

KARMA AS A CURE FOR TROUBLE.

THE greatest problem in human life is its sorrow. From some form of trouble not one of us is free. The happiest and most envied of men knows the meaning of bodily pain, of mental unrest, of sadness from disappointment, fear, or loss. How much more, then, those who are continually ill; those who are anxious over to-morrow's bread; those who perhaps have not bread enough for to-day. And to such as are suffering from cold and hunger and sharp discomfort in every form, there is added the bitterness of seeing wealth and luxury and ease in the hands of others whose characters and lives show no greater merit, perhaps less manly strength.

Every man asks why there is suffering in the world; but the poor man particularly asks why he is made so to suffer. He revolts at the seeming injustice of human lot, clenches his fist at the sight of finery and extravagance, possibly curses the earth whereon he lives in misery while his brother man has everything he can desire. None of the explanations given him satisfy either his reason or his feelings. The political economist states that inequalities in social life are the necessary effect of high civilization; that you cannot have workman without business, nor business without capital, nor capital without luxury; and that strength of mind has as much right to its gains as has strength of body. The candidate for office urges that this is all the consequence of evil laws, and that, when laws are made better, comfort will be more general. The parish clergyman tells him that it is the will of God, and that we are not to question its wisdom, but to submit to its authority. He has been pleased to make a few rich and many poor, some healthy and others weak, all to have trouble but most to have much of it, and that we must accept the fact with devout resignation, not eye it with doubt or bitterness.

But these arguments do not seem wholly to meet the case. Much sorrow of mind and much suffering of body exist for which they do not account, and it is not clear that the inequalities of life arise only from higher civilization or from unjust laws. Still less is one satisfied with the explanation of partiality in God, of a Fatherhood which is sympathetic only to a few of its children and wholly indifferent to the rest. And the hungry, shivering pauper does not look up with reverence to the skies if he thinks that thence come his misery and his pain.

There must be some better solution of the problem of human suffering if the mind is to be satisfied, the moral sense content, the inner spirit braced. And it is just here that Theosophy, the great teacher and inspirer of humanity, comes in with its doctrine of *Karma* as

explaining and justifying the facts of life as we know them. This doctrine holds that men are what they have made themselves, that their lot has been fashioned by their own acts, that they suffer or enjoy because they have earned either suffering or enjoyment. The condition in life is not an accident; it is an effect. But most men will say, "How is this possible? My condition began with my infancy; how can it have been determined by my conduct since? Your doctrine implies that I am as I am because I so prepared myself in a previous state!" To which Theosophy replies, "Precisely so. This is not your first earth-life, nor perhaps your hundredth. In the slow process by which Nature led you up from infancy to manhood your life was composed of distinct days, separated from each other by nights of sleep. So in that slower process by which she is educating you from the lowest stage of human littleness to the highest plane of godlike wisdom, your existence is composed of distinct lives, separated from each other by periods of withdrawal. In these lives you act and learn and form your character; as is that character, so are the lives which follow and express it. Re-birth, re-incarnation, is the law of human development; you come again and again into the world that you may improve and advance and struggle upwards to perfection. Karma expresses the extent to which you have done so; you are now what you have made yourself; your condition is that for which you are fit."

"Yet how can this be", it is honestly asked, "Do poverty or riches, feebleness or power, obscurity or rank, indicate the merit or demerit I have gained?" "Not at all", answers Theosophy; "but your degree of happiness does. Happiness does not depend on wealth or station; sorrow does not needfully follow small means or small influence. Joy and sadness are conditions of the mind, influenced no doubt by bodily surroundings, but not determined by them. The rich are not always happy, hence not the standards of past good; the poor are not always wretched, hence not the standards of past wrong-doing. It is the state of mind, not the state of the purse, which shows what Karma implies in any case."

If any man once clearly sees that his present condition is but the result of his conduct in prior lives; that it means and expresses, not merely what he has done, but what he *is*; that it is not an accident or a freak or a miscarriage, but a necessary effect through invariable law, he has taken the greatest step towards contentment, harmony, and a better future. For note what clouds this conception clears away, and what impulses towards improvement it at once begets. The sense of injustice disappears. He may not, cannot, know the past careers of which he feels the now effects, but he knows what their quality must have been from the quality of those effects. He reaps as he has sown. It may be sad or pitiable or distracting, but at least it is just. Envy disappears also. Why should he envy the greater happiness of those who, after all, have a right to it, and which might have been his too if he had earned it? Bitterness is assuaged. There is no room for such when it is seen that the causes for it do not exist, and that the only person meriting condemnation is oneself. Best of all, there dies out resentment at Divine

favoritism, that peculiarly galling belief that the Supreme Being is wilful or capricious, dealing out joys and sorrows for mere whim, petting one child and chastising another without regard to moral worth or life's deserts. In such a being confidence is impossible, and the only theory which can restore it is the theory of Karmic Law, a law which is no respecter of persons, regards each man precisely as any other man, notes the very smallest acts in its complete account book, enters their value in the precisest terms, and when the time of settlement arrives—be it in the same incarnation or in one far off on the great chain—pays it with scrupulous fidelity. Centering thus responsibility for each man's lot on himself alone, Karma acquits Providence, calms resentment, abates discontent, and vindicates justice.

But it does even more than this; it stimulates endeavor. If we are now what we have made ourselves, we shall be what we make ourselves. The mould of the future is in our hands to-day. The quality of later incarnations does not arise from chance, or from a Superior Will, but is simply such as we impart to them through our present. Responsibility, power, are ours alone. It is just as certain that re-birth will be upon the lines we trace in this life, as that the latter part of this life will be upon the lines traced in the former part. Re-birth is, in fact, an expression of character, and character expresses what we are and do. He, then, who desires a better reincarnation must better his present incarnation. Let him perceive the faults which mar his life—the sloth, the repining, the rashness, the thoughtlessness, the covetous spirit, the evil of hatred or uncharity—and let him master them. Above other faults, and embracing all, is that of *selfishness*, the sad love of personal desire as against the rights, the privileges, the happiness of brother men, a love which inflames every lower element in the human constitution, and kills all higher and richer sentiment. He who would prepare for himself a happier re-birth, may begin by making happier the lives of others. He may respect their rights, consult their feelings, extend their pleasures, generously sacrificing himself that they may profit. As he so does, his own higher nature is manifested, and finer satisfactions greet him with an unalloyed delight. By a blessed law of being, he who thus loses his life shall save it; for he not only tastes richer pleasure than any possible through selfish effort, but he moulds his character in the grace and beauty of true manliness, and he moulds, too, that new incarnation which is to fit the nature formed in this.

Certainly a principle which quickens the highest motives in human nature may well be the regenerator of human life. He who sees his present as the product of his past self, who foresees that his future will be the product of his present, who finds in Karma the unfailing treasury for every effort and every toil, who desires that re-birth shall have less of pain and more of gladness than he knows of here, will seek in generous service to follow-men the highest happiness of his highest faculties, and trust for brighter incarnation to that law which cannot break, that force which cannot fail.

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THEOSOPHY.

“Theosophy” is by no means as unfamiliar a word as it was but five years ago, yet its meaning is little more known to most who hear it. If they connect with it any idea at all, that idea is probably of mysterious Adepts in the Himalayas, or marvellous feats performed by Madame Blavatsky, or strange doctrines in strange words as to evolution of souls. Still, there is no doubt that Theosophical literature is spreading and that its topics are arousing discussion in private circles, sometimes even in pulpits, so that, if one wishes to be *à la courant* with all new thought, he must acquaint himself with this. And so I betook myself to a disciple and asked him to sketch me its outlines. This is what he gave:—

Theosophy is a Science, a Philosophy, and a Religion. It investigates the things that are, why they are, and what they ought to be; and it does so upon planes, within regions, and through resources possessed by no other system. Its range is the universe and everything therein, and, as that includes other grades of matter than that we see and touch, and other forms of life and force than those our scientists cognize, it must make use of additional faculties and accept evidence from additional witnesses. But as the greatest object of interest to Man is himself, his nature, history, and destiny, it expounds with special fulness the facts concerning him, facts which have largely been forgotten in this hemisphere, though familiar elsewhere and in ages past the property of all.

The two central facts are *Reincarnation* and *Karma*. Reincarnation means that his present life is but one of many that each man undergoes on earth, his evolution from ignorance to God-like knowledge requiring repeated embodiments in this scene of experience. Very little, as we all are conscious, can be accomplished in the few years of one—and that perhaps an unfavorable—existence, and so the process must be continued till its end is reached. This was the universal belief of the past; it has been held by many of the greatest

sages in historic times; it is embedded in the principal religions of the world; and it is rapidly emerging from the seclusion long forced upon it in the West. It seems strange until we think it out: then we see that nothing else is reasonable, satisfactory, explanatory of our own state and that of all men, harmonizing with all other facts in nature, society, and humanity.

Karma is the universal law of cause and effect; as bearing upon man, the law that he reaps whatever he has sown. His character is the result of his own efforts, his condition the result of his own acts. Perfect, flawless justice, which will not let an evil be unpunished or a good be unrewarded, sees that every merit or demerit brings about its exact due, not by any arbitrary interference, but upon the same principle that a stone hurled into the air returns with like momentum. No man can blame Fate or Destiny or Chance or God for his lot: he has made it for himself in bygone incarnations, and is making it afresh in the days of this. His present stage of mind, thought, taste, conscience, happiness expresses the point he has reached in the course he has pursued during ages now hidden from view; if he is not more advanced, it is because he wasted time or committed evil. And if a later incarnation is to be a betterment, it can be only as he betters himself, fits himself for higher levels, earns the right to more knowledge or joy.

These two doctrines are the vital essence of the whole Theosophic system. They have numberless corollaries and ramifications, and a study of these explains the enigmas of life, clears up its perplexities, and fertilizes its motives. No small part of Theosophical literature is devoted to explication of the bearings Reincarnation and Karma have on all human interests.

But what is Man himself? The ordinary answer is that he is a being with Body, Soul, and Spirit. True, says Theosophy, but this analysis is incomplete. He is a seven-fold, not a three-fold, compound; and is so because the universe and everything in it exist on seven planes. In the case of matter, three of these are obvious to our sense,—the solid, the liquid, the gaseous. The finer planes require finer senses. Now of man's seven principles, four are connected with this earth, belong but to the one incarnation then passing, and are dropped at death; the other three pertain to his real and permanent Ego, and continue through incarnation after incarnation. The latter have absorbed the result of the experience and conduct during the earth-life, and pass on so enriched, death detaching the body and its cognate principles as having finished their temporary purpose.

Between incarnations occurs a long period of rest and refreshment known as Devachan,—resembling the Christian "Heaven". Into it no sorrow enters, only such happiness as the man qualified himself for. Whatever evil was committed on earth must be recompensed on earth, and will be so in the next or later incarnations. Death has no real terror, for it introduces only to peace and joy: it is *life* wherein

are discipline and pain. Men are wrong to fear the spiritual world which ensures to them bliss, and to love the physical world which ensures to them their dues.

As the higher nature of man unfolds through deliberate effort in duty and practice, the grosser nature loses its hold and more delicate faculties develop. These are latent in all, but only to the advanced become conscious and operative. An Adept is one who has mastered his carnal and realized his psychic and spiritual functions, entering thus upon regions of knowledge, perception, and power which belong to such as have qualified themselves for entrance. All nature is open to every one who is fit, but there is no fitness short of character. As imperfect character means imperfect attainment, perfected character means perfected attainment. Now such attainment is not for selfish purposes, but for altruistic help, unselfishness being the essence of both purpose and method, and so this larger knowledge and power is used to teach and aid the less progressed. Much of the teaching as to the evolution and nature of man, the unseen planes, and the future life has come from these far-advanced students who see when we cannot and roam broadly where we do not enter. Each new discovery of science affirms their disclosures and justifies the confidence with which Theosophists regard such teachers.

As the whole of existence has come from one supreme source, is pervaded by one life, and works on towards one evolution under one law, unity is the essence of Theosophy. Human solidarity is the God-made fact, human antagonisms the man-made denial. Hence the hatreds and dissensions and wars and cruelties among nations and individuals are wrong, and no happiness can come till they and their contravention of the law are ended. When the fact of Universal Brotherhood is realized, when each man learns that an injury to his brother is an injury to himself, when Karma and Reincarnation make certain to every one that an unfraternal act recoils inevitably in this or a later life, the impulse to selfishness is paralyzed and the Golden Age at hand. But evolution is an active, not a passive, process. "We must *strive* to attain the prize of our high calling", as said an early Christian Adept. Therefore the thorough performance of every duty arising in life is essential to that evolutionary advance which contemplates the perfecting in each department of character and will. A weak spot, an unfinished part, keeps back till it is made right. Then, then only, can one go on.

In each of its functions as a Science, a Philosophy, and a Religion, Theosophy has enormous disclosures. It tells of the evolution of the cosmos, the earth, and man, the purport and method of all life, and the laws of racial and individual advance. It gives rational explanation and consistent relation where other systems give conjecture or dogma. Its confers a meaning upon existence, solves its problems, removes its anxieties. Best of all, it provides just motive, and shows how the Theosophic principle would annul the evils of earth by re-

forming the human character which has caused them. In the brilliant light which it throws on the questions that ever agitate humanity, and in the strength which it gives to effort and aspiration and beneficence, many are now rejoicing, and the Theosophical Society—an assemblage of students irrespective of church or caste or sex—is daily recruited from those who wish to understand themselves, the race of which they form a part, the world they inhabit, and the many worlds within, around, and above it.

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THEOSOPHY AS A GUIDE IN LIFE.

THIS is a practical age, and every system or theory is challenged to give proofs of what it may accomplish in action. How very little is gained by mere belief is the standing reproach to Churches. Their diversified Creeds have been steadily evolving through the centuries as new problems in theology or science arose, and to-day the separated sects have an outfit of every possible belief on every possible theme. No small proportion of these themes are in regions remote from practical life, as also from any means of proof. They concern such questions as the number and nature of Divine Beings, the character and bearing of the Divine Will, the fixedness of the future life, the best form of ecclesiastical sacraments, etc.—all of them with little facility of demonstration and with no utility when demonstrated. Moreover, it is quite evident that, whether there be One God or Three, whether He predestinates or not, whether evil-doers are damned eternally or temporarily, whether Baptism is efficacious towards pardon, the various sects have not made this earth more worthy of the Divine care or diminished the evils which religion should cure. As conservators of morals, abaters of sin, regenerators of society, Churches are assuredly a lamentable failure. It is not merely that society remains unregenerated, but that nobody now expects them to regenerate it. A copious provision of minute creeds has clearly done nothing to extirpate evil.

This being so, it is just as certain that the addition of another creed will not do it. The two classes interested in human progress are the philanthropic and the devout, and both, when any unfamiliar scheme for such progress is submitted to them, are sure to point out that mere beliefs have wholly failed. They say, with entire correctness, that not a new platform or Church is needed; but something with an object and an impulsion hitherto untried. If Theosophy has no better aim than have the sects, if, it imparts no motive stronger than do they, if it can show no results more distinct and valuable, it may as well be rejected now as after a futile trial. But, on the other hand, if it holds out a better prospect and a finer spur, if it can prove that these have actually operated where conventional ones have failed, it is entitled to a hearing. The doctrinal question is subordinate, though, of course, an ethical system is more hopeful if upon a rational basis.

Let us see if the unfamiliar system known as "Theosophy", and which has lately received so much attention from the thinking world, possesses any qualities warranting its substitution for the religions around it. They have not reformed mankind; can it?

Now 1st.—*Theosophy abolishes the cause of all of the sin, and most of the misery, of life.* That cause is selfishness. Every form of dishonesty, violence, outrage, fraud, even discourtesy, comes from the desire to promote one's own ends, even if the rights of others have to be sacrificed thereby. All aggression upon fellow-men, all attempts to appropriate their comfort, possessions, or plans, all efforts to belittle, outshine, or humiliate them, express the feeling that self-gratification is to be sought before all else. This is equally true of personal vices, as well as of that personal contempt for Divine authority which we may call "impiety". Hence the root of all evil conduct towards God, towards other men, or towards oneself is self-love, self-love so strong as to sacrifice everything rather than its own indulgence.

From this indulgence follow two things. First, the pains of envy, disappointment, jealousy, and all the mean and biting passions which attend the ever-present thought of self; and the utter loss of all those finer, gentler joys which are the fruit of beneficence and altruism. Second, the restraining measures which society, for its own protection, is obliged to put upon aggression in its coarser forms,—the workhouses, jails, and gibbets from which no land of civilization and churches is free. And if we wish to realize what would be the effect of a universal reign of unselfishness among men, we may picture a land without courts, prisons, and policemen, a society without speculation, chicanery, or deceit, a community whereof every heart was as vacant of envy and guile as it certainly would be of unhappiness and pain. The root of universal sorrow would be eradicated, the stream dried at its source.

Now this is what Theosophy enjoins. Its cardinal doctrine is the absolute equality of human rights and the universal obligation to respect them. If my neighbor's possessions—of feeling, property, happiness, what not—are as much to be regarded as mine, and if I feel that I shall not invade them. Still more. If I perceive the true fraternity of man, if I am in accord with the law of sympathy it evokes, if I realize that the richest pleasure comes from giving rather than receiving good, I shall not be passively unaggressive, I shall be actively beneficent. In other words, I shall be a true philanthropist. And in being this I shall have gained the highest reach of happiness to self, for "he that loseth his life, the same shall save it". You say that this is a Christian text? Very well; it is also the epitome of Theosophy.

Then 2nd.—*Theosophy sounds ceaselessly the truth that every act of right or wrong shall receive its due reward.* Most religious systems say otherwise. Usually they provide a "vicarious" plan by which punishment is to be dodged and unearned bliss secured. But if awards may be transferred, so may duties, and thus chaos is introduced into the moral order of the universe. Moreover, the palpable injustices of human life, those injustices which grieve the loving heart and sting the bitter one, are unaccounted for. All the inequalities and paradoxes and uncertainties so thick around us are insoluble. *Why* evil flourishes and

good withers may not be known. Night settles down on the most important of human questions.

Theosophy illuminates it at once. It insists that moral causes are no less effective than are physical, and that its due effect, in harm or benefit, is infallibly attached to every moral act. There is no escape, no loss, no uncertainty; the law is absolutely unflinching and irresistible. Every penny of debt must be paid, by or to the individual himself. Not by any means necessarily in one life, but somewhere and somehow along the great chain is rigorous justice done; for the effect of causes generated on the moral plane may have to exhaust itself in physical circumstances.

If unselfishness constitutes the method towards social regeneration, Karma—for such is the name of this doctrine of justice—must constitute its stimulus. Nothing fails;—no good, no evil, can die without its fruit. The result of a deed is as certain as the deed. How can a system be unpractical when it abolishes every bar to the law of causation, and makes practice the key to its whole operation?

Then 3rd.—*Theosophy holds that every man is the framer of his own destiny.* All the theological apparatus of “elections” and “predestinations” and “foreordinations” it breaks indignantly to bits. The semi-material theories of “luck” and “fate” and “chance” fare no better. Every other theory which shifts responsibility or paralyzes effort is swept away. Theosophy will have none of them. It insists that we can be only that which we have willed to be, that no power above or below will thwart or divert us, that our destiny is in our own hands. We may perceive the beauty of that conception of the future which embodies it in a restoration to the divine fulness through continuous purgation of all that is sensuous and selfish and belittling, and, so perceiving, may struggle on towards that distant goal; or self-besotted, eager only for the transient and the material, we may hug closely our present joys, heedless alike of others and of Karmic law; but whatever be the ideal, whatever the effort, whatever the result, it is ours alone. No Divinity will greet the conqueror as a favorite of Heaven; no Demon will seize the lost in a predestined clutch. What we are we have made ourselves; what we shall be is ours to make.

Here comes in the fact of Reincarnation. No one life is adequate to a man's development. Again and again must he come to earth, to taste its quality, to lay up its experience and its discipline, each career on earth determining the nature of its successor. Two things follow: 1st, our present state discloses what we have accomplished in past lives; 2nd, our present habits decide what the next life shall be. The formative power is lodged in us; our aspiration prompting, our will effecting, the aim desired. Surely it is the perfection of fairness that every man shall be what he wishes to be!

Of all the many schemes for human melioration which history has recorded and humanity tried, is there one so rational, so just, so im-

partial, so elevating, so motivated, as that presented by Theosophy? Artificial distinctions and conceptions are wholly expunged. Fanciful ambitions have absolutely no place. Mechanical devices are completely absent. The root of all separations and enmities—selfishness—is exposed and denounced. The inflexibility of moral law is vigorously de-claimed. The realization of individual aim is made entirely individual. Thus sweeping away every artifice and annulling every check devised by theologians, opening the path to the highest ideal of religious fervor, insuring that not an item is lost in the long account each man runs up in his many lives, handing over to each the determination and the acquirement of his chosen aim, Theosophy does what no rival system has done or can do,—affirms the moral consciousness, vindicates the moral sense, spurs the moral motive. And thus it is both practical and practicable.

Thus, too, it becomes a guide in life. Once given the aim before a man and the certainty that every act affects that aim, the question of the expediency of any act is at once determined. Is an act selfish, unfraternal, aggressive? It is then untheosophical. Is it conducive to unselfishness, spirituality, progress? Then Theosophy affirms it. The test is simple and uncomplicated, and, because so, feasible. He who would be guided through the intricacies of life need seek no priest or intercessor, but, illuminated with the Divine Spirit ever present in his inner man, stimulated by the vision of ultimate reunion with the Supreme, assured that each effort has its inseparably-joined result, conscious that in himself is the responsibility for its adoption, may go on in harmony, hope, and happiness, free from misgivings as to justice or success, and strong in the faith that he who has conformed to Nature and her laws shall be conformed to the destiny which she predicts for *Man*.

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SPIRITUALITY.

IN the conventional religious speech, the word "spirituality" means "a devotional habit of mind" or "an aspiration after Divine things". Theosophy gives it a far fuller and more extensive signification. It of course includes therein that of "yearning after God", for this is the highest and noblest reach of the human soul; but it also makes it to comprehend all faculty of understanding supersensuous truth, all interest in the illimitable sphere outside the range of our physical senses,—those things which, as the Christian Adept, Paul, said, "being not seen, are eternal".

We perceive this the better when we think out the extent to which our conception of the realities of life has been pushed by the ever-present influence of our material bodies. Their needs in maintenance and comfort, their demands for pleasure and recreation, their function—through the five senses—in opening to us whatever knowledge we gain of the surrounding world, their claims on us in families, social interests, and vital activities, all assuring predominance to them in thought. More than this, our inability to look into other realms of existence, our incapacity to sense unmaterial facts in any way so literal as when we "see" a landscape or a fellow-man, give an objectiveness to the material which we perforce consider reality. The vividness of external things, seen distinctly and spontaneously, contrasts with the dimness of internal visions, perceived vaguely and with effort. So to us the body is the real "I," the "I" which hungers and thirsts, wearies and pains, enjoys and plans, finally dies; and its earthly home is the real world, to be followed perhaps by another adapted to our then mutilated and denuded selves. So fixed is the idea of the body as a necessary element in the composite, triple nature of man, that the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection is to millions the assurance that they are not to be left permanently in the cheerless land of spirit, but are to regain their missing third, and the "Queen of Feasts", Easter, convinces them of an immortality which, without a resurrected body, would be more than doubtful and less than desirable!

One consequence of our mode of thought is that our attitude towards the unseen is always of looking upward, and looking upward with strain. Spiritual things are far away, high above our heads on other planes, and to hear them and feel them we must coerce the shrinking muscles into unfamiliar act. Indeed, no better proof of their little verity for us, as compared with that of material objects, can be found than our use towards them of the word "faith", which implies that, however sure we may be of the existence of matter, that of spirit can be only a subject for trust!

Theosophy's cardinal principle is a complete reversal of this position. Instead of taking its stand on the physical world as the permanent view-point, and thence looking off to the spiritual as a changeful, uncertain region, it stations itself in the spiritual

world as the real, the enduring, and the sure, and from there contemplates the physical as mutable, transient, and illusive. And surely this is in conformity to fact. Earthly objects are evidently in a state of flux. Not one remains the same for two consecutive hours, nay moments. Everything is disintegrating and recombining in other forms; the continents, the cities, the molecules are perpetually altering; the very bodies which we consider "I", the very organs through which we perceive the external world and through which comes to us our conviction of its durability, undergo atomic change each instant that we live. If neither the organs perceiving nor the objects perceived remain the same for a single hour, what possible stability have they as a view-point for existence?

But none of this can be true of the realm of spirit. Reason teaches that, as we ascend from the region of gross matter, passing upward through the zones of the less gross, the semi-material, the more and more ethereal, to the home of pure spirit, we part steadily from all the conditions which induce change and meet ever more fully with the permanent and the real. Interest, too, is correspondingly finer. Animal desires and needs are left behind, and the expanding nature rises past even, the intellectual, psychic, and emotional realms till it reaches the level of spiritual being, where truth is intuitively seen and right intuitively felt. As the pursuits of a physicist are incomparably superior to those of a day-laborer, so, it is evident, must those of a free spirit be to those of the physicist.

But of even deeper value to the human heart is the fact that recession from the material is approach to true happiness. The source of pain is in change. Hardly has a pleasure been attained than the shifting elements of life undermine it and it falls. Instability is the moan of the moralist, and he finds in it the cause of the desolating sorrows and bereavements of this world. These evils must, of course, diminish as we recede from the sphere of their conditions, and must die out as we near the realm of reality. Happiness, therefore, is least sure when it depends most on any object or content in material existence, and gains permanency as it is rooted in the world of the unseen, the enduring. In fact, the whole matter may be thus summed up,—that the richest, the most lasting, the happiest quality of life is possible only as the life is detached from bodily dependency and transferred to a plane above the range of matter.

This seems unpractical, perhaps visionary. Why? Because we are still clinging to the notion of the material as the real and the spiritual as the unreal. But let us reverse the conception. Let us assume—if we do not already *know* it—that each thing, function, process in this surrounding world of substance is a manifestation in density of a corresponding idea in the unseen sphere of spirit. It of course follows that the former, because of inevitable limitations, must be imperfect, changeful, and restricted. But it also follows that, such limitations not existing, the latter may be complete, enduring, and boundless. Apply this to our

percipient organs. The eye, the ear, etc., should have a super-sensuous analogue, of which they are the physical representations. We infer, therefore, to the human spirit a faculty of sight and hearing on the plane whereto it belongs. Further, as cultivation is the law to perfectness in the former, even more, by analogy, must it be to the latter. Still further, if the results from scientific use of the former are both marvellous and demonstrable, in even greater degree must this be true of the latter. And thus we reach the conclusion that spiritual senses are not less real than bodily, not less susceptible to training, even more rich in proved attainment.

Now what is the law of the change to spirituality, expressed in contrast of both fact and method? Col. H. S. Olcott, President-Founder of the Theosophical Society, has thus admirably stated it: "Mankind usually receive a thousand impressions through the senses, to one through the spiritual nature. Adeptship means *reversing* the proportion." In other words, the spiritual world bears the relation to the perfected man that the material world does to the rudimentary man.

But how are we rudimentary men to become perfected men? We cannot ignore facts in existence and the conditions of it, nor can we essay to live, as if now Adepts. By no means. But we can recognize other and larger facts in existence, and we can begin the training which men now Adepts began when like ourselves. Here are some of the successive steps.

1st. *We can give reality to the conception that all physical matters are mutable and illusive, and that permanency is to be found in the realm of the physically unseen.* This conception must first be clearly formed. Reality is imparted to it by acting upon it. A man may make real the spiritual world by transferring to it his thoughts, his meditations, his aspirations, his interests, and his efforts. As he thinks upon it and strives after it, it discloses itself as truly to his spiritual perceptions as does this earth to the student of physics.

2d. *We can affiliate ourselves intellectually and morally with the principles of the unseen world.* The present usual intellectual attitude of incredulity toward all fact which seems strange or which is intangible may be overcome, and the axiom that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy" be digested. The possibility of cosmic and terrestrial and individual forces playing ever around and in us then becomes plausible. Coupled with this may be a like recognition of the unbending moral powers, which ensure the triumph of good and of sweetness and of light, giving certain victory to truth and honor and the doctrine of human fraternity as a consequence of human origin from the Divine. No lasting benefit can come from that which is not lasting, and only good lasts.

3d. *We can substitute duty for self-interest as the motive power in life.* The subordination of selfish wishes to the standard of right and of universal claims soon moderates the egotism which bars out spiritual light. More than this, it brings us into harmony