M A N E V O L V I N G

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I.
AN OUTLINE OF EVOLUTION
1. Before evolution: Spirit to matter.

Science has well established the theory of evolution, but to many the definition is distorted or incomplete, rendering the idea repulsive. Evolution is development, or growth, an unfolding or unrolling, whether applying to the human race or something of a different nature. A full-blown rose has evolved from the bud, the tree from the seed, the mature man from the tiny babe; the plot of a story evolves, or unfolds, as does an architect's plan of a building. Four simple tones of music grew into a great symphony (Beethoven's celebrated Fifth Symphony).

We see growth, or expansion, on all sides of us, not only in individuals but races as well, with civilizations welling up to great peaks, declining and rising again to greater and greater heights. The universe itself is expanding, we are told.

Evolution applies not only to physical realms, but mental and spiritual too. Consciousness, or awareness, evolves as does man, from primitive races to high civilizations, and from the small child who can only express ~~himself~~ his needs by crying, to the evolved or completely mature being who has mastered the great problems of life that are set before him.

But a thing cannot evolve from something it is not already involved in.

Consequently before evolution could begin there must have been a process of involution. Old as the universe is, its solid state was not the beginning.

Time was when all matter and energy were in perfect balance, or rather, when they were one.* (A detailed account of this state may be found in H. P. Blavatsky's "The Secret Doctrine", volume I on Cosmogenesis.) There was no motion; Time stood still. There were no heavenly bodies and no beings to witness that there were not, yet consciousness existed everywhere, even if not consciousness as we recognize it. Then there was an initial vibratory motion, upsetting the equilibrium of the Cosmos and setting up a chain

reaction, resulting ultimately in the manifested universe as we know it today.

It seems natural for the scientist to begin his research at the point of matter and proclain energy, or spirit, a product of this matter. But to shift the base of reference, to see matter more nearly as a manifestation of energy may be to throw new light on science generally.

So we say that Spirit became involved in matter, the initial vibrations growing gradually larger, on through intelligence, magnetism, electricity, light, heat, sound and finally producing grosser and grosser substances until, to our senses gross matter does not appear to have any degree of vibration. Motion

appears to have stopped, like a thing dead.** (See "Pathways Through to Space", by F. Merrell-Wolff, chapter 61, "The Nature of Ponderable Matter".) Theories have been advanced to the effect that there is but One Substance, of which every difference of manifestation is simply a difference in rate of vibration, whether matter or energy.

Neither can we generally conceive of minerals as having any consciousness,*** (see "Man Visible and Invisible" - C. W. Leadbeater, ch.8, p. 53.) yet that consciousness which existed everywhere in the Timeless Age, persists in every atom. One atom may have a strong affinity for another, which affinity we term attraction, yet is there basically any difference between attraction and love? To quote Leadbeater: "One

element has so strong a desire for the company of another that it will instantly forsake, in order to join it, any other substance with which it may happen to be in association.... ..For example, oxygen and hydrogen are combined in water, but if we throw sodium into the water we shall find that oxygen likes sodium better than hydrogen, and promptly deserts the latter to combine with the former; so we have a compound called sodium hydroxide instead of water, and the released hydrogen escapes."

There is abundant literature on the formation of the earth , the nebulous substance in the heavens that gradually cooled until it was a misty, hardly tangible globe. In Lecomte du Nuoy's "Human Destiny", the author

gives, in the section "The Evolution of Man", a vivid description of the early life of the planet, the stifling atmosphere, the clouds and fog and rain which blotted out the sun almost entirely. This cooling period, only about 25 to 85 million years ago, is comparatively recent, but gives one an idea of how the involutionary period of the earth must have been, scarcely more than vapour. Who is to say that during that early age life did not exist on the planet? As we take our bodies today from the gross substance that is the earth, so when it was of a cloud-like substance, life may have been clothed in the available vestments.

2. Beginning of Evolution: Matter, Gross and Subtle

If man evolved from animal, is it not possible that animal evolved from a still lower form of life, progressing from the plant world? There are substances which are something of a link also between plants and minerals, as rust, or bacteria, leading us to believe that we may even have been lowly mineral. But even in the mineral, as we have noted, there is consciousness, perhaps a striving for something, an instinct, and so through the millions or billions of years, that which became so involved strives to free itself.

We are not so much concerned here with the details of these beginnings except as an aid to understanding modern man and where he

stands in comparison with his past and future, his relationship to the rest of mankind and the universe, and how he can benefit from this knowledge.

Let us imagine a circle, placing at the top that early state of Equilibrium in the Cosmos. That Essence would be of such ~~substance~~ subtlity that we may term it pure Spirit. And as motion set in and separation began, gradually there appeared matter more gross until the density was such that reaction began to set in, and the trend was back up the other side of the circle toward Spirit, the Absolute, all nature seeking equilibrium once more. The descending arc we may term "involution" and the ascending arc "evolution". According to reliable sources****

("The Secret Doctrine"- H. P. Blavatsky)

the length of time of this complete cycle is about 4,320,000,000 years. At the end of that time the universe rests, dissolved in the Absolute, and then in another Day of Time the cycle begins again.

To evolve from the mineral state through plant and animal to man may appear to be tremendous progress, yet our bodies are still very gross, we are primitive in many ways, we have not yet found our way out of ignorance and suffering, and our apparent nearness to gross matter and inertia rather than a close connection with and understanding of etherial substances and subtle forces, suggests that we are actually only beginning our climb up the circle. There may be millions or billions of years ahead

of years ahead before we again reach the top. The belief that man has progressed as far as he can go is very erratic. There are forerunners of a new race who indicate that even the physical body will undergo vast changes. (More of these entities will be explained farther on.)

II.
MAN TODAY
1. Indicators of level

Looking back over past civilizations we sometimes wonder if man has actually evolved at all. Modern savage warfare with man's inhumanity to man, petty strife, lust, selfishness and ignorance cast a shadow on all evolution. Looking back, ancient Greece produced men seemingly comparable to most great men today; China used electricity two or three thousand years ago; the Great Pyramid of Gizeh, built possibly 25,000 or even 75,000 years ago, could not be duplicated today, so great were the knowledge and techniques that went into it.* (See "Great Pyramid Passages" - Edgar, "Great Pyramid Proof of God" - and numerous

other writings on this great wonder.)

But progress is not in a straight line with never a slip back. Even a child, after he has learned a new thing, may slip back into his old way for a little while longer. Evolution progresses in cycles," ("Theosophy", - Alvin Kuhn, p. 2) spiraling ever upwards, often falling back but not so far as before, and rising each time just a little higher. And as evolution goes, a few thousand years are as a few minutes in eternity, and in that span progress may appear to be imperceptibly slow. But progress there is.

There has been some refinement of the physical man and some changes have taken place which are not visible to mass man, but he is still very gross in comparison to what he will eventually

be. His emotional evolution seems to be similarly slow. Unevolved man acts instinctively rather than through reason, and his emotions may be generally of a violent nature, giving way readily to any and all feelings. Man today has added reason to his emotions but is still largely dominated by feeling. Of course there has been some refinement throughout, but usually he sees no harm in giving vent to any feelings, whether of hate, lust of anger, for example. He has not yet seen the need for transmuting these emotions into their polar opposites or tempering them with understanding, kindness or perhaps humor, because the principal reasons for the need are of a subtler order, the dangers not readily recognizable.

Witness, for instance, the psychological development of hatreds, how hate breeds hate and can cause some triviality to grow into a fierce war; and witness that lust is never satisfied by indulgence but only grows stronger. The more thought one gives to it the more one feels the need of it, and consequently the nobler activities suffer. Tenseness as we know is a cause of ulcers, and bottled resentments can lead to cancer. More obvious is man's development of the mind. He has learned to adjust himself somewhat to his environment, to develop his culture and his arts, and here and there a mental giant has appeared, an inventor, a great artist, a philosopher, a statesman.

Art reflects man's place in evolution

quite well. A groping for subtlity, a seeking for freedom from gross matter may now be seen in modern trends of architecture. Massive stone structures are fast giving way to airy, sky reaching buildings of such light materials as aluminum and glass, giving one a feeling of lightness, almost fluffiness.

In the field of music the less evolved prefer the obvious, strong, simple rhythms, short uncomplicated phrases, single melodic lines. (This does not mean that great music cannot be simple, for much of it is.) First he develops an ear for rhythm, later for melody, and later still he learns to discriminate harmonies and tone quality and the finer points of music. Almost anyone can discern a mistake in rhythm,

most can tell when the melody is wrong or out of tune, many can discern bad harmony, but few can say whether or not a tone is harsh or resonant, angry or kindly, or in keeping with the mood of the composition.

Art is evolving throughout our civilization with drabness and dark color giving way to brighter, lighter colors, color becoming luminescent rather than the dead colors of the earth, with such aids as neon lighting. There is a growing love of beauty - or truthfulness - with a developing sense of proportion, blend, contrast, balance, gracefulness of line, etc. At the same time there are fads which are indicative of lesser cycles which at intervals reach an undisputed low ebb.

In the field of recreation the invention of firearms and clever traps has not made the sport of hunting any less primitive, but those who refuse to kill, whether man or animal, are evolving. The show of brute, physical strength, as in the prize fight, is close to the bottom of the evolutionary ladder. Physical games of skill rise above those of physical strength and may require a good deal of brain work and some subtlity. Recreation is beginning to have a new look, to re-examine its name and purpose - to re-create, and has begun to put constructive enterprise before the people. Whether the "do-it-yourself craze is just a fad or the beginning of a greater climb, time will tell.

There is an unevenness in the development with some people manifesting certain traits very strongly and other traits not at all, or some developing into well rounded personalities, some undeveloped generally, or some who seem to have mastered every department of life. But to say any one person is any better than another is a dangerous and dubious statement open to some very critical analysis. One may, for instance, be a better cook than another, but the other may be a better mother; or, one physician may be an expert diagnostianian and incapable of performing any operation, while another may be quite the reverse. One is definitely better than the other - but in just one field, and it

does not follow that one is completely better or worse than another. To evaluate the complete individual one would have to figure each detail and evaluate it according to standards that are not arbitrary, and integrate them.

The unevenness of the individual is likewise reflected in races and civilizations, some being philosophic, like the Orient, some being materialistic like the Occident; or undeveloped as the African Bushmen, or very learned as a body of university professors or scientists; or peaceful as the South Sea Islanders, or warlike as the armies of Ghengis Kahn. Each group is a distinctive personality. Some of these traits we recognize as being desirable, or mature, others as undesirable or immature; some are on an

equal basis with others and neither better nor worse, just different. The well integrated personality will have developed all of his parts equally - body, emotions, mind, spirit, his relations with all outside himself.

To take the long perspective of evolution, from matter back to pure Spirit, we may gain some idea of where one stands in the various departments of life. As we have seen in the process of involution there became greater and greater separation of matter and energy, with consciousness becoming more and more embalmed in gross matter. In evolution there is a complete reversal. Man gradually grows in awareness, or consciousness, acting first from instinct, developing

reason later, and finally intuition, that instant knowledge which transcends reason and is dependent on a sixth sense not yet developed in the race generally.°°° (Dr. R. M. Bucke, in "Cosmis Consciousness", credits this phenomenon to one in many millions, sets the average age for the acquisition of it at around 35, describes it rather as a sudden awakening with more or less violent impact, and cites some historic examples of some who have attained.) Besides the gross physical man develops an emotional and then a mental body, and later still more subtle bodies which permeate the gross physical.°°°° (See "Man Visible and Invisible", by C. H. Leadbeater; also "Man and His Bodies" - Annie Besant.) As these

higher, or subtler, bodies develop the grosser ones decline until there may be a time when the entity will cease to exist as physical man and will dwell on an invisible, energy plane.

Man's habits, interests and attitudes indicate how far he has progressed in any given direction. His selfishness or unselfishness, his hates or loves, correlate ~~xn~~ with the trend from separateness to final complete unity. His art mirrors his growth in sensitivity and discrimination, or the trend from the finite to the infinite. His ability or inability to detach himself from materiality and worldliness which keep him in perpetual bondage measure his growth from matter to Spirit.

2. Dilemmas of Man Today.

This unevenness in our culture stems from the fact that no two people have had exactly the same experiences and the result is misunderstanding and suffering. At the same time this unevenness provides a stimulus to greater growth and gives life greater interest. Uniformity in any community is good to an extent as long as it serves the greatest good and does not stifle initiative and growth. But always there are some who seem to be entirely out of line to the extent of being problems to their fellow men. We are only beginning to recognize the fact that many are immature, that is, they lack the virtues common to the majority. The thief is an example of one

who has not yet awakened to the more mature values of honesty. At the same time the public is apt not to recognize those whose experiences have been so vast as to permit them to outstrip their race generally. Their actions are foreign to the masses who, not understanding, disapprove and on occasion can be extremely cruel to these individuals. One need only turn back the pages of history for such examples as the Crucifixion, or persecution of people like Roger Bacon, Galileo, or Mme. Blavatsky. This is especially true if the individual has evolved far in one direction and neglected another category of learning and so is maladjusted in a society of "normal" people. An imbalance of experience may lead to what is commonly regarded as neurosis

or even insanity, and it appears that those recognized as genius are often the ones who most easily lose their sanity. It is possible that here their experiences have been almost entirely along one line, a specialization in one field to the neglect ~~xx~~ of other phases of learning.

Man today stands confused, struggling with his desires and burdened with suffering, not yet wise enough to understand what life is about, but intelligent enough to know that things are sorely amiss. He has been taught that suffering is inevitable, and that man does things a certain way because it has always been that way and is right if the majority does or thinks so, wrong if the majority does not do so

He is torn between what he wants and what he needs, believing these to be the same, and believes that if he wants a thing then it is right that he should have it. He is told that there is nothing new under the sun and therefore cannot conceive of any different kind of life from any that has ever gone before.

These confusions often end in a pilgrimage to the psychiatrist whose own perspective may or may not be a longer one, although a long perspective would be lost on many a ~~xxxxxx~~ patient and working out the smaller detail may prove to be more successful for the time being. Man probes, but not too deeply usually, into the future, and seeing nothing beyond his present physical life feels a futility that soon dictates all his actions. He

sees no purpose or plan other than seeking happiness and comfort, and he may use for his motto: "Live today for tomorrow we die". So he struggles to make money for the material things of life and the rest of the time seeks to entertain himself and be comfortable. He concludes that happiness is the ultimate aim of life and if one is considerate of others it is simply because it is good business, nothing more. He sees death as the only release from suffering, yet he clings tenaciously to life through an innate will to live.

One of the conflicts of man today is his sense of separateness as against his desire for unity. His sense of separateness has led to individuality but also to selfishness, and clinging to it has retarded his own progress and that of all mankind. The result has been man against man, nation against nation and race against race. In time these conditions will disappear and the next two thousand years should see a marked change in this direction - provided man is not so successful with his newly found atomic power as to blow us prematurely into infinity. X

The feeling for unity is innate in man and, growing in understanding and sympathy for others, he begins to lose his sense of separateness. As even mineral has an attraction for other minerals,

so beings are attracted to each other, most especially their polar opposites, thus fulfilling a universal law that all nature seeks a balance. As the opposite poles of a rod are attracted to each other they tend to neutralize, or balance each other. Physical, or sexual love, is one of the earliest manifestations of an instinct for unity, a feeling of at-oneness with the universe. Gradually the love ~~for~~ of one being for another is extended as man evolves, and changes from physical to more subtle types, a meeting of the minds or spirits. Physical love is actually a mixture of selfishness and lust, possibly including admiration, understanding or sympathy, or compassion - a "suffering together", devotion. The higher elements of love are usually extended first to members of the

immediate family, then clan or community, then nation and finally the world, including all lesser life and all inanimate things.

Change: P. 31 = P. 34

2 5

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3. Experience: the Vehicle of Evolution

Learning comes through experience. With the exception of that knowledge we may best here describe as intuition, and with which we will deal in further detail later on, all of modern man's accumulated knowledge, his way of life and every action is the result of experience (or inexperience). Primitive man had no handy reference books or radios or organized schools to teach him, and for him it was necessary to learn everything by trial and error - a slow process. It was also necessary to learn directly from nature, man's greatest teacher. In our own time there has been a tremendous acceleration of learning, mainly because of our easy access to the recorded accumulation of exper-

iences down through the ages, not in books alone. The automobile is the record of the invention of the wheel, the moulding of metal, the harnessing of electircity, the utilization of oil as fuel, vulcanizing, a partial conquest of time and space, development of materials, etc., and without most of these previous experiences the modern auto could never have come into being.

We might consider theoretical training to be learning through the experiences of others, and without its help learning would progress so slowly that we would still be back in the stone age. But personal experience is just as necessary, for without some background of it one would not be able to assimilate much of the theoretical.

There can, however, be an inner experience. The act of absorbing learning from others' experiences and making that knowledge part of one's own consciousness would in itself be an inner experience. It does not necessarily follow that every experience teaches a lesson, yet, say the Great Ones, nothing is ever lost.

As for the unbalanced entity it is obvious that he needs experience of an entirely different order, and for him to be thrown into entirely new situations might be an extremely bitter experience, but in the end he emerges the butterfly.

4. The End of Evolution.

That state of being into which all men and all things are ultimately drawn would be complete harmony, complete balance, unity, perfection. As man becomes more evolved perfection takes on deeper significance and becomes a goal, a thing akin to God, or the Absolute. As one approaches perfection he approaches infinity. His own needs or desires may dictate the necessity for striving for perfection, or his very existance may depend on it, especially in a highly competitive society; his ambition may lead him in that direction, or the desire to be loved either by an individual or the multitudes, or he may desire perfection for the sheer joy which he derives from the effort,

and from the growth he makes. Absolute perfection does not exist on this earth plane. One can only approach it as one approaches infinity. Yet it is the end of evolution, perfection in every phase of existance - physical, or absolute balance of matter and energy; emotional, recognizing emotions for what they are, maintaining emotional balance and attaining to a profound, absolute Peace. When the mind is united with all minds, has transcended all ignorance and is all knowledge, then will it be perfect. There will be complete harmony, not just within the body but with all peoples and all things. All will be united into the One.

Perfection is not merely desirable, it is inescapable, inevitable. It is possible to postpone it if one is a

determined to fight it, but the faster one climbs toward it the sooner he unshackles himself from ignorance and suffering, and the higher he climbs the greater will be his happiness.

Such perfection, peace, unity, etc., may sound very unattractive to average man who is attached to the life he knows to the extent that death appears to be the supreme tragedy. This apparent cancellation of everything he knows may sound only dreary and hopeless, yet men who have reached that stage of Cosmic Consciousness (and there are a few,) insist it is absolutely worth any sacrifice anyone can ever make!* (See "Pathways Through to Space" - Dr. F. Merrell-Wolff, ch. 53, "The Evidence for the Higher Consciousness".) If these men

are unable to give adequate description of this state of consciousness it is because it is of such quality as transcends the five physical senses and consequently would be ubintelligible at the level of ordinary mind. The great religions of the world have been built on this knowledge of "Other-Worldliness", or Cosmic Consciousness, although in attempting to translate it into the language of the senses it has been distorted and usually completely misunderstood.

There are various names for what is here called Cosmic Consciousness - Illumination, Realization (not in the ordinary sense), Moksha, Nirvana, Recognition, Knowledge through Identity, Christ Consciousness, etc. To the ordinary

individual reason transcends all, yet there is abundant evidence that reason in its turn is transcended, and an attempt is here made to indicate some of this evidence and present a somewhat better understanding of it.

Supposedly this "Awakening" comes by Grace, and according to Dr. R. M. Bucke in "Cosmic Consciousness" it comes to one in many millions, occurs instantly, usually around the age of 35, lasts from a few seconds to a few minutes but leaves lasting knowledge and wisdom and power. The subject experiences a feeling of great exstasy, or bliss, and a sudden awakening to great truths hitherto incomprehensible. The phenomenon is usually accompanied by an emanation from the subject of some brilliance, as was witnessed by those who saw Moses coming

down from Mt. Sinai, or Paul when he was struck blind.

"Pathways Through to Space" by F. Merrell-Wolff, (Richards ed.), is a remarkable personal record of a transition from what is termed relative, or subject-object consciousness (that of both our waking life - objective plane, and after-death life - subjective plane), to a plane of consciousness which rises above both. The transition brings with it absolute, not relative, knowledge, and great powers. But as there are levels of subject-object consciousness, so there are different levels of Cosmic Consciousness, and certain named ~~xy~~ actually identify certain levels. Nirvana is more indicative of the ~~ob~~ subjective state, the polar opposite of our waking consciousness

and is the most easily attained. Yet it is not so infinite and its powers do not match those of the Consciousness which transcends the duality of subjective-objective planes. It is still beyond the comprehension of ordinary mind or reason.

Evidence of the benefits may be seen in the examination of the life and works of those who have attained. As noticeable as any are the works of Walt Whitman and Balzac, both of whom wrote very ordinary works before the transition, but whose works that followed were inspired. One of the brilliance of a Plato is carried infinitely higher but to the person of ordinary consciousness the difference may not appear as great, actually because these levels are beyond human measurement.

Some who have attained to Illumination include Gautama Buddha (Buddha means "The Enlightened One"), Shankara, Jesus, Pythagoras, Plato, Paul, Plotinus, Mohammed, Dante, Francis and Roger Bacon, Jacob Boehme, William Blake, Balzac, Whitman, Emerson, Swedenborg, and possibly Ramakrishna, Tennyson, Gideon, Spinoza, Wordsworth, Thoreau, Isaiah, St. Germaine, Paracelsus. These latter are listed by Dr. Bucke as doubtful cases.

The personal record of Dr. Wolff is meant as a guide to those who aspire, giving what information can be presented and all conditions relative to Illumination. He cites the pitfalls and the rules, which are stringent, and makes it clear that one cannot hope to arrive there and keep one hand in the flesh-pots. It is a

road of sacrifice and dedication, sacrifice of pride, selfishness, personal desire, etc., but he adds that it is worth any sacrifice one can ever make. This transition in consciousness is the true meaning of being born again. The difference between a genuinely Illumined One and an ordinary individual is as great as the difference between an ordinary individual and a pig, say those who have attained. It is like breaking through a ceiling of the mind into a new dimension undreamed of before, and the knowledge and power place these super-men in a position where the modern scientist appears as a child dipping out the ocean with a spoon.* ("How to Know God - Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali" - Isherwood & Prabhavananda)

In Alice Bailey's "Iniation: Human and Solar", are listed seven degrees

or initiations. Probably most of those personalities mentioned attained to to first and the first only, and a few have gone higher. Jesus, she points out, received His third Initiation at around the time of his baptism which began His career of ministry, and his fourth Initiation was the Crucifixion. Buddha seems to have been the first of whom we have any record, of evolving mankind to attain Illumination. But according to Dr. Bucke these phenomena are gradually increasing and it is generally conceded that the time will come when they will be very commonplace in the world.

It has been said that Illumination comes by Grace** (see Letters of Sri Aurobindo, second series, section 9 - "Divine Grave"). Actually it appears

so to the limited reasoning mind that feels some have attained who were not as deserving as some who did not attain. But supposedly things are seen by the Higher Mind that are not seen by ordinary man, and one who may appear to be so ready may have still a certain ~~drawback~~ serious weakness which may prevent him throughout his lifetime from this attainment. This Grace does not fall haphazardly on just any being without reason. Nothing happens by chance. It may be safe to say that those who attain are highly evolved beings - far from perfect still, and even those who are Illumined are still evolving. They are infinitely closer to perfection than the unillumined, but with still some way to go.

5. The Means to the End.

Although there is no set formula for attaining perfection there are certain stimuli suitable for the average civilized being that may hasten the process. We have seen that he learns by experience; in the past and still mostly in the present, experience is forced upon one by circumstances, or Nature, and is not of his own choosing. From every experience should come some lesson, and if the lesson is not learned the problem recurs over and over, with variations perhaps. Once a problem is mastered it is no longer a problem. So one way to quicken the learning process is to seek experience voluntarily. Even experiences which may on the surface appear to have no bearing on one's life or work may be the

most beneficial, and may serve to integrate the smaller details for a better understanding of the whole. In the words of a great philosopher, "A physician is a better physician for having studied music.

If there is danger of too much specialization leading to one-sidedness, then there is also danger of a superficial sampling of everything with no profound experience in any one field. Another philosopher, ~~takes~~ likens a man who has investigated all the religions superficially without probing any one deeply, to a man who digs many wells but none of them deep enough to bring any water.

A beginning in the seeking of perfection is often made with a branch of

the arts. One is usually not so much aware of a striving for perfection in the ordinary walks of life, for he does a thing either because he has to or because he likes to. But with higher learning certain values begin to become evident. The painter early learns to discriminate between color and form, later learns such things as blend, balance, composition and the finer techniques; the scientist or technician acquires skill at his work, becoming highly sensitive to ~~xxxxx~~ certain conditions and thereby more capable of delicate or intricate work. The advancing musician gradually learns to discriminate between infinitely small differences in pitch or intensity or tone quality, between good melody and banal, between a correct

performance and an inspired one. The artist has as a by-product of his musical performance mastered qualities such as coordination, agility, concentration, analytical ability, self discipline, patience, imagination.

One unskilled in the arts may challenge the worth of them, but one who has pursued them to a relatively high degree can hardly failt to see their worth. They are something of a window to discrimination generally, which quality must be developed if one is to approach perfection. There is a high correlation between the arts and the art of living. As in music so in daily living one firstx learns the extremes of good and bad, or right and wrong action, or the opposite poles of any manifestation.

Later he is able to discern the slightly wrong from the slightly right, or the good from the better, the unimportant from the important, the important from the more important. Through the arts especially man is able to learn discrimination to an infinite degree. From mastery of one skill or phase of learning the way becomes clearer to mastery in other fields, mastery of the self, the health, body, emotions, mind, and mastery over the forces of nature and over his own future. Gradually, through mastery he lifts himself from suffering and misery to a plane of continuous ecstacy and usefulness.

A push-button civilization doubtless will add to a man's comfort, but the

time may come when he either cannot or need not depend on the machine. When the machine fails him after he has learned to lean upon it he is lost. But the truly evolved being will be resourceful enough to have many of these machine powers contained within himself, or to have no need of them, or will have the wisdom to invent or manufacture almost instantly whatever suits his needs.

III.
Beyond Man: the Near and Distant Futures.

It is highly probable that our present civilization, following the pattern of past civilizations, will rise to a high peak and decline, sinking into another Dark Ages, but not quite so dark and possibly of much shorter duration, after which a still greater civilization will arise. The peak of our present civilization may still be far in the future as might be indicated by the great strides which science is taking, and new humanitarian and social attitudes that are now coming into being; at the same time there are already indications of decline, noticeable for instance through the great crushing machinery of pressure groups, and also through what appears

to be a degeneration of general mentality, the result of plush living that seldom taxes the brain enough to keep it from atrophying. Yet much that may appear to be either advance or degeneracy is only change, the results of which are not always apparent.

For the time being, civilization should forge ahead so long as the great minds of the world are allowed to function. Once they are curtailed doom is not far off.

For a look at the more distant future man may see wonderful and unbelievable things. Desire natures will have given way considerably to mental and spiritual natures of men who shall possess powers which are at present almost beyond our imagination. Man will be much less

selfish and will be free of those weaknesses which he has found hold back his own progress as well as that of others; there will be a greater feeling of unity and brotherhood and eventually wars will cease. Man may argue that human nature does not change. It certainly does change. Where there is no change there is no growth, and admittedly many individuals can live their entire lives through without seeming to change in the least; but looked at over the ages we see the progress mankind has made.

The arts of the future will manifest breath-taking beauty everywhere; mankind will no longer be plagued by insects; feeding the world will be no problem and there will be but little

suffering. Progress in science will be beyond the ken of today's man, yet to many, mechanical devices will be superfluous, because man will have reached that stage of self mastery where he can command the elements, can project his mind or read another's telepathically, understand the language of animals, keep in perfect health and live for 1000 years; he will see clairvoyantly, fly without any mechanical aid, and be able to pass through gross matter as if it were not there. There are many other amazing things he will be able to do, things that are generally believed to be not possible, but most of these feats have already been performed, some many times over.

There are hundreds of references to these phenomena just mentioned. The

miracles of the Bible are not to be taken too lightly although it is true some are subject to a rather free interpretation. There is the instance wherein Joshua commanded the sun to stand still. He well may have commanded it, yet it is not likely that the sun stood still. "Worlds in Collision", by , advances the theory that some heavenly body came into the orbit of the Earth, exerting such attraction on it as to slow ~~down~~ its rotation to a standstill, thus causing a cataclysm. If such is the case, Joshua had nothing to do with it, but we may speculate on the theory that he may have had a premonition of such disaster and simply capitalized on it- if he were of such personality to do so.

But the miracles of Jesus we may take with more seriousness. He is

recorded to have walked on the waves, for instance. This phenomena, called levitation, is not too uncommon. "Isis Unveiled" - H. P. Blavatsky, devotes two pages to an explanation of it under the name: Aethrobacy, in the section: "Before the Veil". The magazine Tomorrow, Vol. 1, no. 2, carries ~~the~~ a dissertation on levitation, presenting several examples. Time magazine, Feb. 16, 1953, reports the claim ~~of~~ that a Hindu recently flew three miles through a Nepalese jungle.

D. M. Tredwell, most skeptical biographer of Apollonius of Tyana, admits that in prison he removed the chained rings from his ankles with no effort, and as effortlessly replaced them. He also brought to life a maiden who was being borne to the funeral pyre, according to Tredwell.

He is highly skeptical about the tales of the disappearance of this man from his trial, but this miracle is chronicled by Manley Hall in "The Phoenix", giving some hint of how he actually vanished.

Also in "The Phoenix" is an account of Mme. Blavatsky herself, who was one of the most amazing and remarkable ~~xxxxxx~~ persons in history. She had such command over the elements as to produce at will almost any material object. Col. H. S. Olcott, her co-worker, recounts in his "Old Diary Leaves" many of the astounding things which she did, and numerous other writers confirm these stories. Col. Olcott himself toured India for a year healing by Faith or mesmerism, and gives an excellent account of

some of the secrets of the art, notes on sensitivity and rapport, faith, psychology, a positive attitude and knowledge of the subject, the nature and potency of unseen forces.

There are great men now living who, according to reliable records are over 200 years old. Many have developed a sixth sense, or rather, various degrees of clairvoyance and telepathy. There are thousands of cases of remarkable powers developed and reliably recorded.

That age when these and similar phenomena will be the heritage of the majority, or at least very commonplace would be perhaps a few thousand years hence, and still mankind will be only a little way up the ~~[illegible]~~ ascending arc of the circle, scarcely more than

just beginning to evolve. One day he will cease to be merely man and become something greater, clothed perhaps in the mantle of his own choosing, a physical or semi-physical body or one of such subtlity as to be unseen by norman vision, of the size of man or of a planet, with or without definite form, but completely self contained. As the universe expands so does he, and finally he will seek rest and the highest joy again in the absolute, but possibly not for another two billion years, more or less.

IV.
THE DIVINE PLAN

In comparison to the tremendous length of time that represents one complete cycle, which cycle may in turn be only one phase of a greater cycle - who knows? - our little earth life is but a fleeting second. In that scant second we, atoms compared to the planet on which we dwell, are engaged in constant struggle, suffering, hoping, each of us seemingly the center of the universe. Billions of people have lived and died on this planet through the ages, and so have billions of lesser life forms.

For what?

The materialist says, "When you're dead you're very dead". If there is a soul, he argues, it is only a product of the physical and dies with

the physical, and thus he reduces the individual to nothing more than a piece of very intricate machinery. So this machinery has been running for millions of years with each of its countless billions of component parts worrying, struggling, grasping perhaps for immortality in some form or another, trying to satisfy a yearning for eternal life by endeavoring to prolong its present life, or projecting something of itself through descendants, either in quality or quantity, or perhaps by seeking immortality through fame or greatness, living on in the mind and hearts of other machines.

But why should machinery care? 'Though death be painless why should we look upon it as such tragedy if we are nothing but machinery? The idea that

machinery should seek immortality is slightly ridiculous unless ---. True the physical body is an intricate machine, a highly sensitive instrument, but could there not be some kind of soul body independent of the physical being?

The answer may partly be in the theory expounded ~~of~~ here of origin, that Spirit has always been, or rather, that Spirit and matter were one, inseparable, but the manifested, or physical universe was not always. If there is consciousness in every atom then consciousness must surely persist even after the destruction of the form, but then what do we mean by destruction? The form can be destroyed, the substance chemically changed,

but annihilation of matter or energy, that is, reducing it to nothingness, is an impossibility.

Since energy and substance are indestructible, and since we are fashioned of them, then we must be automatically immortal. And since consciousness persists in every atom there is a chance that the seeming concentration of consciousness which we recognize as ourselves, may persist in its concentrated form. We are familiar with the law of attraction. So if this consciousness continues to exist after the state we call death, then it must likewise have existed before birth into our present life. If matter and energy cannot be destroyed neither can they be created. They have always been.

Are we then to believe that the end of all one's struggling and aspirations is only death? If we are just so much machinery, is this machinery running purposelessly through the ages with no other purpose than to continue running purposelessly? Or could there be a plan to it? Man, being scarcely an atom in the great universe, being in it and of it, could scarcely be expected to comprehend a thing so vast any more than an atom of the body can comprehend the entire body, its function and purpose and its ruling power. Man scarcely understands his own body.

The physical, or material, body is evident to all, as is evident its inheritance from its parents. Less evident is the existence of an energy

body manifesting in various ways as hear, electrical impulses, sound, emotion, thought, and perhaps other, more subtle ways, beyond the ken of mass mind. Is it not possible that after the state we call death these energies might still persist, even if dissipated? As we have seen, they cannot be destroyed. And is it not possible that like atoms with an affinity for each other they may not be dissipated, but continue in a fixed condition for perhaps eternities?

Through the ages the great sages of the world have insisted that there is a Divine Plan, with growth, or evolution being a means to the end, and the end being perfection, or absolute balance. Perfection is the original state of matter and energy dissolved

into each other, the unity of All, the Absolute. But it is obvious that perfection cannot be reached in a single lifetime. Even if one may accelerate the learning from the accumulated experiences of others through such mediums as text books, schools and all manner of communication, there is still much too much to learn. And if perfection means absolute unity of all things, then all beings must of necessity attain to it.

If we are to reach perfection through the medium of experience, then learning through experience may be the reason for our sojourn on this planet and in this phase of life. And since perfection cannot be attained in a single lifetime, and since we have seen that we are automatically immortal, it may be logical to believe that we have lived

before and will live again as we know life. According to the great sages we have already lived hundreds of lives as human beings.* (see The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett.)(also "Reincarnation" - Manley Hall.)

The persistence of the entity may account for certain character differences children, or may explain why one becomes a prodigy and another cannot learn the simplest things, yet both may be equally sound in body. It may explain such a case as the celebrated Negro slave known as Blind Tom who, as a small child suddenly startled everyone by reproducing perfectly on the piano music he had just heard without ever having touched the instrument before , and his remarkable career

as a concert artist.** (A detailed account of him is given early in "From Cretin to Genius" - Voronoff.) Brothers and sisters may have dispositions and characteristics at polar opposites and differ from their parents.

The majority are not conscious of any memory of past lives, but claims of those who say they do remember cannot be completely ignored even if these claims cannot be proved to the satisfaction of every skeptic. Too numerous are the claims of persons who are otherwise generally recognized as being highly responsible citizens. (Thomas A. Edison and Henry Ford both believed in reincarnation. See "We Never Called Him Henry", by .) There has been a tendency to point a finger at great men's belief in rebirth with the remark that they

were undeniably great except that they had a peculiar quirk in their philosophy. Could it not be that this peculiar quirk is precisely what led to their greatness? They cannot all be liars or fools.

It is evident that physical characteristics are inherited, but it is possible that the temperament or personality may resemble that of the parents simply because the entity was drawn to those parents whom he most resembled, or most desired, or most deserved, depending on certain conditions.

As for the experience gained in a single lifetime, to consider it lost or destroyed at death is again to reduce man to machinery. It is possible that man may have stored the memory

of past experiences in his subconscious mind, the distilled wisdom of which determines much of his thoughts, personality and the course of his life. Consciously we do not even remember the early years of our present life, or even most of the happenings of last week, yet it has been shown time after time through the medium of hypnosis that these memories are actually still present in the subconscious. The store of knowledge in the subconscious mind should cause one to learn more easily by building on what is already there. One cannot grasp calculus until he has at least learned simple arithmetic, and hardly then. If one has mastered certain lessons in previous lives, then that particular department of learning should be no problem to him after an initial refresher course.

More than half the population of the world embraces the doctrine of reincarnation and it was accepted by the early Christian fathers. There is little allusion to it in the Bible because at that time it was simply taken for granted.

It may be this difference in belief between East and West that has caused the vast differences in culture. Perhaps the Western materialistic view that there is this life and this only, has been in a way beneficial, for Western man, if he have only one life to live, seeks to accomplish all in this one life. Time is short and so he must strive harder to meet the deadline, and in consequence has speeded up his own progress, coming

that much nearer to freedom from tribulation and suffering. The Eastern man in comparison is not in any special hurry, knowing that he has all eternity and that he can resume any unfinished business in another life. But reincarnation without evolution would revert to the perpetual machine again, which aimlessness may be responsible for the seeming apathy which has dominated the East. Belief in reincarnation without evolution would be about as hopeless and despairing as the materialist's point of view, if in a little different way. But reincarnation based on the theory of evolution can bring new hope to all of mankind.

Similarly, Christianity has suffered

through want of a belief in evolution, not through any fault of its great Founder, but through misinterpretations, distortions, omissions and the general human weaknesses of its ~~fxxxxxxx~~ followers. Seen through the eyes of the multitudes their religion for life on this plane offers no hope, only resignation to suffering which they see as inevitable. Release comes only at death, bringing eternal rewards or punishment out of all proportion to one's just desert, even admitting that it is hard for us to judge any man's worth. The entire philosophy seems to belie justice all the time it preaches justice. Yet a deeper look into the teachings of the Master in the light of evolution reveals a pretty complete alignment of His teachings with the theory

of evolution, as in his admonishment: "Be ye perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect." (It is understood here that by "Heaven" is meant a high state of consciousness rather than a location.)

For a complete understanding of himself it is necessary for man to find himself in Time as well as in Space. Without the knowledge of this relationship he may grope his way through, learning by trial and error over long eons identified with suffering. There is a shorter path to release, not through death but still in this life, release to a higher strata of consciousness which brings with it undreamed-of powers and absolute, not just relative knowledge, these powers and knowledge already possessed by a handful of people living today but unknown to the masses.

There are rules for attaining to this state, but rules not generally easy to follow. In the light of the greater perspective of evolution there is an alchemy of the soul, a transformation from base metal to pure gold, of from gross matter to pure spirit.

We have first to recognize this grossness and all that it implies - heaviness, inertia, ignorance, separateness, animalism. To identify ourselves with their opposites is to take a great step foreward. Of prime importance is the equal development of heart and head, or love and wisdom, and either one without the other is not sufficient. A great intellect who knows no compassion for his fellow man is blinded by

his sense of separateness to certain truths and consequently lacking in certain powers. The sense of unity is beginning to manifest in the popular notion that all men are created equal. Subconsciously, perhaps, it is a factor in politics with one party insisting that no one person is any better than another, hence all should have equal rights and status. The opposing party just as strongly insists that men are not equal, that one may be a harder worker, or more intelligent, or a person with much higher integrity or more capable than another, and so all are not equally deserving and should be rewarded accordingly. And in a sense both are right. Men as beings on this planet are not all equally evolved, which

is excusable if all did not come into human incarnation at the same time. But some are many lifetimes ahead of others. In the longer perspective all are of the same primordial substance and will be eventually gathered in when once more the Cosmos is in that state of perfect equilibrium, or rest. Hence all are equal, all are one, and where we now stand in the scheme of things lesser ones will eventually stand, and greater ones have stood. And since all are one, the hurt or good done to one is that much hurt or good done to all, and the person who holds back his own progress holds back the progress of all, while one who continues to improve himself improves all.

Still, there is a danger in striving for equality. To raise the lower element

is very noble, but to pull down or hold back the higher element to a common level would be disastrous and would retard evolution for all. It is deplorable that the school child who is far advanced for the normal of his age should not be permitted to forge ahead. Organized labor offers an example of a tendency to hold back to the detriment of all. As for the higher intellects that guide a nation, we have seen the liquidation of such "dangerous" individuals by tyrants, leaving the nation ultimately poverty-stricken mentally, and backward. Mankind needs great leaders and thinkers for a long time to come.

As wisdom without love is blinding, so is love without wisdom. The ability to

love and have sympathy or compassion seems to be a characteristic identified with the feminine side more so than the masculine, while wisdom seems to be more a characteristic of the male. One in whom there is a good balance of love and wisdom may possibly have lived in previous lives about an equal number of lives of each sex, thus gaining the experiences that are peculiar to each.

Animalism is the servant of involution rather than evolution, being basically the greatest single cause of suffering in the world today. Once that energy that serves lust and all the pleasures of the lower nature is turned into different channels, one begins to have a sense of well being and may

begin to hope for the higher life with all its wondrous benefits, which cannot come until there is a considerable degree of purification and discipline. New interests can be instrumental in diverting that energy which otherwise, for want of different direction will revert to its lusty habits, never satisfying, only strengthening its desire with each weakening to it. Such interests as constructive hobbies, pursuit of knowledge, participation in humanitarian activities, for instance, can be a stepping stone out of this quicksand which has held man back for so many centuries. In fact, say the Sages, civilization is about 145,000 years behind where it is supposed to be. That is, according to the calculations of the cycles of the universe, there is a deadline

for each phase of life.

If the trend toward perfection is inevitable, then it may appear that one need not make any effort, but may be permitted to continue in his comfortable rut and indulge in sensual or earthly pleasures for the remainder of his life. So he may, but he pays a price. He is in bondage in proportion to his desire for the lower life, not realizing usually what he has missed. By making a conscious effort and by pulling himself out of the mire of the world of desire, he raises not only himself but his fellow man, for in a sense each is a part of every other being. We are all interdependent on each other, perhaps not realizing the vast influence each has on the

rest. If, as has been said, the movement of a single finger can be felt on the farthest star, then our influence on those close to us must be very great. It is to our benefit to emanate a beneficial influence on others, those beings with whom we are primarily one. As we lift ourselves we lift others; and as we lift others we lift ourselves.

Gertrude Adams
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