immediately after the dying individual has separated from the body he finds himself in the state called Kama Loka, where he is compelled to remain until he has freed himself from all the gross desires which chain him down to earth. This period, in the case of the majority of men, is one of semi-consciousness, or like a drowsy, drunken sleep; it may last a few days, or it may last hundred of years, according to the life the individual has led, and according to the effort he has made to rid himself of his lower tendencies while alive. Having cast off the gross elements, the soul or Lower Manas is freed, and presently rejoins its spiritual half, being born into the devachanic state, and here it remains until the time comes for it to again take up the thread of destiny on earth, to suffer reincarnation.

But, some may ask, what if the gross elements which bind its desire to earth are too strong to enable the personality to obtain the mastery over them? Then, and in such case, it becomes an "earthbound soul" and remains in Kama Loka until the time arrives for reincarnation, instead of passing into Devachan. In the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" the good or purified soul, after death "in conjunction with its higher or uncreated spirit, is more or less the victim of the dark influence of the dragon Apophis (the bundle of terrestrial desires). If it has attained the final knowledge of the heavenly and the infernal mysteries- the gnosis, i.e., complete reunion with the Spirit, it will triumph over its enemies; if not, the soul cannot escape its second death", such second death being a spiritual one by reason of the severing of the link which bound it to its Higher Ego.

To say much more concerning the awful mystery of such soul-death is here impossible, but it should be added that the actions performed by the individual after death, such as freeing himself from earth-desire in Kama Loka, the warring with the dragon Apophis, are only the effects of his actions and thoughts during the previous incarnation, or life just ended. And therefore one may suffer spiritual death as well during life as after. But the man who leads a naturally pure and virtuous life, albeit no adept, need have no fear of such a catastrophe, although, not having knowledge of the "heavenly and infernal mysteries" he will, after death, have to suffer " a delay in the world of spirits, until he finds himself sufficiently purified to receive it from his Spiritual 'Lord', one of the mighty Host. But if otherwise, the 'soul', as a half animal principle, becomes paralyzed, and grows unconscious of its subjective half... the Lord,.... and in proportion to the sensuous development of the brain and nerves, sooner or later, it finally loses sight of its divine mission on earth. Like the Vourdalak, or Vampire, of the Servian tale, the brain feeds and lives and grows in strength and power at the expense of its spiritual parent. Then the already half-unconscious soul, now fully intoxicated by the fumes of earthly life, becomes senseless, beyond hope of redemption. It is powerless to discern the splendour of its higher spirit, to hear the warning voice of its "Guardian Angel" and its 'God' It aims but at the development and fuller comprehension of natural, earthly life; and thus can discover but the mysteries of physical nature. Its grief and fear, hope and joy, are all closely blended with its terrestrial existence. It ignores all that cannot be demonstrated either by its organs of action or sensation. It begins by becoming virtually dead; it dies at last completely. It is annihilated. Such a catastrophe may often happen long years before the final separation of the life-principle from the body. When death arrives, its iron and clammy grasp finds work with life as usual; but there is no more a soul to

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

liberate. The whole essence of the latter has been already absorbed by the vital system of the physical man. Grim death frees but a spiritual corpse; at best an idiot. Unable either to soar higher or to awaken from lethargy, it is soon dissolved in the elements of the terrestrial atmosphere... Our present cycle is preeminently one of such soul-deaths. [Isis Unveiled, Vol.II., page 368, 369]

Yet it is said that even one who has become dead to his spiritual self can yet be "born again", through genuine aspiration, or by a knowledge of his mission on earth arrived at through occult study, the first step in which is an intellectual grasp of the tenets of the Wisdom-Religion.

From the foregoing, the reader will have gathered that the death of the individual sets free the various principles, each of which has then to be accounted for in the scheme of nature. First of all, the physical body or gross particles of matter held together during life by the vital astral form, return to the earth, departing to their "home", the Linga Sharira disappearing with them and fading into the Astral Light. The Linga Sharira, however, remains intact, though separate from the body, until the last vestige of the physical shell has gone, [This without taking account of the bone structure.] And during such dissolution may be frequently seen hanging over the grave or place of rest of the grosser body, as a shade of the deceased. The Prana, thus freed, rebecomes one with the pulsating life-waves of the earth.

There yet remains the Kamic element, the principle of desire, or terrestrial clings of the Lower Manas ("I am I" consciousness) to be disposed of before devachanic bliss can be enjoyed. The "war" between the soul and its earthly proclivities takes place, as shown, in Kama Loka, and continues until the personality is purified sufficiently to become one with its spiritual self. Then the dross thrown off- the Kama Rupa or body of desire - is dissipated in the aura of the earth, its energy being transformed into elementals, which sleep, awaiting the return of their Lord from the devachanic rest. These constitute what are called the Skandhas of the personality: "they remain as Karmic effects, as germs, hanging in the atmosphere of the terrestrial plane, ready to come to life, like so many avenging fiends, to attach themselves to the new personality of the Ego when it reincarnates". [Key to Theosophy] . Therefore it is that each person, on being born, awakes to find himself carrying on a battle with his lower nature, being compelled to conquer those tendencies left un-mastered in the last life. In the case, however, of one whose lower desires were very strong, the Kama Rupa may not dissipate, but may continue as a complete entity between incarnation and incarnation. In any case it will remain so for a long time, and until the entry of the ego into Devachan.

Kama Rupa is thus seen to be the real element which binds the soul to earth. It may be called the intellectualized animal part of man. H.P.Blavatsky used to say that if any one lived for a long time in association with an animal, a dog, for instance, making a pet of it, such a one actually endowed the animal with some degree of intellect- lit partially the manasic fire- the brute in return animalizing him to some extent. In each one of us resides both an animal and a god. If the desire to pamper, feed and live with the brute nature, then we intellectualize it, and in time our whole soul becomes absorbed in its behests. But if, on the other hand, our communion be with the divine Higher Self, we starve the lower, and in time it fades away.. But the Kama Rupa formed by and forming our connection with the lower world may be of any degree of energy, according to the strength of our earthward proclivities. Any one who lives on this earth must possess some such entity, even the highest adept, if he would remain in touch with the planet; the spiritualized form produced in the latter case is however very different from that of the man of desire.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

After death, the Kama-rupic phantom, separated from the manasic principle, "no longer receiving light from the higher mind, and no longer having a physical brain to work through, collapses.... It falls into the state of the frog when certain portions of its brain are taken out by the vivisector. It can think no more, even on the lowest animal plane. Henceforth it is no longer even the Lower Manas, since this "lower" is nothing without the "higher".. It is this nonentity we find materializing in seance-rooms with mediums.... A true nonentity, however, only as to reasoning or cogitating powers, still an Entity, however astral and fluidic, as shown in certain cases when, having been magnetically and unconsciously drawn toward a medium, it is revived for a time and lives in him by proxy, so to speak. This "spook" or the Kama Rupa may be compared with the jellyfish, which has an ethereal gelatinous appearance so long as it is in its own element, or water (the medium's specific AURA) but which, no sooner is it thrown out of it, than it dissolves in the hand or on the sand, especially in sunlight. In the medium's Aura it lives a kind of vicarious life, and reasons and speaks either through the medium's brain or those of other persons present [Key to Theosophy-Pages 144-145]. But if it finds no medium or sensitive person upon whom to draw for vitality, it sleeps, or, splitting up into elements, dies a natural death, and is resurrected only the day when the Manas or Individual, its period of devachanic rest ended, seeks a fresh incarnation in accordance with karmic law, to progress along its path of evolution. Then the phantom awakes, is resurrected, and, drawn to its other self by the unseen force which must link the creation to its creator, both are guided together to the family in which is to be born the child which shall fulfill the karmic destiny and answer the necessities of evolution. Rebirth follows; but with the passing into the light of common day the draught of Lethe is taken, the past forgotten. Yet the man awakes to meet his old enemy, his lower self, and to carry on the war with it which lasts from the cradle to the grave.

So much for the normal after-death states. There are, however, many other sides of the question to be examined, such as those concerning accidental deaths, suicides, and the like. All deaths occurring before the natural period, before the expenditure of the force which was brought into play at the time of birth, necessitate - save in exceptional cases- immediate reincarnation to complete the life. For such deaths, whether of the soul, of the astral or of the physical body, constitute but the forcible separation of one principle from the seven, not the natural loosening of all.

Thus in the case of suicides, or accidental deaths, all that has happened has been the severing of the physical shell, the instrument through which the ego functions on this plane. The man is complete minus his body, and must remain so until the time for natural death arrives. But there is this difference between the victim of circumstances and the suicide; that whereas the former is immediately united to his Higher Manas and rests until the period for rebirth, the latter is compelled to remain in Kama Loka during the same time- the vital distinction between death in the two cases being identical to that between an energy affecting an entity from outside, and a force generated within itself; one is a working off of old Karma, the other a generating of new. The suicide's experience is therefore one of the most awful that can be imagined. Remaining alive as before the severance of the body, with full power to think, to live, he is without any means of functioning on this plane. The desire to eat or drink, sleep, communicate with friends, in short anything pertaining to the life he has just left, may be strong within him, but he has no means of gratifying such save by establishing connection through another body- that of some weak medium or sensitive. Thus he lives until his hour for death and liberation arrives. Of course, however, the weaker his lower desires, the fewer his tortures.

KARMA AND REINCARNATION

Since the soul perpetually runs and passes through all things in a certain space of time, which being performed, it is presently compelled to run back again through all things, and unfold the same web of generation in the world... for as often as the same causes return, the same effects will in like manner be returned

- Ficin. De Im. An. 129, Chaldean Oracles

Metempsychosis is the only system of immortality that philosophy can hearken to.

Hume

From all that has preceded it will be seen readily that reincarnation or rebirth is the fundamental tenet of the esoteric philosophy. The doctrine is an exceedingly simple one, and in so far as it relates to man can be stated in a few words. (1) That the self or soul does not enter life here and now for the first time at birth, but takes its position as a member of the human family only after a long course of previous incarnations in other kingdoms of nature, on this earth and elsewhere, its passage through the man-stage being likewise but the necessary prelude or probation to after-experiences in higher and more perfect organisms. (2) That life as a human being is not ordained for one incarnation only, but exists through many, the position each person takes in anyone earth-life being the outcome of his experience and merit in previous ones.

In the eminently rational basis of such a doctrine we see at once so natural a solution for most of the world-problems that it is not surprising to find it dominating the minds of the greatest thinkers of every century and moulding the philosophies of all countries, for incalculable ages.

To be sure, the reader may not have before heard of it, but this is not any good reason for its untruthfulness. It is not yet common in the West, because the intellectual development of the American and European nations has not reached a point when they can formulate a philosophy of their own; but among all matured races, the Egyptians, Hindus, ancient Greeks, Chinese, the Mexicans, the Peruvians, the Jews, it was a common doctrine, and, in fact, in the present day as in the past, it may be stated fairly to be absolutely universal outside of Christianity. This is not by any means because the founder of that religion did not uphold it, but because his teachings have never been understood correctly. If it could be shown to be a part of the Christian doctrine, its universal character as a natural belief of man would be established. The writer claims that it can be so shown, and holds that any difficulty that may arise in so doing must be charged to the account of the early Christians, who, as is now generally admitted, chose so to alter the original teachings to suit their own views, as to render them hardly reconcilable with the real philosophy. The history of the soul's trials, temptations, and final victory and illumination, has been confounded with that of the Sage who expounded the Doctrine, the only evidences for whose existence are now the four canonical gospels. [Concerning which we read in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible" (Art. New Testament), that "the original copies seem to have perished. It is certainly remarkable that in the controversies at the close of the second century, which often turned upon disputed passages of Scripture, no appeal was made to apostolic originals... Express statements of readings which are found

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

in some of the most ancient Christian writers are indeed the first direct evidence which we have, and are consequently of the highest importance. But till the last quarter of the second century this source of information fails us. Not only are the remains of Christian literature up to that time exceedingly scanty, but the practice of verbal quotation from the New Testament was not yet prevalent. As soon as definite controversies arose among Christians, the text of the New Testament assumed its true importance. The earliest monuments of these remain in the works of Irenaeus Hippolytus and Tertullian, who quote many of the arguments of the leading adversaries of the Church. Charges of corrupting the sacred text are urged on both sides with great acrimony".]

Thus in St. John, ix, Jesus is cited as healing a man - blind from his birth. "And his disciples asked him saying, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, neither hath this man sinned nor his parents: etc., etc.". Observe the italicized word. Had the question been, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he became blind? We should have no remark to make, but the use of the word "born" distinctly implies a belief by the disciples of a possible sin before birth. And if we remember that the apostles were taught mysteries not revealed to the vulgar herd, and Jesus himself- an Essene - must also have been a reincarnationist, then the claim that this was a reference to such teachings has more than merely a supposed foundation.

Again, let the reader turn to St. Matt. XI, 14, where Jesus, in speaking of John the Baptist, says: "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come". And again in St. Matt. XVII., 12, 13L Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed... Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist". These remarks are so clear as to call for no further comment.

Apart from these two references to the belief, however, there are many others more or less marked, to be found throughout the whole Bible and the Apocrypha.

The intelligent reader will have perceived that two independent particulars enter into the doctrine of reincarnation as formulated above; one, the fact of rebirth itself, apart from anything which may affect or guide it - the simple statement of the immortality, preexistence, and change of dwelling of the soul or self; the other a regulating function in such process. That the latter is necessary is self-evident. It could neither be rational, just, nor in keeping with the law of evolution, that the soul, after inhabiting a relatively high organism, such as that of a human being, should next take up its abode in a lower one, as a plant or an animal. Matter, as has been affirmed several times already, is a purely passive element, and has to be acted upon by the active principle of mind before forms can be produced, so that our idea of scale or order in nature arises out of the effect produced in matter by the influence of the different degrees of intelligences which ensoul it, the existence of such degrees being again an effect of the varied experiences of said intelligences.

Hence the position in nature that a soul takes upon incarnation is held to be the direct result of its past experiences; its formed deeds, good or bad, regulating the degree of pleasure or suffering that will be its lot.

But "a theoretical principle deduced from practice or observation"[Ogilvie] is known as law; and seer after

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

seer for untold ages having confirmed one another in their observation of the reincarnationary process as taking place in the manner above stated, we must speak of law as regulating it, such being known in Theosophy as Karma. It is that which was referred to on page 37 as the "Ultimate Law of the Universe".

The Buddhistic doctrine of Karma is one which has held always an important place in the philosophy of the exoteric as well as of the esoteric schools. The word has been introduced into theosophical terminology for the simple reason that there is none in the English language to express the idea intended. It does not simply signify "action and reaction" nor yet, "cause and effect", but both of these. In one sense it conveys the idea of ethical causation- "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again"; in another, the balance of individual merit and demerit considered as affecting one's actions and environment. It is the law of Adjustment, the outcome of the unvarying tendency of nature to bring about harmony and equilibrium, having its expression equally in the Spiritual, Manasic, Astral, and Physical planes of existence.

Law cannot be said to be seen, although its actions may be perceived, the term literally signifying the determination of any body or bodies to certain changes or motions which invariably take place under similar circumstances. Consequently Law is an abstraction, is merely the name for the observed "like tendency of things in like condition". This definition is necessary in view of the fact that many persons, after a not very complete examination of this principle of theosophical teaching, have come to the conclusion that Karma is to be understood in the light of a personal god, combining the properties of an indulgent father or friend, and an avenging fiend. But there is nothing personal about Law; it exists, and naught we may do can avail one jot or tittle against its workings. No one would consider that a fire had some personal spite against him, if upon plunging his hand into the flame he were to draw it back scorched; or that the rain which drenched its umbrellaless victim had acted with malicious intent. And why should we ascribe any of the evils which may come upon us to anything other than the direct result of a disregard of natural law? Such is surely far more logical than the Theologian's assumption of an anthropomorphic deity, or the "chance" doctrine of the atheistic and materialistic schools.

Until the advent of the Theosophical Society, no full understanding of the doctrine of Karma seems to have been arrived at by any in the West, even including Orientalists. Yet the following definition of Mr. Rhys Davids deserves quoting: "Buddhism is convinced that if a man reaps sorrow, disappointment, pain, he himself and no other, must at some time have sown folly, error, sin! and if not in this life, the in some former birth.. We are familiar with the doctrine 'Whatever a man soweth that shall he also reap', and can therefore enter into the Buddhist feeling that whatever a man reaps that he must also have sown; we are familiar with the doctrine of the indestructibility of force, and can therefore understand the Buddhist dogma (however it may contravene our Christian notions) that no exterior power can destroy the fruit of a man's deeds, that they must work out their full effect to the pleasant or the bitter end. But the peculiarity of Buddhism lies in this: that the result of what a man is or does is held not to be dissipated, as it were, into many separate streams, but to be concentrated together in the formation of one new sentient being". Reincarnation it will thus be seen, is the necessary accompaniment to the doctrine of Karma. Christianity usually imposes the after states of Hell or Heaven for the evil-doer or the righteous man, but the representatives of this doctrine do not generally seem to have held the notion that such after-states might as easily find their expression on earth as anywhere else. There are places of suffering here that we cannot fancy as excelled in any hell; and the heaven of most men is not above the highest enjoyment of the material things that this world can afford. And it is far more logical and in accordance with common sense to believe that a cause generated on the physical plane should have a physical effect, than that

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

the "Spirit" should suffer for the misdeeds of the flesh- misdeeds invariably directly antithetical to that Spirit's behests. That the "Spirit is willing but the flesh weak" is well said, but if justice is to be accorded, the body or lower man should suffer, not the higher; under which circumstances most men would have to return to earth-life many times before their full award was meted out.

Reincarnation refers to the real man or thinker- the Manas, and not to the several other principles with which that is associated. The division of the manasic element into two aspects, a higher and a lower, has already been stated, but it should now be made clear that this division can only be said to exist during the period of incarnation. It is that part which comes into contact with the animal man which is known as Lower Manas, the other half maintaining its station in the spiritual spheres. After death the two become one, and for a period rest from the pain of separation; but this period ended, it (now one Manas) again projects part of itself into earth-life and another incarnation and simultaneous division of the Self results. So that no one can therefore say that it is the same Mr. Brown or Mr. Smith who appears from life to life, but rather that the individualizing self which inspired every succeeding birth, was identical. The "I am " consciousness of each one of us may have looked out through the eyes of an Egyptian, Chaldean or Arabian, but we are now no more Egyptian, Chaldean, or Arabian than we were American or European in times past. Yet there are anomalies in reincarnation as in everything else, and we find in rare cases the actual incarnation of the personal being, comprising everything but his physical body. Thus "the appearance of the same individual, or rather of his "astral monad, twice... is not a rule in nature; it is an exception, like the teratological phenomenon of a two-headed infant. It is preceded by a violation of the laws of harmony of nature; and happens only when the latter, seeking to restore its disturbed equilibrium, violently throws back into earth-life the astral monad which has been tossed out of the circle of necessity by crime or accident. Thus, in cases of abortion, of infants dying before a certain age, and of congenital and incurable idiocy, nature's original design to produce a perfect human being has been interrupted. Therefore, while the gross matter of each of these several entities is suffered to disperse itself at death, through the vast realm of being, the immortal spirit and astral monad of the individual - the latter having been set apart to animate a frame and the former to shed its divine light on the corporeal organization- must try a second time to carry out the purpose of the creative intelligence." (Isis Unveiled, Vol. 1, page 351). We may add to the above, "suicides" and "accidental deaths", in both of which cases the natural period of incarnation not having been ended, the law generally forces a return without any Devachanic period to complete this. This generally takes place within thirty-five years after the natural period of death has arrived. The "certain age" quoted above, before which infants dying are incarnated immediately, is seven years, and this for the reason that before that age the Manas or ego and mind has not fully associated itself with the child, but merely overshadows and protects it.

Some have endeavoured to show that reincarnation means the going back from the human form to the inhabitancy of the brute or inanimate kingdoms. This is called "transmigration of souls", but is not held by Theosophists as true of the human soul. The foundation for the ignorant superstition that one's horse or dog may be his grandfather or dead brother, lies in a very old teaching arising out of the recognition of the fact in nature, referred to at the commencement of this chapter, that every one of the fleeting atoms of which the body is composed, gains from it a certain impress, the colouring of the individual's temperament, and when it soon after leaves, it is absorbed into some other being or form for which it has an attraction or sympathy. So, in this sense, if one lives a low, vicious life, it is very likely true that his atoms, affected every moment with brutishness and animal thoughts, go, upon leaving his corporeal limits, to the kingdom of atoms to which they by right belong. This can have, however, no application to the real man or thinking part of us, since that has no atomic structure, as we understand the term.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

It is not easy for Westerners to credit the idea that they have lived upon the earth before, for the reason chiefly that they have not thought along lines tending to this idea; yet lurking low down in the mind of almost every individual will be found the belief. Outside, this it will be found to solve so many of the problems of existence, otherwise explainable only attributing them to chance or divine caprice, that this fact alone entitles it to the most serious consideration. For instance, while it would be absurd to hold, as some have done, that each individual is born into the world with equal chances, when we are well aware of the great differences perceptible even among the very young, yet outside of reincarnation we are in possession of no straightforward explanation of such differences. Heredity does not afford one, by any means. Examples can be furnished without number where men of genius are born into families almost entirely destitute of it. Instance Immanuel Kant, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Burns, William Shakespeare, Abraham Lincoln, and a host of others. The late discoveries of Weissman also seem to be producing a revolution in the scientific position concerning heredity, at least in Germany, while its very groundwork, the doctrine of the transmission of acquired faculties, has already found some serious opponents among physiologists. Soon scientists will have to find some more adequate explanation for the intellectual advancement of mankind, to give better reasons why all are not born with equal possibilities and identical tendencies.

The most general argument against the doctrine of rebirth is that of "memory". "If I have lived here before, why do I not remember it?" is a first and most natural query. We answer: because memory, such as is here spoken of, is that of the brain, the physical organism, and as one has a fresh body, how can one be expected to remember those things which were associated with the old one, an entirely distinct entity? But this only refers to the details - the chain of recollection. The aroma or experience is certainly remembered from life to life. No one recollects learning to walk. He has no memory of the time he drew one leg after the other in his effort to move in childhood's days. Yet he has learned to walk. The details are forgotten, but the knowledge remains. And it is precisely thus with rebirth; no recollections of the details or individual experiences of previous incarnations are carried into this one, but the experience gained from all is every present. So that we are all born with certain memories - a certain knowledge of men and things, greater or less according to the variety of our past experiences.

There is, however, a state which can be reached by the purified soul, in which the details of past lives are seen, although this is scarcely for the ordinary mortal of this humanity. And again, in the case of the immediate rebirth the past life is often so vividly photographed in the surrounding aura of the person that he may have memory of it. In either of these cases reincarnation becomes something more than a theory, it becomes an actual, verifiable fact; and the writer knows of several instances in which it has so become.

PREHISTORIC RACES

And he charged the lesser gods with the duty of constructing mortal bodies as well as everything additional that was required for the human soul, giving them dominion also over these and all things consequent thereon, and bidding them rule over the mortal creature as nobly and honourably as they could, that it might not become a cause of evil to itself.

Plato in Timaeus

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

An orderly presentation of the esoteric philosophy would here necessitate a description of past races of humanity, out of which have grown or evolved the individual as he stands before us in the present age. But it would perhaps be advisable before so doing to recapitulate something of what has already been said, and, in the light of this, to add one or more additional tenets, thereby to render clearer what is now to follow;

(a) At the dawn of the Manvantara, or at the first dividing of the two poles of life, Spirit and Matter, the "Pilgrim" or monad- *Atma-Buddhi* - separating itself from the Over-Soul, commences its long cycle of experience which will end only with the Pralaya, or *night* of the Cosmos. It passes through world after world, issuing on each in different garbs, and learning the lessons each has to teach.

(2) The cycle of experience or "necessity" thus passed through, is, obediently to the fundamental law of periodicity, itself also composed of many minor cycles, these again including numerous lesser ones- en very truth, "wheels within wheels"; so that a process corresponding to that act of evolution which we have named "the descent of Spirit into Matter", is repeated again and again throughout the whole range of life.

(3) The human monad arrives on our planet after experiencing life in innumerable other worlds, and from this point alone the secret doctrine considers its evolution, past worlds having but little interest for us now.

(4) The last chain of globes occupied by the monads of this world was the moon-chain, the parent of the earth.

(5) Life and experience on this world is ordered through multitudinous cycles, of Round and of race, on each of the seven globes of which the earth-chain is composed. The present Round is the fourth of the series in this chain- the total number being seven- the globe now occupied in this Round being also the fourth, or physical one. The esoteric philosophy as at present advanced, deals therefore mainly with this Round as it sweeps through the physical globe, - our earth- the monads having *visited this globe three times* previously.

Although the monad is compelled to incarnate in, or rather contact, every race, it must not be imagined that it does this for once only. Each main race has, as already shown, seven sub-races; each of these has in turn seven branch or family "races", even the latter being still yet further subdivided, and into all these the law compels its descent. The latter subdivisions may be likened to the nations or tribes of human beings which in this, the fifth root-race, "vary with each succeeding 'season' of three or four thousands years", reaching in that period their apex of glory and their downfall. By the figures thus before us we shall be able to calculate approximately the age of the world according to esoteric chronology. I say approximately, advisedly, for the whole "information concerning the occult calculations and figures pertains only to the highest Initiations". If the period of a "nation" be estimated at 3,000 years, then a family-race will last for 3,000 times 7 or 21,000 years, and a sub-race for 147,000, and the root rate for 1,029,000 years. This for the fifth race, our present one, which has been already in existence for "nearly a million years". As, however, races vary in the length of their duration from the first to the fourth, each of them also overlapping the preceding and succeeding one, besides commencing and closing with "taillights" or periods of birth and death, the above will not help us very far. But the guard over the

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

esoteric calculations has been so far relaxed as to give us the information that the "sedimentary deposits of the earth began in this Round over 320,000,000 years ago", and therefore, if the reader bears in mind that we have passed through three Rounds previously to this, probably much longer ones, that we have yet to experience as many more before life on this planet is ended, and that this world is but a unit in the infinity of spheres which the "Pilgrim" has to thread on its way "home", he will truly begin to have some idea of the immensity of the scheme of evolution advanced by the theosophical philosophy.

Indeed, it may be well here to mention some of the total figures as given, and in this we cannot do better than quote the following passage from the *Secret Doctrine*. The author of that work, in speaking of the "seven eternities" referred to in the sacred books, says : (Vol. 1, page 35) -

" By the Seven 'Eternities' , aeons or periods are meant. The word 'Eternity', as understood in Christian theology, has no meaning to the Asiatic ear, except in its application to the ONE existence; nor is the term sempiternity, the eternal only in futurity, anything better than a misnomer. Such words do not and cannot exist in philosophical metaphysics, and were unknown until the advance of ecclesiastical Christianity. The Seven Eternities meant are the seven periods, or a period answering in its duration to the seven periods of a Manvantara, and extending throughout a Maha-Kalpa, or 'Great Age'- 100 years of Brahma- making a total of 311,040,000,000,000 of years, each year of Brahma being composed of 360 'days'; and of the same number of 'nights' of Brahma (reckoning by the Chandrayana or lunar year); and a 'Day of Brahma' consisting of 4,320,000,000 of mortal years. [The number 4,320 is the basic number of the great ages, and so appears in all the occult systems. The Jews, borrowing their knowledge from the Chaldeans, transformed the 432,000 of the Dynasties of the latter into the supposed lunar years of the Nativity, 4,3200 years. Dr. Sepp, of Munich- who plagiarized the idea from an unlucky speculation, and a mistake of Colonel Wilford the orientalist- fancied he saw in these figures a confirmation of the date of the coming of Jesus Christ, holding, a priori, that the Hindus had copied them from the Jews. Subsequent discoveries seem to have reverse the tables. In the Bible the 4,320 lunar years have been transformed into solar years, and appear in Genesis as 4,004!] These 'Eternities' belong to the most secret calculations, in which, in order to arrive at the true total, every figure must be 7 to the power of x) -x varying according to the nature of the cycle in the subjective or real world; and every figure or number relating to, or representing all the different cycles from the greatest to the smallest- in the objective or unreal world- must necessarily be multiples of seven. The key to this cannot be given, for herein lies the mystery of esoteric calculations, and for the purposes of ordinary calculation it has no sense".

During the 320,000,000 years that have elapsed since our physical globe was evolved in this, the fourth, Round of the earth-chain, four races have lived and passed away, and a fifth now enjoys rulership over its kingdoms. And here we meet with another illustration of the law of cycles. The first of these races was ethereal, so much so as to present forms quite unappreciable by our senses as now developed, but nevertheless objective, and consequently- material, no matter of how delicate a texture. The fourth race, on the other hand- midway of the seven which develop in this Round- was even more grossly sunk in matter than our present fifth one is. For we are now on the ascending arc of the cycle, and the seventh race which is to be, will be as spiritual or ethereal as the first- but plus the wisdom of its experience gained from the "fall into matter".

But to our history. The mystical sketch which tells the story of the birth of man on this planet, opens in representing the latter as calling on the gods to come and people her "wheel" as she is unable of herself to create reasoning beings. The gods refuse to do so until she has produced forms sufficiently evolved to

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

become fit dwellings for them- and recommend her to call upon the moon for these. Then the earth, after "whirling for thirty crores (ages) more," herself tries to give birth to human beings, and, as a result, creates "watermen, terrible and bad". These fail entirely in their mission as rulers of the planet, and commit much evil. The "Sons of Wisdom" come and look on them, and, finding them unfit to incarnate in, destroy them. Then the waters are dried from off the earth, the lords of the moon come, and with their help the earth produces her first race, out of which are evolved the second and third, in which latter the "Sons of Wisdom" find a fit abode.

All of this is, of course, purely allegorical. The earth, like everything in nature, is at first but a germ- a "laya point", or neutral centre. The transfusion of the principles of the moon, its last incarnation, into this centre, gradually produces the new planet, at first ethereal, but consolidating and hardening after many ages; or, in other words, as the transfusion of the moon's principles become more and more complete. The "creation" of man, as we now know him, could not come to pass until this the fourth Round; consequently the "Sons of Wisdom"- our own inner egos- are represented as refusing to incarnate or dwell on earth, when she first calls on them to do so. But in the fourth Round, on the fourth globe, the time has come when men-animals may be formed, sufficiently developed to serve as dwellings for the gods, and the earth tries then to evolve them herself, but without success; thus showing that "nature unaided fails".

The lunar *Pitris*- or fathers- then "create" men by projecting their astral bodies, around which the physical stuff of the earth gathers, and thus the first race is produced.

These pitris are the lunar spirits who represented man on the lunar chain of globes; when the first globe of our chain was formed they passed through the various kingdoms elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal and so during the Rounds until Round IV. Then they "oozed out" their astral doubles from the ape-like forms they had evolved in Round III., Thus giving the form around which Nature built physical man. After this they are said to retire to Mahar Loka. [The Great Place; "a region where dwell the Munis or "Saints" during Pralaya". If the writer understands the philosophy correctly, this ascent of the pitris to Mahar Loka is equivalent to their passing out of the manifested world entirely; the "oozing out" of their astral doubles being practically the same as their incarnating on earth. The Pitri is the "root" or seed of the periodically manifesting Astral Body.]

Now it will be remembered that seven classes of pitris were spoken of- and these may really be said to be the principles of the "human" entity as they remained at the period of the moon's Pralaya, which principles must necessarily be transfused into the earth along with the rest of the lunar world. For man is in the esoteric philosophy regarded as composition of seven gods, forces, elements or "fires" which play through the column we call humans, each of which itself *evolves*; and as the earth-chain is but the next ring of the spiral above the moon-chain, so we must conceive these seen forces or gods "incarnating" here from the moon-chain, and thus creating men "who are themselves". But so far we have only spoken of the Lunar *Pitris*.

Like every other septenary, the classes of *pitris* are divided into two main divisions, three higher and four lower,- the former being of the essence of the spiritual, metaphysical side of nature, the latter partaking of the material. In the Hindu account these are called respectively the Agnishwatta or solar pitris and the Barhishad or lunar pitris. And now it will become clear to us why the allegory shows "The Sons of

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Wisdom" as refusing to incarnate on the earth or "create" man when called upon by her to do so. The "Sons of Wisdom" are the Agnishwatta pitris, and they refused because they could not, being of the spiritual essence, having to wait until the Barhishad, the more material pitris, had evolved the lower principles, or the animal man, before they could find dwelling on earth. The incarnating gods, the Agnishwatta, pitris, are really nothing less than the manasic fire, or mental and self-conscious intelligence within us, that which joins Atma-Buddhi, or the monad, to the animal creation. For wherein indeed do men and animals differ from one another? Surely not in the monadic or spiritual sides of their natures, which are identical. Rather is it that man has in him a principle which is possessed by no other being in creation, that which cements the most spiritual and the most material- Manas. And he must ever remain separated from lower creations by this- "the impassable abyss of mentality and self-consciousness".

It was only in the third race that man was sufficiently evolved to allow of the manasic essence being imparted to him. The first two races produced by the Barhishad pitris - were ethereal, astral forms-"spiritual" in a sense, yet belonging so much to the elemental worlds as to be almost useless. They were certainly forms, and, as the allegory has it, "could stand, walk, run, recline and fly"- yet were but shadows with no sense.

From the first race was formed the second; not, however, in the way we now understand the human species to propagate its kind. Humanity in the prehistoric times of which we write was "shadowy, ethereal and negative", and it made its progeny, according to the Secret Doctrine by doubling itself- producing an astral shadow, and incarnating in the latter. Hence this first race is said to have never died, for death was unknown in its golden age.

The second race was a more material one than its progenitor. The ethereal, shadowy frame was more solid- more covered with flesh- and a physical body began to make its appearance, as yet, however, of a far less gross texture than our present forms.

The distinction between these two races lies chiefly in the fact that whereas the first was sexless, the last was asexual or double sexed- androgynous. The former evolved the second unconsciously, like the plants, or better, perhaps, "like the *Amoeba*, - only on a more ethereal, impressive and larger scale". The third was produced from the second by an oviparous method. It seems strange to us now that in past ages men should have been born from eggs, like the birds, yet such is the teaching of the esoteric philosophy: "the species was procreated by a kind of exudation of moisture or vital fluid, the drops of which coalescing, formed an oviform ball, which served as an extraneous vehicle for the generation therein of a foetus and child". [The Secret Doctrine, Vol. II, page 132]. Hence, as the "eggs" were produced from the moisture of the human body, the third race is graphically called the "sweat-born". It was only at the end of this race that asexual humanity became divided into distinct men and women.

However weird all this may appear, yet distinct traces of like traditions can be found in almost all the world-religions. No system which contains a history of the birth of man is without traditions of a nature confirming the esoteric doctrine on every side, but space absolutely forbids reference to them here. They generally deal, as is natural, with the origin of man as he now is known- with the birth of the fifth, our present race- but the more important contain a fuller recital, and many volumes could readily be filled in recounting the different traditions of the nations, showing the manner in which they bear out the teachings of the Secret Doctrine.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

The man-bearing eggs of the third race, toward the close of the latter, began gradually to produce beings in which one sex preponderated, and in time distinct men and women were evolved. The asexual became the sexual, and just at the very close of this race human beings began to produce their species in the way they now do. Almost exactly at this period also, mankind was far enough evolved to receive the incarnating gods, "The Sons of Wisdom" (our inner selves) who forthwith took up their abode on earth; divine love- Eros, and the terrestrial passion- Cupid, the two poles of creation, thus becoming active in the world at the same time.

And this brings us to a period of the greatest interest to the mythological students, for it is from what happened in that age that have sprung all the ills and evils of present-day humanity. *All the "Sons of Wisdom" did not incarnate at once.* When the time came that they should leave their divine abode and enter earthly existence so as to help on the work of nature, only a few fully obeyed the law; of the others, some half did so- "emitting a spark", while the rest refused, saying, "we have wisdom, we can choose", and deferred their incarnation until the fourth race was evolved, the law then *forcing* them to descend. This descent is symbolized in Christian and Gnostic mythology by the war in Heaven, Michael casting down the angels-or the Dragons of Wisdom.

But what happened between these periods? The men sufficiently evolved as to be ready to receive the fire of mind, not receiving this endowment, committed much evil. The power of creation, formerly the property of all, was changed to that of procreation; even the latter was prostituted, for, in the words of the sacred writings we read that, "those which had no spark (of mind) took huge she-animals unto them. They begat upon them dumb races... Monsters they bred. A race of crooked red-hair-covered monsters, going on all fours. A dumb race, to keep the shame untold". And it is from this race that has sprung our "ancestor" - the ape - who was no ancestor at all, but an offshoot from, and a result of the sin of, the mindless race of humanity. Here it will be seen that Occultists, while granting the facts of the evolutionists and biologists, reject their theories, holding that, in this Round, the animals were produced from man, not man from the animals; as is maintained in all "Geneses" - including that of the Bible. If the question be asked: "How then did the huge she-animals come into being"? the answer could not be better made than by quoting the following passage from the pen of H.P.Blavatsky. "As regards that other question, of the priority of man to the animals in the order of evolution, the answer is as promptly given. If man is really the Microcosm of the Macrocosm, then the teaching has nothing so very impossible in it, and is but logical. For man becomes that Macrocosm for the three lower kingdoms under him. Arguing from a physical standpoint, all the lower kingdoms, save the mineral- which is light itself, crystallized and immetallized- from plants to the creatures which preceded the first mammalians, all have been consolidated in their physical structures by means of the "cast-off dust" of those minerals, *the refuse of the human matter, whether from living or dead bodies, on which they fed and which gave them their outer bodies.* In his turn, man grew more physical, by reabsorbing into his system that which he had given out, and which became transformed in the living animal crucibles through which it had passed, owing to nature's alchemical transmutations. There were animals in those days of which our modern naturalists have never dreamed; and the stronger became physical material man, the giants of those times, the more powerful were his emanations. Once that Androgyne "humanity" separated into sexes, transformed by Nature into childbearing engines, it ceased to procreate its like through drops of vital energy oozing out of the body. But while man was still ignorant of his procreative power on the human plane, (before his Fall, as a believer in Adam would say), all this vital energy, scattered far and wide from him, was used by Nature for the production of the first mammal-animal forms. Evolution is an eternal cycle of becoming, we are taught; and Nature never leaves an atom unused. Moreover, from the beginning of the Round, all in Nature tends to become Man. All the impulses of the dual, centripetal and

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

centrifugal force are directed towards one point- MAN (The Secret Doctrine, Vol II, page 169) The existence of such gigantic animals, monsters, dragons or reptiles in these old days, or at any time in the earth's history, will no doubt be scoffed at by the superficial reader; but happily I have before me a copy of *"Mythical Monsters"*, by Charles Gould, one of the deepest students and thinkers of our day. I quote from the Introduction: "For me the major part of these creatures are not chimeras, but objects of rational study. The dragon, in place of being a creature evolved out of the imagination of Aryan man made by the contemplation of lightning flashing through the caverns which he tenanted, as is held by some mythologists, is an animal which once lived and dragged its ponderous coils, and perhaps flew... To me the specific existence of the unicorn seems not incredible, and in fact more probable than that theory which assigns its origin to a lunar myth". And much more of the like, thus adding the corroboration of more scientist to the esoteric philosophy.

However, be this as it may, such is the teaching. The men of the fourth race were born in many stage of development. Roughly three classes, the first being those who retained their godlike powers- and whose descendants do to this day- the second and third representing different degrees of degradation. Humanity then being fully endowed with mind, and having reached its apex of materiality- being even more gross than the men of our present day- gradually lost its spiritual perceptions. Whereas in the gold, silver and bronze ages- the ages of the first three races,- man had been spiritually gifted, could see the future and the past at will, having a "third eye", and possessed of creative and "phenomenal" powers, now after his fall, these were gradually lost to him as a race; white magic gave room to sorcery, man forgot his place as the ruler of the planet, committing evils undreamed of in our day, and in the midst of evil and darkness, the fifth, our present race, was born.

I must now say a few words concerning the various habitations of the races, touching on the location of prehistoric continents and adding the names of these as adopted by the modern Theosophist.

(a) The first- the "Imperishable Sacred Land" - was and is at the North Pole. It never shared the fate of the succeeding continent; like the race whose home it was, it "never died". Little is told concerning it, and we shall only remind the reader of the belt of snow and ice that makes a natural impassable barrier to the northern limits of the earth; albeit now and then men have come forward- instance Franklin- stating their discovery of such a continent.

(2) The "Hyperborean Land" is the name given to the continent of the second race, which comprised the northern belt of the world, most of which is now embedded in snow and ice, but at one was truly a "Greenland". It comprised also the whole of Northern Asia, and "was the name given by the oldest Greeks to the far-off and mysterious region, whither their tradition made Apollo the "Hyperborean" travel every year".

(3) "Lemuria" (This name is an invention of Phillip Lutley Sclater, who asserted between 1850 and 1860, on zoological grounds, the actual existence in prehistoric times of a continent which he showed to have extended from Madagascar to Ceylon and Sumatra.) Was the next continent, the abode of the third race- the Lemurians. It extended across the Pacific ocean from India to Australia, and was connected with Atlantis, stretching westward as far as Madagascar and Africa, the latter not being then in existence. It was destroyed by volcanic eruptions, fires and earthquakes about 700,000 years before the commencement of what we know as the early Miocene age, afterwards sinking under the ocean.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

"Lemuria was not submerged as Atlantis was, but was sunk under the waves, owing to earthquakes and subterranean fires, as Great Britain and Europe will be some day".

Its people are said to have been of enormous stature- from twenty-seven to even thirty feet in height, and to have possessed such powers over nature as we cannot now conceive of. Therefore their civilization, though great, must have been of a different kind to our own, having probably more to do with science and philosophy than with food and clothing. They are the true ancestors of present-day humanity, for it was during the period of their existence that man first received the gift of mind; the "Sons of Wisdom" entered their tabernacles and claimed rulership over the earth. "No sooner had the mental eye of man been opened to understanding, that the Third Race felt itself one with the ever-present as the ever to be unknown and invisible ALL, the One Universal Deity. Endowed with divine powers, and feeling in himself his inner God, each felt that he was a Man-God in his nature, through animal in his physical Self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for live between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joined the "Sons of Light". Those who fell victims to their lower natures, became the slaves of Matter. From 'Sons of Light and Wisdom', they ended by becoming the 'Sons of Darkness'. They had fallen in the battle of mortal life with Life immortal, and all those so fallen became the seed of the future generations of Atlanteans" *The Secret Doctrine, Vol. II, page 272*- [The name is used here in the sense of, and as a synonym of 'sorcerers'. The Atlantean races were many, and lasted in their evolution for millions of years; all were not bad. They became so toward their end, as we (the fifth) are fast becoming now."]

(4) Atlantis was the home of the race which preceded our own, and was probably situated south of that portion of the globe which we know as Asia, extending far out into the Atlantic ocean. The Atlantean being the middle, or fourth in order, of the seven races on this globe, was consequently the most sunk in physical existence, and is credited with a far greater (material) civilization than our own. We find its descendants in the ancient Egyptians, the older Greeks, Romans, and the Chinese, all of whom were offshoots or branches of the mother race: we have only to examine such relics as now remain to us of these peoples to understand something of the former greatness of the root stock. But the great continent itself was submerged many thousand years ago, and with its sinking nearly the whole race perished.

The people are said to have been possessed of wondrous knowledge; they could live with equal ease in water, air or fire, and had unlimited control over the elements. But they fell into sorcery, and with their fall, their fair home was lost forever.

The island referred to by Plato in his *Critias* was the last fragment of the great continent which had perished long before. In the words of an Adept: "The great event, the triumph of our sons of the firemist (the adepts), the inhabitants of Shambullah when yet an island in the Central Asia sea, over the selfish, if not entirely wicked magians of Poseidonis (the last of the Atlantean continents), occurred just 11,446 years ago". (1881) [see the book "*Man: Fragments of Forgotten History*, page 85]

(5) Last of all we come to the true home of the present race- the fifth continent, America. It should be remembered that although these five lands have been posited in various portions of the globe, they were not the only ones existing at the periods of their greatness, but as the race which dominated the world at any given period had its rise in some particular land, that has been called the continent of the time.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

America was the fifth great continent which appeared, but the evolution of the races having taken place in Europe, the latter is often called the fifth. Nevertheless, as said, America is the true home of the fifth race.

It is scarcely to be expected that the casual reader, meeting with statements such as the preceding for the first time, will be likely to accept them unconditionally- less so when the further statement is made that he had himself lived with all these races, had likewise contributed to their rise and fall. But very little trouble is required for any one to verify many of the assertions by an intelligent examination of the various facts which the different sciences have collected together. Deeply submerged as the continents may have been, yet distinct traces of their existence are yet to be found- in every race, every country, every language. The most arcane Sanskrit and Tamil works teem with references to them; ancient traditions of widely separated peoples- of India, Greece, Sumatra, Java, Madagascar, and the legends of both Americas are full of them. Modern Science finds the existence of one of them, at any rate- of a former continent now sunk beneath the India Ocean (Lemuria) necessary to afford an explanation of many difficulties in the distribution of organic life; while of the other, Atlantis, fresh traces are constantly being brought to life. [In "Atlantis, the Antediluvian World". Ignatius Donnelly has gathered together a mass of unanswerable evidence to demonstrate the existence of such a continent, and it would appear that only a few more years must elapse ere it become an established fact.

"Why should not your geologists bear in mind that under the continents explored and fathomed by them, in the bowels of which they have found the Eocene age, and forced it to deliver them its secrets, there may be hidden deep in the fathomless, or rather unfathomed ocean beds, other and far older continents whose strata have never been geologically explored; and that they may some day upset entirely their present theories? Why not admit that our present continents have, like Lemuria and Atlantis, been several times already submerged, and had the time to reappear again, and bear their new groups of mankind and civilization; and that at the first great geological upheaval at the next cataclysm, in the series of periodical cataclysms that occur from the beginning to the end of every round, our already autopsized continents will go down, and the Lemurias and Atlantises come up again ? [Letter from an Adept,quoted in Esoteric Buddhism.]

But this brief sketch of the races, which preceded the present-day humanity, must end. Incredible as it at first may seem, there never was a time when no forms peopled the earth. From the moment of her birth, before the first sedimentary deposits, the earth had produced beings, and hence the races whose history has been so rapidly sketched, have extended over many millions of years. As they have been divided and subdivided, as each has had its allotted cycle, so each, to the minutest division, had its Golden, Silver, Bronze and Iron ages- allegorically, of course, meaning its period of purity, and subsequent descent into vice and materiality. The Iron or Black age (Kali Yuga) of the fifth race ends its first five thousand years in A.D. 1897-8, so says the tradition. "We have not long to wait, and many of us will witness the Dawn of the New Cycle, at the end of which not a few accounts will be settled and squared between the races".

THE MONAD

The soul contains in itself the event that shall presently befall it, for the event is only the actualizing of its thoughts

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Emerson

Heaven is not reached at a single bound,
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

J.G. Holland

If the reader has understood the general tenets of the esoteric philosophy, as put forward in the foregoing pages, it will be possible to add a few words on the mystery of the ego, a task that could not have been attempted in the earlier chapters.

Confusion may have been suspected in the fact that while the monad or "Pilgrim" the spiritual part of man which experiences, has been cited as Atma-Buddhi (see previous graphic on page 119) , yet the ego-sum is given as Manas. Moreover, the manasic essence did not vivify man until the end of the third race (see page 184). It would be natural also for one to inquire if before that mankind, according to occult teaching, had no egoity.

There is really, however, no confusion whatever in the matter, only a difficulty in comprehending the oriental philosophy arising out of our undeveloped notions concerning consciousness- a term whose definition, it has been said, no two of our metaphysicians have agreed upon. Atma-Buddhi- pure Spirit, with its vehicle, or first veil- is the true monad, that which. While inseparable from the UNIVERSAL CONSCIOUSNESS, yet erroneously fancies itself separate therefrom, during a Manvantara or Day of life. All monads are essentially one and the same.

But if this is so, that these monads or "Spirits" of all things are essentially One, the same cannot be said of the forms and individuals that One evolves; these, illusionary and evanescent, judged from the stand of Spirit, are yet to themselves, from the groundstand of illusion, actual realities.

The work of life is to individualize, to produce single, separate, distinct existences, and to adorn each as far as possible with the characteristics of divinity. But however high in the scale any one may climb; however great a god he may become after ages and ages spent in accumulating wisdom,; with whatever profusion nature may yield to him her gifts- yet her last secret must always be withheld, for to no finite being can the knowledge of the Infinite be. Until that day which is so graphically called in the eastern Schools the "great day BE-WITH-US", arrives, none can cross the "circle of the Pass Not"- the boundary line of limitation. It is only then, in the great night of the Maha-Pralaya, that the wall of individual consciousness shall be broken down, each unit merged in the translucent waters of the Universal Essence.

The Universal Monas, a s soon as the Day of Life, the Manvantara, has fully dawned, commences its work of producing individual existences, building them up or "drawing them out" by contact with the

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

opposite pole of life- Substance- first as simple forms, afterwards as more perfect and complex. Consequently it is said to incarnate first in the lowest mineral kingdom. But to say that it "incarnates" gives perhaps a wrong impression. It contacts rather. Figuratively speaking, spirit and matter upon becoming a duality, upon separation, "throw" toward one another, to produce a bridge across which they can travel to each other, and it is this joint endeavour which causes that action which from the one side is the "descent of spirit into matter", from the other "evolution", or the ascent and perfection of matter. Individualized monads cannot be said really to exist until the "bridge" is fully formed; and its point of completion is to be found in that faculty or principle called Manas, or self-consciousness, which on this planet exists only in man. "It would be very misleading to imagine a monad as a separate entity trailing its slow way into a distinct path through the lower Kingdoms, and after an incalculable series of transmigrations flowering into a human being; in short, that the Monad of a Humboldt dates back to the Monad of an atom of hornblende... The atom, as represented in the ordinary scientific hypothesis, is not a particle of something, animated by a psychic something, destined after aeons to blossom as a man. But it is a concrete manifestation of the Universal Energy which itself has not yet become individualized; a sequential manifestation of the one Universal Monas. The ocean (of matter) does not divide into its potential and constituent drops until the sweep of the life-impulse reaches the evolutionary stage of man-birth. The tendency toward segregation into individual Monads is gradual, and in the higher animals comes almost to the point. [See The Secret Doctrine, Vol. I., page 178)

Hence, while in one sense the more undeveloped beings, the animals and plants, are more spiritual than we are, since they draw their life more directly from the ethereal regions, yet they are by no means so advanced in the scale of perfection, are not of any direct use to nature in the great object that she has in view, that of developing Individuals. They have consciousness, truly, but not self-consciousness. Some day they will have reached a point in their evolution when the manasic essence can vivify them, but before that they are conscious of little more than of being alive. With the few exceptions of those higher animals who "come almost to the point", - those who dwell with civilized man, - they simply exist, and generate very little *individual* Karma. The same may be said of the first two races on our globe. They were certainly more spiritual than we are, but not having Manas, not having the spirit of rebellion against nature, the desire to dominate and control her, not having "activity", they were useless as powers and scarce awake on this plane.

There really exists in nature a triple evolutionary scheme: (a) that of the *body*, or animal part of man; (b) that of the soul, or self-conscious ego; and (c) that of the spirit or monad- the "Pilgrim"- which sacrifices itself, by severance from the Universal Over-Soul, for the purpose of producing individual intelligences. "Each of these three systems has its own laws, and is ruled and guided by different sets of the highest Dhyanis... Each is represented in the constitution of man, the Microcosm of the great Macrocosm; and it is the union of these three streams in him which makes him the complex being he now is".

Self-consciousness having arisen in man, or Manas having been evolved, the Monad, since it assimilates the experiences of self-conscious being, must from this point be considered as Atma-Buddhi-Manas, instead of merely Atma-Buddhi, as heretofore. In the great march of the soul along the cycle of incarnation or experience and necessity, it may be said to start on its journey as Atma-Buddhi, or pure spirit, and to return as Atma-Buddhi-Manas, or spirit joined to self-consciousness: the TWO-IN-ONE expresses itself as the THREE-IN-ONE, a result of its cycle of independent existence. The unfolding of such self-conscious principle within Itself is the one object of manifestation, or coming into being, of the Universal Self or "world soul".

NIRVANA

The spiritual Ego of man moves in eternity like a pendulum between the hours of life and death. But if these hours marking the periods of terrestrial and spiritual life are limited in their duration, and if the very number of such stages in eternity between sleep and awakening, illusion and reality, had its beginning and its end, on the other hand the spiritual "Pilgrim" is eternal

M.

The essential feature of the esoteric philosophy is the conception of a principle of unity as underlying the infinite productions of nature. This has been sufficiently demonstrated already, and if appreciated, it then becomes comparatively an easy task to have some idea of the destiny of Being, as that also of every individual item in the scheme of nature.

All things have sprung from One - out of homogeneity into heterogeneity- to one they all tend; the final endeavour of each unit is to recognize its oneness with all. This state has been called Nirvana. There are many degrees of it, however; indeed in the evolution of the lowest to the highest many "Nirvanas" may be said to be realized. From a lower aspect it is simply the bringing of any entity into a state of harmony with its surroundings. Thus the Chinese say that the animals enter Nirvana when they become civilized. But from a higher point of view, it is the total merging of the consciousness of individuality of any unit into that more complete nature of which it forms a part. For example, a drop of water might be said to have attained to its highest power, its Nirvana, when it had identified itself with the larger body of fluid to which it belonged; likewise a leaf, if it merged its individual life in that of the branch of which it was born; or the branch, if it felt itself the tree; or the tree, if it cast into the earth for its essential life. Each would have extended its sphere of being, and by the consciousness of unity thus established, attained peace, arising out of freedom from its former sense of separateness. And as a lesser unit, joining its individuality with that whole of which it forms a part, finds itself a member of a greater world, so also the latter, identifying itself with a yet more complete nature, recognizes a still more perfect harmony. This constant assertion of greater harmonies in the universe constitutes the real progress of the "Pilgrim" in its journey "home".

Each stage of perfection thus reached, each more complete individuality evoked by the monad, gives it at first the idea of finality. It is only after much association with its new condition that it discovers that such is not yet an entirely complete one; that there are still yet loftier peaks to scale, wider fields of Being to investigate. "Nothing is permanent except the one hidden absolute existence, which contains in itself the noumena of all realities.... Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya .
[The Secret Doctrine. Vol. -1-, Pages 39-40]

This identification of individual life with the sum-total of consciousness- universal life- has been the goal of every religious system. The Zoroastrian is called upon to "hasten to the Light"; the Buddhist aspires to

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

his "Nirvana"; the Hindu asks for rest in the "Bosom of Brahm"; the Hebrew, for rest in the "Bosom of A-Brahm"; the Christian would become "one with God".

It will be seen at once that a vast distinction must exist in the degree and kind of their development between those beings that are without the element of self-consciousness and those that have it. With the first Nirvana is merely the sliding into a state of passive harmony; the second carries the power of individuality. The retaining of self-consciousness, yet evolving perfect consciousness and existing in absolute harmony with all things and on all planes, is said to be the greatest bliss known, the sum-total of strength. In part it fulfills the purpose of the Universe in manifesting itself as individual lives- to evolve *self-consciousness* within itself. It is possible on earth to man alone. He alone, of all beings, can reach the highest state in this solar Manvantara, for no other composite being has the manasic element in it.

What the state of Nirvana is for the monad that has attained self-consciousness- the human monad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas has been the subject of more controversy among eastern Buddhist pandits than almost any other. And it has reflected itself among western Orientalists. Some have maintained that the Nirvana of Gautama's doctrine, signifying as it does the fulness of Being, is equivalent to annihilation. This arises out of the limitations of the mental faculty to comprehend such state. "All that words can convey", writes A.P.Sinnett [in his *Esoteric Buddhism*, page 236] is that Nirvana is a sublime state of conscious rest in omniscience. It would be ludicrous, after all that has gone before, to turn to the various discussions which have been carried on by students of exoteric Buddhism as to whether Nirvana does or does not mean annihilation. Worldly similes fall short of indicating the feeling with which the graduates of esoteric science regard such a question. Does the last penalty of the law mean the highest honour of the peerage? Is a wooden spoon the emblem of the most illustrious preeminence in learning? Such questions as these but faintly symbolize the extravagance of the question whether Nirvana is held by Buddhism to be equivalent to annihilation. And in some, to us inconceivable, way the state of para-Nirvana is spoken of as immeasurably higher than that of Nirvana".

Above all things it is important to recollect that Nirvana is a condition, or state of the soul, or spiritual ego, not a locality. It is not a place where the destiny of man lies, but is the transfusing of his individual mind into the universal soul-essence. And the state can be reached while the physical body is alive as after its dissolution. During life it is called Samadhi. At such periods, when the ego has separated itself entirely from physical life, has entered the ineffable condition of Nirvana, the body remains in a sort of cataleptic condition, one of suspended animation, and to all intents and purposes dead. Its inner principles have fled, and resolved themselves into the more ethereal natures of the world.

This high ecstatic condition of bliss reached, the only question is if the soul will ever return from it. To pass into Nirvana means a cessation of any further possibility of individual development or of aiding other selves to that end. The ego has run its course, it has attained the object of its setting forth, has reared individual life. And proportionately as success has crowned its efforts, it is entitled to blissful rest. But to accept its well-earned peace is to divorce itself from the power of rendering further aid to nature in her great labour, that of evolving individual existences. Therefore those wise ones who have attained liberty- 'freedom from rebirth'- and Nirvana, are, among the trans-Himalayan Brothers, regarded as selfish if they accept Nirvana. They are the Buddhas of Selfishness, the Pratyeka Buddhas, as opposed to the Buddhas of Compassion, those who renounce nirvanic bliss "to help mankind".

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

The fact that the ego should have the power to return to earth-life after having attained the condition of Nirvana, contains a greater mystery than the writer is prepared to state his ability to explain. It is a teaching of the esoteric doctrine; but only those who have made the great journey can have any idea of its mystery. That the ego-spirit can, and frequently does return, however, is exemplified in the lives of such as Gautama and all the greater sages of the world. These are the divines of earth who are said to walk "the fourth path of holiness".

It will be apparent that death to so exalted a being as one who had attained an renounced Nirvana, could scarcely be called death at all. At best it would be but a "shuffling of this mortal coil". The death of the body would simply mean the dissolution of the lowest and most physical instruments. The adept could then live for ages in his next form, his astral counterpart, untrammled with the desires terrestrial- which must to some extent affect all who dwell in the flesh,- and living thus, aid nature in her development of man, man in the development of himself. Such adepts are known to exist. Unseen of man, they labour to shield him from falling into deeper sin and misery than has already become his lot. They are called the Nirmanakayas of Compassion. They incarnate from age to age as the greater avatars, the saviours of the world. Of such were Gautama , Jesus, and many whose names rest unknown; who worked silently, perhaps through others, for the regeneration, the upraising of mankind. Yet even the highest of the earth's more perfected beings cannot entirely avoid the issue of life. As surely as night follows day, as the state of waking leads to the condition of rest, is it that the time will come when even the most active natures must be plunged into the nirvanic sleep, animals, men, nirmanakayas, gods, planets, universes alike. This is when the whole cosmos passes into its Pralaya, at the close of a Day of life. The monads of all must then return into their primary state of oneness, to reemerge only when again the great thrill of activity awakes the sleeping worlds. This universal sleep is called the state of Para-Nirvana "In *para-Nirvana* when *Pralaya* will have reduced not only material and physical bodies, but even the spiritual Ego(s) to their original principle- the Past, Present, and even Future Humanities, like all things, will be one and the same. Everything will have reentered the *Great Breath*. In other words, everything will be "merged in Brahma" or the divine unity.

"Is this annihilation, as some think? Or Atheism, as other critics- the worshipers of a personal deity and believers in an unphilosophical paradise- are inclined to suppose? Neither. It is worse than useless to return to the question of implied atheism in that which spiritually of most refined character. To see in Nirvana annihilation amounts to saying of a man plunged in a sound *dreamless sleep- one that leaves no impression on the physical memory and brain, because the sleeper's Higher Self is in its original state of absolute consciousness* during those hours- that he, too, is annihilated. The latter- simile answers only to one side of the question, - the most material; since *re-absorption* is by no means such a "dreamless sleep", but, on the contrary, absolute existence, an unconditioned unity, or a state, to describe which human language is absolutely and hopelessly inadequate. The only approach to anything like a comprehensive conception of it can be attempted solely in the panoramic visions of the soul, through spiritual ideations of the divine monad. Nor is the individuality- nor even the essence of the personality, if any be left behind- lost, because reabsorbed. For, however limitless- from a human standpoint- the para-Nirvanic state, it has yet a limit in Eternity. Once reached, the same monad, will re-emerge therefrom, as a still higher being, on a far higher plane, to recommence its cycle of perfected activity. The human mind cannot, in its present stage of development transcend, it can scarcely reach this plane of thought. It totters here, on the brink of incomprehensible Absoluteness and Eternity".[The Secret Doctrine- Vol. 1- pages 265 and 266]

CHAPTER FIVE MASTERS OF WISDOM

But the Brotherhood has always existed. Some in ages past had discovered how to the eye of Spirit all the workings of Nature might be revealed; they caught glimpses of a steadier lore, and sought to baffle the grave. But freedom from the chilling ties of earth was found only possible in fulfillment of the Law- the Law of Harmony and Brotherhood. Hence, etc..

-Letters on the Rosicrucian Fraternity.

As for what thou hearest others say, who persuade the many that the soul, when once freed from the body, neither suffers... evil nor is conscious, I know that thou art better grounded in the doctrines received by us from our ancestors, and in the sacred orgies of Dionysus, than to believe them; for the mystics symbols are well known to us who belong to the "Brotherhood".

Plutarch

So far this work has dealt only with the outline of the more important theosophical teachings at present before the world. Some acquaintance with the oriental esoteric doctrine was necessary before anything could be said at length concerning the Masters of Wisdom claimed by Theosophists to exist, and before the reader could have understood correctly the relationship of the Society to its unseen but true Founders.

It is reasonable to expect from the ordinary reader, who perhaps may have had not experience of a nature sufficient to justify a belief in any higher evolution than that of a man as he now is, incredulity in regard to a possible greater development of the latter than is to be found among the best and most cultured individuals of his own particular nation. But the existence of degrees in nature is easily discernible; and the fact of orders of beings of less degree of intelligence and power than man, argues for the possibility of the existence of men presently developed to the highest point. For aught we can say there may be many orders of beings higher than the human, bearing the same relation to man as the latter does to the animal or plant, although we may not be able to perceive them with the aid of our five senses. The animal, if it thinks at all, probably looks upon the human being as an animal like itself. It has no Mind to enable it to perceive that faculty in man, and although it obeys him, yet it understands not why, but only that it is acting in obedience to some law which has the mastery over it for the moment. Similarly who can say that when we find ourselves forced to yield to some greater energy than our own, we are not obeying the commands of some more complete intelligence? Who can say that the cyclones, earthquakes, floods, avalanches, are not the result of forces directed against us by greater beings than ourselves- greater, that is to say, in the sense of being more matured,- while we ascribe it all to natural law? Who can say? The conception is not untenable; it is not unscientific.

But although the author himself believes in the existence of very many higher kingdoms of nature than the human, though perhaps not quite in the way suggested, he does not call upon the reader just now to give credence to their existence; all he asks, judging by analogy, in the observation of differing degrees in the human family, is belief in the possibility of a race of men who have evolved very much higher in

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

mental and spiritual perception than the scientist, the theologian, or the ordinary man of our age. Let us suppose the reader to be sufficiently large-minded to grant such a possibility, then may we proceed to prosecute our inquiries along lines best calculated to at once interest and convince.

The task of inquiry would have been a much more difficult one some years ago than it is now, on account of the absence of evidence then; nearly all that could be obtained at the time of founding the Theosophical Society being the statements of the one solitary individual who acted as the messenger from the Brotherhood. But some seventeen years having passed, and more than one person of high position in the intellectual world having received communications from the members of the eastern School, it remains for us now to place before our reader for his considerations some of these facts. It might, however, be well to see first the position of affairs in the early days of the Theosophical Society's history.

Madame H.P.Blavatsky [probably no one of her time has been more traduced and slandered, unfairly criticized, or suffered more from misrepresentation, than this extraordinary woman. But this, as she said herself, was all that could be expected of a materialistic world, for one who strove to implant therein a few seeds of a high philosophy. The author lived with her during the last three years of her life, and his unhesitating criticism of her is that few purer in mind, nobler, or more self-sacrificing have ever existed. Nearly all who knew her have said the same. The evil reports about- and they are all reports- were originated by selfish and ambitious persons who strove by ruining her reputation, to place themselves in power. Toward the end of her life, however the greater number of the charges against her were withdrawn, yet since the public do not seem generally aware of this the following retraction of the famous New York Sun article of July 1890, a full sheet of slander- which appeared in the editorial column of that paper's issue of Monday, September 26th, 1891, may well be added here:

"We print on another page an article in which Mr. William Q.Judge deals with the romantic and extraordinary career of the late Helena P.Blavatsky, the Theosophist. We take occasion to observe that on July 20th, 1890, we were misled into admitting to The Sun's columns an article by Dr.E.F.Coues of Washington, in which allegations were made against Madam Blavatsky's character, and also against her followers, which appear to have been without solid foundation. Mr. Judge's article dispose of all questions relating to Madame Blavatsky as represented by Dr. Coues, and we desire to say that his allegations respecting the Theosophical Society and Mr. Judge personally are not sustained by evidence, and should not have been printed", The only regret is that Madame Blavatsky never lived to see this retraction. And so Madame Blavatsky, a high pupil of the trans-Himalayan School of Adepts, was sent by that college in 1875 to give out to the world knowledge in respect to certain important points that had been concealed from it as a whole for ages. Two or three thousands years ago, when everybody believed in "Messengers from God", in Sages, in Prophets, such an ambassador would have only to state his or her position and claims, to secure at once a large following; but in this age slightly different tactics had to be employed. It was well seen that whereas, at first, belief in the philosophy depended almost wholly on the credit given to Madame Blavatsky's declaration of the existence of the Brotherhood, yet afterwards, when the truth of he doctrine was proven, both by the evidence of science and by its being shown as existing in all past ages, then belief in a Humanity higher than our own-in "Masters of Wisdom"- would be the natural outcome. Hence the necessity at first of proof of the existence of the Brotherhood.

Now it is clear that to permit every inquirer to visit the School in order to prove its existence, would be an impossibility, not only because visitations of this nature would be contrary to the most time-honoured rule

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

of the institution- which demands for good reason that none save persons of the greatest purity and of high development shall enter their precincts, - but also as a matter of policy, identical with that which makes us legislate against the random invasion of our own public and private buildings by the curious, Nor, on the other hand, could it be expected that the whole array of adepts and occultists should turn out to prove themselves to a few possible converts, who might as easily as not be found quite unfitted to understand the sacred sciences. Proof for the few in that way would be difficult, and for the many it would be impossible. Curiosity in the multitude would have arisen, and were the masses convinced by ocular demonstration a new dogmatism would result.

Hence other methods had to be resorted to in order to prove the claim. Occultists claim that their study, as a secondary effect, gives power over many forces in nature not generally known to the world; it goes without saying, therefore, that one coming directly from the eastern School should be endowed marvelously in this respect. Hence if Madame Blavatsky showed herself to be possessed of ability to control the elements, to produce or make things visible by the power of her will, and in other ways to indicate her power over hidden forces of nature, much necessary evidence would have been given, and the philosophy could then be placed before the whole world backed up by some semblance, at any rate, of truth. While directly the attention of thinkers was turned to the philosophies of the past, every desired object would have been accomplished.

Therefore we find the early days of the Theosophical Society's history pregnant with stories about the powers of this wonderful woman, powers which were exhibited even up to the time of her death, though in a lesser degree once the first point was gained.

Having proved her endowments in these particulars to some, she at once set about her work of piecing together all the older philosophies of the world and showing that an identical teaching (Theosophy) ran throughout all. That she succeeded in this, probably beyond the most sanguine expectations of any, must be manifest from an examination of her work, "Isis Unveiled", comprising two volumes of between six and seven hundred pages each, every chapter of which is filled with citations from and references to the ancient and modern philosophies in defense of her statements.

This was in the earlier days. People began to believe what was said, and very soon many showed a desire to go out to the eastern Brotherhood and become pupils of these sages. And now the wisdom of not localizing the college was shown. A stampede to Tibet [It was given out that the headquarters of the school were somewhere in Tibet] such as might then have followed would have completely frustrated the attempts of the Adepts to give their philosophy to the world, and to establish the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood; not a worker would have remained in the ordinary haunts of men.

But some years later, in 1880, the veil was partially withdrawn, and several of the Tibetan Brothers made themselves known to members of the Theosophical Society in Simla and Allhabad, India. Mr. Sinnett in the "Occult World", recites a number of very interesting experiences of this period, afterwards publishing letters he received from the Mahatmas at that time, and these, annotated and explained, were swollen into a volume of considerable bulk and presented under the title "*Esoteric Buddhism*"- the first attempt to present Theosophy to the West in an orderly and comprehensive manner. The value of the testimony in the "*Occult World*" consists chiefly in that many of the experiences recorded, which, as is natural, might be readily open to skeptical judgment, were properly witnessed by persons, a number of whom bore high

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

standing in the social and literary world, and we recommend the perusal of this work to all who would critically examine the question. Space forbids our quoting from it here.

Of course most of the people in India, who are born and brought up in an atmosphere redolent with occult tradition, believe in the existence of adepts. Dotted all over as the country is with fakirs of every kind and holy men, it would be hard indeed for the native not to believe in masters in the occult sciences. This holds in every ancient eastern land. And from Americans and Europeans many letters could be quoted giving accounts of interviews with such men, of exhibitions made of their powers, and of other proofs of their existence, such as that through correspondence, letters received and the like. But what necessity is there for such? If the philosophy be a true one, then there *must* be some where on earth the Elder Brothers of the race. And the demonstration of its general truth proceeds yearly in all departments of thought.

"Looking at the matter from the most rigidly scientific point of view", says Prof. Huxley, "The assumption that, amidst the myriads of worlds scattered through endless space there can be no intelligence as much greater than man's as his is greater than the black beetle's; no being endowed with powers of influencing the course of nature as much greater than his, as his is greater than a snail's, seems to me not merely baseless, but impertinent... If our intelligence can in some matters surely reproduce the past of thousands of years ago, and anticipate the future thousands of years hence, it is clearly within the limits of possibility that some greater intellect, even of the same order, may be able to mirror the whole past and the whole future " [Essays upon some Controverted Questions. The italics are ours.]

In the opening chapter, and several times subsequently, we have briefly referred to the work of the Adepts, but the time seems now to have come when the matter can be more fully treated. The Theosophical Society, founded with the object, among others, of forming the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, may be considered as the general outside work of the Adepts at the present time, and must, therefore, in its endeavour and methods of work, follow along the same lines as the more select body. It may, indeed, be said to be the outward and visible sign of the inner esoteric school. Therefore an examination of the work attempted and achieved by its members would be perhaps the most fitting way of demonstrating the work of the Brothers; but as this is largely treated of in the next chapter, "The Theosophical Society", the question must be dealt with just now from a more general position.

The first question that one would naturally be expected to ask is, "Why a Brotherhood- if Theosophy sketches an immense scheme of evolution, and names this latter in its widest sense as the great object of existence, such can be nothing but a protracted selfishness- an evolution is now generally understood, it means the raising and improving of certain individuals who survive at the expense of the weaker, and Universal Brotherhood is certain not possible in company with the doctrine of the 'survival of the fittest'? But, with the Occultists, evolution has not for its keynote the pushing ahead of the individual to the detriment and destruction of his fellows, but precisely the opposite, the Fraternity holding that the only way possible of raising one's self is by raising those with whom one is associated in earth-life- the nation either into which one is born, or with which it is one's *Karma* to dwell. This must be the case if the hypotheses of the philosophy are correct. Unity is, as has by this time been clearly shown, the basis of the whole doctrine- from this have all things sprung, to it they all tend, and he would therefore best help forward the race to its final emancipation, its Nirvana, who makes for unity instead of for discord. Again, as in each planet and race a soul is associated with other individuals for incalculable ages, its work lies in

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

lifting these, and by such means raising itself also; all being chained together, in effect of past acts. The work of the Brothers, then, lies in the improvement of mankind, the oldest traditions of the schools holding that in this way alone can any advance be made in the spiritual sciences.

The question that naturally follows in the reader's mind from this, is how, since one has to descend into material life, to pass through planetary existence, through Rounds and races- how it can in any way be said to be possible to advance men? Would not this be a getting ahead of the "Great Law"? By no means, for such Law itself includes the factor of individual development. Although all have to pass through certain cycles of existence, to experience material as well as psychic, mental and spiritual life, yet there is no actual obligation which forces anyone to keep merely abreast of the times. The most casual inspection of humanity will show how varying are the degrees of progress, how it is possible for any one man by dint of exertion to outdo his fellows, and the same possibility must hold good in the general as well as in the more limited sense. It is thus, from one point of view, that have arisen the many classes of monads referred to, divided roughly into minerals, vegetables, animals and humans. The calculations deal with the general bulk, not with individual units.

The writer once addressed a similar question to Mme Blavatsky, asking her why, since it was the law that we had to pass through material existence, we should have to suffer so in getting out of it? "Well", she said, "we should not have had all this pain and suffering if we had not bound ourselves in chains when on the road. If part of one's journey lies through a boggy swamp, it is bad policy to stop and sit down in the mud. But this is just what we have done. We might have walked through on stilts".

This settles the question concerning the work of these individuals, which is solely with the object of benefiting the race to which they belong; next concerning themselves. Upon first being told that persons endowed with great power and learning, living apart from ordinary humanity, unknown and almost unheard of, and apparently refusing to disclose their knowledge, our western sense of openness and freedom receives a shock and we at once feel inclined either to discredit the whole statement, or, if finding it to be true, to exclaim: "How selfish! these men ought to be forced to reveal their knowledge!" But until we fully comprehend the nature of the lore, the conditions of its successful study, we are hardly justified in ascribing to its possessors the attribute of selfishness if they do not happen to scatter their wisdom broadcast. Occult science is at one with modern philosophy at least in this, that, on the one hand, it is not advisable to cast pearls before swine, nor, on the other, it is wise to allow explosives to be handled by the uninitiated. For these two reasons its possessors prefer to keep their science as much as may be to themselves, and, what is necessary to this, themselves to remain as far as possible in the background.

As to the first reason: So great is the ignorance of the masses concerning the spiritual side of nature, that, save at certain epochs, the wisdom is not so jealously guarded, for the simple reason that the skepticism of the "wise man" of the age, generally prevents its abuse.- "disbelief being as the Magic Casket in which it is locked". But at other times the reins are very closely drawn. This is a period for more or less of secrecy. Although we have not yet more than touched the border-line, still we are, according to the traditions, approaching one of those periods when belief in "nature's finer forces", in "magicians", "fairies", "ghosts", "spells", and indeed all the so-called superstitions of the past ages, will once more become general, and what is more, will be *scientifically* proven to be well-founded. "Coming events cast their shadows before". "Coming events cast their shadows before". Already several of the greatest minds of the age have publicly stated their belief in an unseen world; the ancient superstitions of Mesmer and

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

de Puysegur have lately transformed themselves into the scientific discoveries of hypnotism and catalepsy; spiritualism is not without its adherents amongst men of letters- although perhaps the "fourth dimension of space" may one day prove itself an inadequate explanation; and the writer can state on excellent authority that many of the first physicians in London do not withhold from practicing astrology!

Yes; many who would fain pin their faith to a materialistic conception of the universe have been forced, nolens volens, to a belief in its occult side. But they have no explanation to offer. Theosophy is the only philosophy, we affirm, which has afforded any solution of the phenomena which are taking place on all sides and among all classes of men. The intelligent reader will see in this more than a mere result of chance. The occult sciences, little as has yet been given out, have not been even so far advanced without the definite object of benefiting the race by offering light and truth in explanation of what must, without it, very soon plunge humanity deeper than ever into darkness and ignorance. The state of matter called astral, - the anima mundi, elemental forces, Linga Sharira, and the like, - can, we hold, of themselves give full explanation of all psychic phenomena, including clairvoyance, clairaudience, even to the extent of explaining the rationale of the remarkable "Double Ego" of hypnotism, where, by careful experiment many times repeated, men are proved to be possessed of two (or even more) selves. Reincarnation again, new to the West, but by no means new to the world, and the law of Karma, will serve as solutions to many, if not all, of the mysteries of life; and, if not complete ones, yet quite fall enough to be appreciated by our race as a whole. "The Adepts", it should be remembered, "do not undertake to give any one the key to the final mysteries until he is prepared to receive and understand it" - which we Westerns certainly are not. Before we can hold and use that key we must be properly trained. But few as yet have fully escaped from the influence of old dogmatic doctrines respecting cosmogenesis; we are not yet as a whole free enough from prejudice rightly to comprehend or properly to use such knowledge.

And as in other days argument against a six-day creation, based perhaps on geological investigations, or more unaffected "common sense", would have been misunderstood, probably to the extent of sending the perpetrator of such heresy to the stake, so now, if more of the philosophy than could be assimilated by mankind in its present era of evolution were scattered broadcast, no benefit could accrue to the race.

As to the other reason: We referred to the undesirability of giving explosives into the hands of persons uninitiated in the methods of handling them, and have now to say that the study of certain branches of Occultism is held to invest its disciples with powers not normally possessed by man. A correct understanding of the conditions of matter, and of the methods of directing its hidden forces, will easily be seen to be the steppingstone of great power, and in this connection it may some day be that the "Vril" of Bulwer Lytton's *"Coming Race"* is not altogether a fable. The same force which stirs the summer zephyr, intensified, may pick up a locomotive and hurl it many yards distant. The subtle agent that warms our houses may likewise devastate our towns. Electricity is equally efficacious in tickling the palate, or in blasting the rock. And we may readily conceive regarding any of the multitudinous hidden forces which must play through us, that, were we able to hold and control them, to make out of the human body a veritable storage-battery, then would we be invested with the power to work apparent miracles. There is, indeed, said to be one force of terrible effect, which, raised to its highest power on this plane, comes only under the control of man. Electricity is its lowest aspect, but it is many million times more potent than this. Happily, however, it is only as man rids himself of his passions and terrestrial desires that he gains ability to handle this terrible agent; the two are not compatible. Therefore will it only be the inheritance of mankind as a whole in the purified coming seventh race.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Yet, even in our own time, in a lower degree, it is not entirely without its manipulators. In the majority of persons these powers lie entirely dormant; but in some, physical and psychical idiosyncrasies more or less awaken them, and they require only very slight stimuli to call them into potent action. So that "individuals born with such a capacity as not very rare. That they are not heard of more frequently is due to the fact that they live and die, in almost every case, *in utter ignorance of being possessed of abnormal power at all*".

But mankind has now as a whole commenced its ascent along the upward cycle which leads back to unity; consequently spirituality is on the increase, materiality on the decline, and year by year our race will become less animal, more human, possessed of greater and greater powers over matter. Yet, as such gifts may be possessed by the unrighteous as by the righteous- esoteric science, recognizing *spiritual evil* as well as spiritual good- perhaps it is well that those who have them do not always discover their power.

For these and like reasons the practical study of Occultism is denied to any who have not proven themselves sincerely desirous of benefiting their race. It is therefore the province of the very few. The theoretic study, on the other hand, is within certain limits, the province of all, such limitation being expressed by the boundary line of the spiritual possibilities of humanity in any given epoch. In other words; the Great Law withholds no one individual from becoming a pioneer of his family, tribe or race, provided he has the strength to do so; if he has not the innate daring which alone can achieve this, then he must only wind his way slowly around the circle of progression with his brethren.

Thus "*The firm soul hastes; the feeble tarries, yet- all -
Will reach the sunlit snows.*

-From the Light of Asia by Edwin Arnold

It is well to put this clearly. Mankind in the present age being, according to the eastern belief, on the ascending arc of its cycle, it is easy to see that the gradual return to unity (Nirvana) must be the indication of progress. Advancement therefore depends entirely on the striving after unity. This is logical; and the study of Occultism is nothing else from beginning to end than the practical realization of it. So also the powers with which the students of the lore are endowed, results as a natural consequence of their recognition of unity in nature as opposed to the sense of separateness which inheres in the ordinary mortal.

The Brotherhood, or Lodge, as it is sometimes called- the hierarchy of the Masters of Wisdom, together with those whose endeavour is toward becoming such- must therefore be looked upon as embodying the true pioneers, the advance-guard of the race; and the profound knowledge of the laws of nature with which ages of research have invested them- a research probably carried on through innumerable incarnations, - causes them to believe that a working for the benefit of their brethren, and, indeed, of all nature, is the truest aim of life. Of such were Gautama Buddha, Sri Sankaracharya, Jesus, Pythagoras, Plato and many others, the beauty of whose lives must well testify to their inherent divinity, and to the soul-light which inspired their labours.

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

It is such as these who were referred to one page 97 as the exceptions to the rule concerning the present pioneers of the Globe; for some of them have, as the result of their great endeavour, gone so far ahead of ordinary humanity as to have arrived at development equal to that of the fifth Round. These are the true "Sons of God".

But all nature is made up of opposites; the existence of "Brothers of the Light" argues that also of "Brothers of the Shadow". The control over the elements which comes of an elevated perception, could scarcely be observed by the evil-minded and selfish without being coveted for personal benefit; it is natural to suppose that the world holds also those who are leaders of its people to spiritual wickedness. The supposition is well grounded. Oriental occult philosophy speaks not a little of Black Magicians, Sorcerers, Pratyeka Buddhas, [Pratyeka Buddhas are those Bodhisattvas who... caring nothing for the woes of mankind or to help it, but only for their own bliss, enter Nirvana and- disappear from the sight and the hearts of men. In Northern Buddhism a 'Pratyeka Buddha' is a synonym of spiritual selfishness".- The Voice of the Silence], Dugpas, and others whose labours in occult study are wholly with the object of gaining personal benefit. The powers attained are used solely for the glory and advantage of the possessor, and consequent detriment of his fellowmen. This statement does not militate against the previous one that these powers are only to be obtained through unity and harmony. Notwithstanding that the Black Adept works on an exceedingly low plane of spirituality, to evil and disharmony in relation to the planet on which he lives, and the race to which he belongs, yet even he has to labour harmoniously with his coworkers. It is not therefore surprising to find sorcerers adopting many methods of producing their results, identical to those followed by the White Brotherhood. This will be rendered clear if the reader remembers that almost every soul-production can be imitated by mathematical ingenuity. It requires talent, rather than genius, to transfer the landscape to our canvas. The most inartistic may, by practice among lines and curves, in time produce what looks like a human face. By a legitimate course of figuring we may even construct a piece of music. But the true inspiration, the divine creative faculty, is absent in every case, they are but base imitations of the genuine article. And, just as the man of genius lives only for his art, while his brother perhaps produces only for the sake of whatever advantage may accrue to him thereby, so also we find some to whom the soul-science comes naturally, others whose labours in the occult fields are wholly with the object of gaining whatever personal benefit is possible therefrom. White and black magic differ from one another, primarily, in the end each seeks to accomplish; secondarily, in the means employed to reach that end.

He who pours water into the muddy well, does but disturb the mud.

Iamblicus de Vit. Pythagoras

It is not to be imagined because the Adepts do not feel constrained to give out the bright truths to the world to be dragged in the mud by the masses, that they refrain also from helping individuals. Such would be entirely against the work of the Brotherhood. Anyone who aims at the improvement of himself and of his race will, most certainly, be assisted by those whose only desire is the regeneration of mankind.

But it is only after one has advanced some distance along the path of knowledge, by his own unaided efforts either in this or former lives, and achieved a certain degree of spiritual perception, that he may become the direct pupil of an adept in occult lore. Such pupils- chelas or lanoos as they are called, - are almost as little heard of by the profane as are the Adepts themselves, since they are not, for good

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

reasons, allowed to reveal themselves as such. Yet it is said that there are far more of them in existence than might be at first supposed. Mr. Sinnett, for instance, came across many, after he had joined the Theosophical Society, before unsuspected as such.

"Till now", he writes "in accordance with the law of those schools, the neophyte no sooner forced his way into the region of mystery, than he was bound over to the most inviolable secrecy as to everything connected with his entrance and further progress there. In Asia, in the same way, the chela, or pupil of Occultism, no sooner became a chela than he ceased to be a witness on behalf of the reality of occult knowledge. I have been astonished to find, since my own connection with the subject, how numerous such chelas are. But it is impossible to imagine any act more improbable than the unauthorized revelation by any such chela, to persons in the outer world, that he is one; and so the great esoteric school of philosophy successfully guards its seclusion". [See Esoteric Buddhism, pages 58-59, Sixth American edition]

As in every properly organized school of instruction there are many degrees of pupilage, corresponding to the varying degrees of advancement of the scholars, so in the occult colleges, there are many degrees of discipleship, only those pupils coming under the individual tuition of a master being chelas proper. All the rest are but "probationers", of whatever rank.

Although chelas in the east are many, yet we have it on excellent authority that those in the west are exceedingly rare, mainly because the conditions and requirements of discipleship are so entirely opposed to those bred by our civilization. Unity, the sine qua non of spiritual progression and enlightenment, is too far removed from western thought. Emulation and strife, ambition, push, the resolve to surpass, outdo, and conquer our fellowmen, is educated into us from our earliest childhood. What schoolboy is there who does not hasten to learn, not in order that he may eventually acquire wisdom, but that he may outstrip his companions and carry off the prize? And, instinct with such principles of envy and uncharitableness- however much masked under the cloak of social courtesies and well-bred manners- how is it possible to find persons willing and able to fulfill such conditions as the following, which been quoted as directions to the eastern instructor?:

"The disciples when studying must take care to be united as the fingers on one hand. Thou shalt impress upon their minds that whatever hurts one should hurt the others, and if the rejoicing of one finds no echo in the breasts of the others, then the required conditions are absent, and it is useless to proceed.

"The co-disciples must be tuned by the guru as the strings of a lute, each different from the others, yet emitting sounds in harmony with all. Collectively they must form a keyboard answering in all its parts to thy lightest touch (the touch of the Master). Thus their minds shall open for the harmonies of Wisdom, to vibrate as knowledge through each and all, resulting in effects pleasing to the presiding Gods and useful to the Lanoo. So shall Wisdom be impressed for ever on their hearts and the harmony of the law shall never be broken".

During the first years of his development the eastern pupil is forced to study in company with a select body of other disciples; it is only toward the end of the cycle of his training that he can receive individual instruction. The chela has to fulfill the conditions of harmony, before he can proceed consciously and

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

individually along the lines of spiritual development, and study "face to face" with his guru or his own Higher Ego.

It will readily be seen how difficult it would be for any of us in the west to fulfill such conditions when all our training has been along exactly opposite lines; although it is not wholly impossible. But we learn from the ancient books that in order to be born into a family and circumstances suitable to occult study and development, one must have consciously struggled towards the light in a previous birth; therefore we must only consider it as the Karma of our race which makes the practical realization of the God within us so difficult, attempted, as it must be, in the rush and roar of our civilization.

CHAPTER SIX

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Nature's first and imperishable, and most lovely, and most noble Law- the Inequality Between Man and Man.

Bulwer Lytton

In a work devoted to an account of the Wisdom-Religion as it is at present known, the reader will expect to find some sketch of organization through which, directly or indirectly, it has come. A chapter under this head will therefore not be out of place.

The Theosophical Society is only one many; it is not the first, nor will it be the last of its kind. There have been many bodies in the past under this name, organized with the same object in view as had the Founders of the present one- that of forming an association which should act as an efficient channel for the scattering of the few seeds of true knowledge among the masses that the degree of their development entitled them to. But here have been still more bodies of the same nature formed under other names. Of these, some are not yet fully dead. They remain; but most of their utility has long ago departed. Like the husk without the seed, the house without its inhabitant, the shell bereft of the vital organism its only use is to encase, their glory has departed,; no longer has the world any need of their services, no longer have they any "good tidings" to impart, for a new race has been born since they strove to fulfill their mission in the world; a new race, with fresh vitality and fresh ideas of the fitness of things, to which Truth must present another facet of her brilliant gem. The Rosicrucian fraternity, the Freemasons, Foresters, are all remnants of former endeavours to inculcate and implant the Wisdom-Religion in the hearts of men. But the great mystics who formerly sat at their heads have long ago departed, the vehicles are left to run without their drivers, and the weary descendants of the once great schools will strive in vain to hold together the fast crumbling remains. Yet their history records the efforts of the past; they are "footprints on the sands of time", and as such are yet, perhaps, not without their value.

The word Theosophy literally means "God-Wisdom" (theo-sophia); however much dictionary editors may inform us to the contrary, this is all we can claim for the word. But this does not signify *revelation*. The signification or term "divine-wisdom" does not necessarily contain any implication as to how that wisdom is acquired. Theosophy is wisdom *concerning* God, or the divinity of things, not wisdom from God. In this view therefore the writer accepts the definition of Vaughan: "A Theosophist", he says, "is one who gives you a theory of God, or of the works of God, which... an *inspiration of his own* for its basis". Therefore all great philosophers and thinkers who have offered any explanation of life, the founders of every great religion, have been Theosophists, and, we affirm, have all taught, consciously or unconsciously to themselves, some aspect or other of the vast system which has been so roughly outlined in this volume.

Christian writers ascribe the development of the ancient Eclectic Theosophical System to the third century of their era; but there were Theosophists before that time. Diogenes Laertius speaks of the philosophy as antedating the dynasty of the Ptolemies, disclosing its founder in the Egyptian Hierophant,

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Pot Amun - a Coptic name, signifying a priest consecrated to Amun, the god of wisdom. History shows its revival in the Eclectic System of Ammonius Saccas, in whose time certainly the word Theosophy originated. The object of this philosopher was almost identical with our own- to reconcile all sects, peoples and nations under one common faith, and to establish a belief in one Supreme, Eternal, Unknown and Unnamed Power or Principle, through which the Universe came into being, and by which it was governed with immutable and eternal laws.

Again, we find Theosophists in Germany in the 12th century, holding identical views of life and working to the same end, and also in the 15th century. There was a society formed in London in or about the year 1665, which strove after a like purpose. All these, not to speak of the host of seers who have appeared from time to time, of the Swedenborg and Bohme type, whose explanation of nature differed but in minor detail from that offered by the modern Theosophists.

Theosophy is the Wisdom-Religion, the archaic philosophy which was the fount of knowledge in every ancient country having claims to civilization, and from which have descended in less mystic garb the sciences of the present day known to the professors of our colleges as Chemistry, Astronomy, etc.,. However much said professors may object to the statement.

But whether known as Theosophy or by any other name, the same Wisdom-Religion has existed always and will show itself on earth and among men for all eternity: the sequence of martyrs to the great universal truths has never once been broken; known or unknown they will appear and suffer again and again, ever adding to their ranks however, until some day, at the birth of the purified seventh race, mankind will reawaken to find the chair of materialistic philosophy vacant and decayed.

It was said in another part of this work that about once every hundred years special efforts to regenerate mankind are made by those in whose guardianship is the philosophy, and a retrospective glance would show where many of these have been undertaken and under whose management. But to trace them all completely would now be a difficult task, for the simple reason that all have not been made in the shape of public movements. They have been in a manner suitable to the exigencies of the times. It is only in our cycle that an open attempt has been made, and this for the reason that the age demands it. Formerly work was often done through kings and rulers, instead of through public movements, because people had then less independence and the king held more the position of dictator than he does in this age. We constantly hear of wise men, alchemists, soothsayers, appearing at various courts and working marvels sufficient to attract the attention and wonder of the monarch. These, however, were but their outward signs; in truth they worked to other ends than miracles. They often influenced the prince's mind, so that he altered his method of ruling his kingdom, thereby perhaps bringing about results which not only affected his own subjects, but, by reaction, the peoples of other countries, and afterwards the world as a whole.

But although it is for these reasons hard to trace the uprising of all such efforts, yet with some we have no difficulty. Toward the end of the 14th century we may place the founding of the later Rosicrucian [do you imagine that there were no mystic solemn unions of men, seeking the same end through the same means, before the Arabians of Damus, in 1378, taught to a wandering Jew the secrets which founded the institution of the Rosicrucians?" Bulwer Lytton in Zanonij] fraternity, one of the brightest and most successful of bodies of philosophers, although a secret one. The labours of Jacob Boehme and of his

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

teacher, John George Gichtel, had their effect at the close of the 17th century. [In 1672, when Louis XIV, laid siege, to Amsterdam, Gichtel, by the power of his will, is reported by his disciples to have exercised influence enough to cause the raising of the siege, and afterwards the names of the very regiments and squadrons he had seen in his vision were found in the papers. Princes of Germany and even sovereigns consulted him".] The one however which comes nearest to our own time is that which directly preceded the Theosophical Society, at the close of the 18th century of the Christian era. This was the famous "Société de l'Harmonie", founded by Mesmer in Paris in 1783.

The success of these efforts is not, it should be remembered, any more absolutely certain than is anything else in nature. The Adepts are not infallible. Their extended insight into the workings of natural law enables them to place the cause farther back, the effect further forward, than our more limited vision permits us to. But this is all they claim. The mistakes of one century are corrected in the efforts of the next, so that in course of time they may lessen enormously with respect, at least, to that race whose development is being forwarded; but so long as there is a limitation of vision, finity- and work on the material plane of necessity implies such, there must be error. The effort of last century was a failure because of the too socialistic aspect of the mystical doctrine put forward. There was a definite teaching- albeit a secret one- similar to Theosophy as now known, given to the members of Mesmer's society. But the true philosophy did not come to the front. "Fraternité, Liberté, Egalité" constituted the only philosophy the people of the period would listen to. Hence the Reign of Terror of 1794. Even such as Count St.Germain and the wonder-working Cagliostro, the successor of Mesmer, could not stay the torrent of materialism; they were laughed at, and accounted charlatans and falsifiers. [In her "*Theosophical Glossary*" (article Mesmer) Madame Blavatsky says: "Of these three men (St Germain, Mesmer, Cagliostro) who were at first regarded as quacks, Mesmer is already vindicated. The justification of the two others will follow in the next century (1892)]

Although such attempts are made at every cycle of 100 years, yet all are not equally powerful in effect; the more efficient efforts themselves also run in cycles. The result of work done in such epochs lasts much longer. Consequently while it would require much acquaintance with European and other history, both told and untold, to trace each endeavour, yet the greater ones can always be observed.

Of course each movement makes use as far as possible of the work of its predecessors; so that, for instance, the "*revival* of Freemasonry" has become almost a byword, nobody being able to tell exactly when or where the craft had its origin or founding. The same thing may be said of Rosicrucianism, and indeed of Theosophy itself. It is therefore not surprising, in view of the fact that Cagliostro and others worked to reestablish lodges of Freemasonry, to find H.P.Blavatsky, the nineteenth century messenger, offering herself at the outset of her career as the new leader of the Freemasons. This she did before 1875 to some of the heads of the craft in America, naming herself as the messenger from the eastern Brotherhood. It was but the Karma of Freemasonry, which was the movement that had been carried over from the last century to the present one. But even if the Freemasons had wished to accept her as their head, they could not have done so, since the traditions of that Fraternity militate against the admission of women. This was probably a later introduction than the days of Cagliostro, who is said to have organized more than one "lodge" composed entirely of women.

Madame Blavatsky's services being declined, she set to work to form the nucleus of a new body. Gathering together some of those on earth who had previously worked with her, she started the Theosophical Society, with Col. H.S. Olcott, William Q.Judge and others; and from the date of its

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

founding men's interests have been drawn more and more to spiritual things.

It is advisable, perhaps, here to make clear to the reader that the reason that the wave of spirituality which marks the revival of occult knowledge among the masses, is manifested for twenty-five years only of each century, is not because the Adepts are unable to work at other times, but because they have found that any attempt carried forward longer than such period has been productive of evil rather than of good results. The time chosen, also, it is well to point out, is that period when the forces for evil are strongest, so that while combating the reawakened tendency of humanity toward wickedness and sorcery, they can at the same time work to the establishment of a higher ideal among the masses. Everything has its twilight or period of awakening. The advent of Theosophy was marked by a number of phenomena of the spiritualistic character, which served as indications of the existence of subtler forces in nature. The manifestation of these was in part the direct work of certain Nirmanakayas, who thus, behind the scenes, forwarded the work of the T.S. By giving it an actual basis on which to commence work. And for this reason H.P. Blavatsky, during her lifework, in her first labours worked among the spiritualists, supporting their assertions even to the extent of at first declaring herself one, although always maintaining that they attributed their effects to wrong causes.

The Theosophical Society, as at present constituted, has three objects, which, if properly carried out and fully understood, must result in the recognition of the mystical system known as Theosophy. Thus the Society is bound by no beliefs, no dogmas, throws its doors wide open to all, and has only endeavour, that of uniting all sects and peoples into one harmonious whole- producing a humanity of philo-sophers, or true lovers of wisdom. Indeed, so evident is it that without a knowledge of the laws of Nature and of Being, the first object, "To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood", would be a mere high-sounding mockery, and could not be accomplished, that restriction over the other two has been withdrawn, and the candidate for entrance into the T.S. Need now only subscribe to the first object.

The three are as follows:

First- To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour;

Second- To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions and sciences;

Third- To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

No person's religious opinions are asked upon his joining, nor his interference with them permitted, but every one is expected to show towards his fellow-members the same tolerance in this respect as he claims for himself.

Some may wonder, perhaps, with only the above programme, why nearly all of the members of the Theosophical Society should also be Theosophists. An examination of the three objects will indicate the reason. The First must be subscribed to, otherwise admission cannot be gained to the Society. But any

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

one desiring to be a worker in establishing such a Brotherhood must be a pioneer of his race. It is one and the same thing as saying that his spiritual perceptions are more awakened than those of the majority of his kind. Let him cry out against the statement as much as he will, he is not a materialist at heart. For there is nothing so opposed to materialistic science, nothing so mystical, nothing so founded on the internal evidence of the heart, as the Brotherhood of Humanity; and, sooner or later, men who believe in its existence, who work to help it on, will find that they draw their inspirations from the spiritual spheres, from their own Higher Ego, and not from an inspection of material things.

Then, religionists and mystics at heart, whether subscribing to a creed or not, let them study under the Second Object, and they will find that humanity has ever placed its hopes elsewhere than on this globe. They will find that from the dawn of the Aryan race down to the present time mystics and sages have always walked the earth and taught the peoples the one truth, Universal Brotherhood- the one doctrine, Theosophy. No wonder then they are Theosophists. For once the keynote has been struck, once the Wisdom-Religion is shown to have existed ever, in all creeds, it takes very little to convince anyone with higher perceptions than those which look on clay, of its verity.

And if they wish to go further, and demonstrate its truth in their own lives, there is still the Third Object, now embraced in a school founded by H.P.Blavatsky, which, under certain conditions, members of the Society can enter in its first degree. This they may join, and through it come to a real inner perception and knowledge of the truth of the ever occult philosophy.

Universal Brotherhood is the end as well as the beginning of the doctrines of Theosophy. Harmonious living is the direct heritage of Wisdom; without the latter we might as well try to "love our neighbour as ourselves" as to endeavour to run without possessing legs. So the true philosopher will not attempt to point out a possible Utopia without showing also the manner in which it may be reached. While the Theosophical Society, therefore, adopts the formation of a Universal Brotherhood as its main object, the theosophical philosophy is put forward as serving as a pointer, at least, to the solution of the problem of life, and to indicate the rationale of such Brotherhood.

Theosophy shows unity in its most complete sense to be the last expression of the Universe; the recognition of harmony in all things to be the final perfection of life. To reach the final, perfected state, therefore, it would be reasonable to conclude that cooperation with one's fellow men should be the first endeavour, so Theosophists are invariably found advocating work in the service of Humanity. But work for others is only a means to an end- that of raising those others-, is not the end itself, and it would be manifestly foolish to continue such work without learning from it the best methods of achieving success in this direction. And Theosophists strive more toward the altering of the minds of the people than their surroundings, the individual rather than his environment; considering the latter in regard to each person to be almost wholly the outcome of the vice or virtue which may have coloured his previous lives, or his past actions in this one. This is striking at the root of the evil. All the vice and wickedness of the world, no matter how we may regard it, has selfishness for its foundation-stone; has arisen out of thought for self, regardless of the necessities or troubles of others. If a complete change for good is to be made in the condition of the world, the mind of man must first be altered. Philanthropic associations are doubtless of value, but the good they have done has lain more in any effect they may have had in making people less selfish, than in the establishment of soup-kitchens and workingmen's clubs. And while the untutored philanthropist rushes wildly about, struggling frantically to remove the effects of the evil, the Theosophist, versed in the laws of advancement works silently at the cause.

CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION

The door by which the human soul goes out of itself, is the same by which it enters the understanding.

The door by which the human understanding goes out of itself, is the same by which it enters the spirit of the universe.

The door by which the spirit of the universe goes out of itself, is that by which it enters into the elements and matter.

This is the reason why the learned, who do not take these routes, never enter Nature.-

Louis Claude de Saint-Martin

The mission of Theosophy is, in the main, to broaden the thought of the age and to direct the minds of thinkers toward the contemplation of life from groundstands high enough to overlook all the different sciences and philosophies.

It seeks to reveal the true origin of our various religions, and to show that the same mysticism which inspired the founding of Christianity sowed the seed for the growth of all the creeds of the world. Religion, it teaches, is a part of man's own character, not simply a knowledge derived from whatever books he may have studied; and every creed represents but the external covering of Truth. Essentially, therefore, are the teachings of all the sages identical. External differences are due merely to incidental causes- diversity in the methods of giving their wisdom among individual teachers, natural modifications and changes of the original philosophy after lapse of time, or the varied interpretations of it by the priests into whose keeping it was entrusted. Theosophy therefore in this sense is the Religion of religions.

But Theosophy is distinctly a science. It is religion with a philosophical basis. There is really no difference between its conclusions and those reached by the great thinkers of our civilization save in that it takes a broader view of life, and shows a more complete harmony throughout the manifestations of nature. Our physical sciences are concerned with nature in her last effect,- her outward manifestations or "garment"; the secret science of the Orient studies the whole of that concatenation of causes and effects which intervenes between this sphere of life and God or the "First Cause". That is almost the only difference between the two. Eventually will our western thinkers- perhaps through greater attention to the psychological fields of investigation- attain to a knowledge of life similar to that of the great nature-students of the East; the only thing needful to such being a development of the occult senses.

In Theosophy therefore science blends with religion. Religion, according to that theosophical view, being but a clearer perception of, a deeper insight into life, by man, freed from superstition and emotion and grounded in true philosophy, it must lead to wisdom. If the insight it gives be added to the practical and intellectual powers of our modern scientist we can set no limit to his advance in knowledge. It is indeed this ever deepening insight, by whatever name it be known, that alone permits scientific progress. The Romanes lectures for 1893 [Evolution and Ethics by T.R. Huxley, F.R.S.] Has been a surprise to many. In it the lecturer frankly admits that cosmic evolution does not explain everything, and that in particular it

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

tells us nothing of the "soul" of man. "Cosmic evolution", he says, "may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of man may have come about; but, in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before", in the religions and philosophies of the past and especially in those of India. "Fragile reed as he may be, man, as Pascal says, is a thinking reed: there lies within him a fund of energy, operating intelligently and so far akin to that which pervades the universe that it is competent to influence and modify the cosmic process. In virtue of his intelligence the dwarf bends the Titan to his will". Both the intelligence in man and his knowledge of good and evil are rooted in the same cause; that no science of mere physical nature can explain. Outside of occult science or religious philosophy, there has been no efficient reason given why man, as an animal the most degraded, and certainly by no means among the most powerful, can yet bring under his subjection all living things; why for instance the strongest and even the wildest animals are forced to answer to his will. The reason has been given by the occultists ages ago. Man is the temple of divinity. In each human being there is incarnated some of the divine essence, drawn from the plane of Mahat or Maha-Buddhi, by virtue of which incarnation he is endowed with intelligence and religious instinct. By permitting it to inspire his actions here he becomes the greatest of all beings; for Mahat is the finer, occult side of the universe, the realm of Divine Thought and of the higher law, and man as an actual vessel of its essence has no equal in power on this plane. Physical nature could produce a perfect animal; but soul had to be added, it could not be evolved in the ordinary way. Its first incarnation, by which man obtained the rulership of nature- referred to on page 185? of this volume, is allegorized in all the great religions and mythologies. The tempting by Wisdom of Man in the Garden of Eden; the story of Prometheus; the fall of the Gods; are examples.

The truth is that each of the world's great religions is but the remnant of an ancient science. As in the present day we receive our general knowledge concerning physics and biology from the personal experiments of our Stewarts and Huxleys, so in the past did the masses receive their instruction regarding nature from the information given them by the sages of that time. But the latter- the scientists of that day- laboured in fields of investigation different from those explored by the more advanced men of our civilization. We consider physical nature in all her aspects and are rarely carried into the psychic realms; their studies constituted what may be called an advanced psychology - acquaintance with the subtle essences of the universe and a practical knowledge of the Soul of man. This occult study has left perhaps but little that is applicable to the studies of our day, for as it appears in the garb of popular religion it is so cloaked in allegory and metaphor that its inner truths are not easily seen. But the "first principles" of today are identical with those of old; and the practical science of the soul is already in embryo in our civilization. The old philosophy was given out in turn to each nation on its arriving at maturity; and survived in the race as its religion. Greatly modified and altered as the ages have passed, changed into superstition in the minds of the majority, it is still to be found in almost all the exoteric scriptures of the world; the Theosophical Society has been established to try and resurrect it. When religion is fully comprehended and science entirely developed there will be found no essential difference between the two. The links in the chain of thought that brought the great thinkers of the past to their conclusions are scattered, the occult science is lost to the world at large; but it is the hope of the Trans-Himalayan Brotherhood that by the light of Theosophy the old wisdom may be restored.

"Well then", it will be said, "is the Theosophical a school of occultism; does it teach how to develop the hidden powers of man and enable him to practically investigate these questions?" The Theosophical Society itself is not a school of occultism; but it certainly seeks to educate man into knowledge of a possible growth in the occult sphere. The practical investigation of the occult and psychic side of nature is one of the most difficult things imaginable. It requires the development of senses and faculties not

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

generally active in man. But before even these senses are developed, a certain philosophical balance- a complete self-reliance, must be attained. Until the soul is able to learn entirely on itself, on the god within- to draw its food, not from the opinions of friends or the fulfillment of the desires of the flesh, but from the spirit with which it is linked, it would be hazardous indeed to have intercourse with the denizens of the hidden spheres, many of whom are inimical to man. Everyone is surrounded, in the wise provision of nature, with an akasic wall that preserves the soul from conscious association with the astral world until it is sufficiently grown in power to be able to dominate and overcome the inhabitants of that world. To rush willfully into the occult spheres before that power is developed, to gain ability to associate with the elementals without first having entirely purified the nature, is to become what is technically termed a medium, one who has permitted himself to become the agent of the transmission of occult forces, but who is entirely powerless to control them. In its final consequences such a condition is one of the most terrible imaginable. The power to control these forces is drawn only from the Higher Ego. Reliance on that, a total renunciation of self, and utter fearlessness of life, are the only talismans that can guard the soul from danger when it attempts to fathom the mysteries of other worlds.

Absolute purity of mind, selfishness, and freedom from superstition, are therefore the preliminary necessities to occult development, and it is with a desire to attain these that the Theosophical Society seeks first to inspire man; then later a school of practical occultism in the west may be developed. All the greater sages have instructed their pupils in these virtues before permitting them to practically study occultism; nearly every oriental philosophical treatise is based on them.

For this reason also very little information has been given regarding the subjective spheres. Beyond the fact of their existences, and the general laws governing them, scarcely anything definite has been told us by the Brotherhood. It would be of no value to us in the present state of development, for nothing could be really understood until occult powers were attained. The most meager information has been given us concerning the fellow globes of our earth, their relations to the "seven mystery planets", the globe-rounds, elementals and the like. Humanity is not prepared for the knowledge; even what has been told us has given rise to no little misunderstanding. All the information regarding them that could be given us would not enable us any better to truly comprehend them unless gifted with psychic powers- and such would at once place us beyond the necessity for mere information.

Psychic powers will assuredly be an endowment of our race at no very distance time. Already many breathe who possess them in some slight degree. But the Theosophical Society was not established to hasten their development. It was formed to give men a conception of right philosophy, to awaken in them a knowledge of their possibilities, to point out the methods of advance, and to train each to conquer and dominate his own nature and thus diminish the evil of the day.

The Coils of Eliphas Lévi's "*Great Serpent*", the Astral Light, reflected in which are the desires and passions of all past humanities- enfold our civilization; but the desire to be liberated from its oppression, to escape the influence of its corrupt magnetism and to break the enchantment of its eyes is growing among us and in age when success may be achieved. Shall not each of us lend his aid to the deliverance of his kind! Slight is the exertion- a mere control of self- in comparison with the reward, the emancipation of a race. And the occult laws of advance and power set no out of the way task before us; they require only that each one shall do his best in that sphere into which it is his Karma to have been born or to have come. "Each man who conquers a single passion or fault raises the Karma of the whole world to that extent". Following the examples set us by the Great Ones of the past and the blessed

Modern Theosophy by Claude Falls Wright

Mahatmas of today- the example of self-sacrifice- we may be certain of success; drawing our inspiration from the knowledge that every drop of blood wrung from the heart through sacrifice out of genuine compassion for our brothers pays the ransom of ten thousand souls.

There is an old, old tradition that for the sin of one soul the whole world is dipped in suffering; and until that soul repents and atones, so will the world remain.

That soul incarnates among men in every age. Who is so acquainted with the mystic signs as to point out the forehead that bears the mark? It may be a brother, but, reader, - it may be YOU!