



ANNIE BESANT

SUPERHUMAN MEN  
IN HISTORY AND  
IN RELIGION

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**SUPERHUMAN MEN  
IN HISTORY AND IN RELIGION**

**BY  
ANNIE BESANT**

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Superhuman Men In History And In Religion By Annie Besant.

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## FOREWORD

THIS volume, containing lectures delivered in London and in Stockholm in June 1913, differs from its predecessors containing a series of London lectures. I had planned a series as usual, and it was to have been as follows: I. "Manifestation of Superhuman Beings in our World (Inspiration, Overshadowing, Incarnation)"; II. "Saviours of the World, or World-Teachers"; III. "Krshna and Christ"; IV. "The Divine Man as the Adored of the Devotee"; V. "The Divine Man as the Hope of the Mystic"; VI. "The Restoration of the Mysteries".

On these, June 1st and 8th, I delivered Lectures I. and VI. Having to go to the International Theosophical Congress at Stockholm on June 14th to 17th, I tried to put what I had meant to say in London into three lectures: I. "Saviours of the World or World-Teachers", the second of the London course; II. "The Christ in History", representing the third and fourth; and III. "The Christ in Man", representing the fifth. This has been partly carried out in the present volume, and explains the peculiarity of the dates attached to the lectures. Unfortunately, my kind reporter in Stockholm, Mr Henry Hotchner, was overdone by his hard work, and so Lecture II. of the Stockholm series has vanished into the Ewigkeit, making the set incomplete. Unpleasant friends say it was the best of the series, but I do not agree with their opinion.

I have to thank the *Christian Commonwealth*, as so often before, for its wonderfully accurate reports of the London lectures.

The last lecture stands by itself, and was an address to the Congress at the morning session of June 15th.

May the little book, which took its origin in times so stormy, carry to some the Peace which ever broods over its author's heart.

ANNIE BESANT.

ADYAR,

September 9th, 1913.

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# 1. MANIFESTATIONS OF SUPERHUMAN BEINGS IN OUR WORLD

LONDON, 1<sup>st</sup> June 1913.

FRIENDS:

I ought almost, I think, to begin with an apology for offering to you a very large subject in a most imperfect form. I had planned to place before you the whole question of Super-human Beings manifested in our world in a course of six lectures, so to some extent perhaps touching on the main points of the subject, and making intelligible possibly to you some of the obscurities of the past. I have been compelled, not by my own will, to change the course of six lectures in London into two, and I can only try to place before you tonight something of the general forms of manifestations and of the great realities that lie behind those forms, and then, next Sunday evening, to point you to the future rather than to the past. Basing upon what has happened in the past the possibilities of the future, I shall try to indicate to you some of the greatest of those possibilities, the restoration to our world and to religion of those great Mysteries which have ever been the life of religion in the past, openly in its life during thousands and tens of thousands of years, existing still today, although withdrawn from the common knowledge of men, to come back to our world as soon as men are ready for and desire their restoration. For ever the barrier between the spiritual and the physical does not lie in the spiritual world; it lies in the physical world, the habitation of mortal men; for the life of the Spirit, which exists in forth-giving, is ever striving to pour itself into our mortal world; but we erect barriers, we create obstacles, we hinder the free flow of that beneficent, that glorious life. Only as we build up in ourselves the spiritual vessels that are able to receive it, will the old stream of spiritual life pour forth again abundantly upon our world, not only on individuals who prepare themselves for its reception, but on the great masses of those who follow the religions of the world, on the great masses of all who seek to make their life serviceable to their generation, to the world in which they are.

But for this evening our eyes turn backwards to the past, seeking whether in that past we can find any guarantee of the hope which gleams in the future. Now, as we turn back the pages of history we find civilisation after civilisation succeeding each other. Students of ancient literature, students of those old books which have come down from a past which seems to us perchance hidden in the night of time, have found records of civilisations mighty and great, apparently permanent and secure, but which have so utterly passed away from ordinary human thought that in modern days men disbelieved in their existence, and thought the stories in the ancient books were but legends, fables created by national pride in order to glorify their own past, not records of historical facts, not pictures of civilisations that really existed on our earth. These ancient books, it is true, were corroborated now and again by what is called occult research. Men and women who had developed in themselves certain powers not yet general in our race have claimed that by the exercise of those powers they could read records of the past existing as pictures in matter subtler than the physical, as men with physical eyes can read the printed page. But in a time like our own, when Occultism is only now beginning to make its way among men, an age in which Mysticism until lately was regarded, in the high opinion of the *Times* newspaper, as an “exploded superstition”, so that it marvelled that a man so eminent as the Dean of St Paul’s should think it worth while in the twentieth century to give lectures on such a superstition; in our age, when Occultism and Mysticism are again beginning to claim the attention of the thoughtful and the earnest, there is more probability as the years roll on that the records of the past, as read by the Occultist, will again take their place as subjects of study among men. Until quite lately - nay, I hardly know whether I dare say until - those records have been scoffed at by the foolish, have been ignored by the learned; but, as you know, during the last half, and even more, of the nineteenth century, a new light came into the arena of human thought, and antiquarian research, spreading widely and digging deeply, began to unveil fragments whose existence could not be denied, fragments of ancient civilisations. And step by step as archaeology advanced, step by step as excavation succeeded excavation, it was found that physical research was confirming the legends of the ancient literature, was verifying many a statement made by occult research - stories of such a

one as King Minos of Crete, stories of such a one as Menes of Egypt, stories running back into ancient Babylon.

Those were brought to the light of day, not in ways that could be challenged, not in forms that could be denied, but in matter solid enough to knock a man down with, so that a man could be sure that it existed - in libraries made of ancient tiles which had long outlived their makers, in fragments of ancient architecture from city after city buried one below the other, and each succeeding city shut off from its predecessors by ruins, by solid earth which intervened between each pair. In these ways, ever being confirmed by new investigations, by these physical methods which appeal to the physical mind of men, the existence of those old civilisations was proved, and none now ventures to deny that well-nigh endless past of civilised man.

One thing came out strongly, a surprise to the thinkers of the last century. Quite naturally, the great doctrine of Evolution applied to human history resulted in a certain theoretical building up of the past which appealed to the human mind and seemed logical and even necessary. The elder amongst you must remember how we read of the growth of civilisation, how we were told of families of savages who joined together into tribes, of tribes who linked themselves together into communities for mutual assistance and defence, of communities building themselves up into nations, and so on step by step, millennium after millennium, until from barbarism civilisation arose, just as in the corresponding domain of religion the ideas of the savage, the animistic ideas of the barbarians, were held to be the origin, the source, of all the religions of the world. But, however natural that view was, it was found not to square with facts. None had discovered in the excavations of the past those infant civilisations whose remnants might naturally have been looked for, building up step by step in successive excavations. Savages have been found, cave men have been discovered, villages built on piles have been unveiled, but between those and the civilisations there is no steady advance or link which science has discovered. Savages exist today side by side with great civilisations; they existed also in the past; but between them no bridges have been found. On the contrary, it has been seen everywhere, as facts have been accumulated, that what

Bunsen has said of Egypt only is true of all the great civilisations of the past. You may remember how he declared of the civilisation of Egypt that it had no origin which human wit could find, that it seemed to spring upon the stage of history complete as Minerva burst from the head of Jove. It was thought at first to be a marvel and a wonder, to be unique in the story of man, but every great civilisation shows the same marvellous characteristic, that it *appears* as a mighty civilisation. Even though traces of a child-people can be found under the great Rulers and Teachers of the past, more and more through the twilight, in the dawning of history, great figures stand out grandiose and mighty, over-topping the contemporary people, the Rulers, the Teachers, and the Guides of men; They the founders of the mighty civilisations, They the architects of the marvellous buildings, They the teachers of the child-humanity, the Superhuman Beings who are the builders of civilisations and of religions in our world. Plenty of civilisations have been traced through the period of their decay - a significant fact; none has ever been traced through its building up from the savage state into the state of the highly organised and civilised nation. As we look at these great civilisations and see how the masses of the people in them were as children intellectually and spiritually, but children ready to be taught, children willing to be guided, loving, not hating their superiors, and reverencing, not being jealous of those who knew more than themselves; as we see that unrolled in the story of the past, two great types appear: the Ruler and the Teacher in these most ancient States; Builders of races, Builders of sub-races, Builders of nations and polities; Teachers who give forms for the eternal truths of religion, shaping them in different forms according to the needs of those to whom they gave this ever-new presentation of ancient truth.

The Ruler, the typical Man, He is concerned with the building up of the outer civilisations, with the shaping of social policy, with the laying down of laws by which the people must develop, must evolve. He has to do not only with racial types, not only with national policies, but also with the great seismic changes which go side by side with evolution of new races. Take as types of what the Theosophist means when he speaks of a Root Race, the two great types so familiar to you that we call the fourth and fifth; typical examples of the fourth in the Chinese and Japanese, typical examples of the fifth in the Indian and the European. If you put those two side by side you see at once

what I mean by the fundamental difference of Races; difference in outer features, difference in nervous system, showing distinctions so deeply wrought into the physical frame that confusion between them is utterly impossible, and a child would distinguish between those I have mentioned, which we call the fourth and fifth of human Root Races. Smaller differences, but yet clearly marked, until by intermarriages the characteristics have been more or less blended, you find in the sub-divisions, to which we give the name of sub-races. Now the great Ruler is connected with the racial type. His task to build out of a previous Race the new Race which is to succeed it in leading the evolution of humanity; His task to prepare for the new Race He has builded the continent on which that Race shall develop, to which in time it shall be led in order that its evolution may proceed. And without delaying - for we have not time to delay upon it - on the interesting geological questions of the existence of a great physical continent to which the name of Lemuria has been given, or the great Atlantic continent known as Atlantis, only reminding you that these are subjects that are being discussed by scientists and not only by Theosophists, we find that the world as it is today is the world ruled by the later Race, by the various sub-races of the fifth, and we see in these distinct types the work of a great Builder, the Builder of the outer evolution as well as of nations, and of social organisms; and to Him the name has ever been given from which 'man' is derived, the word *Manu* - the man, the typical man, the thinker, inasmuch as thought is that which differentiates the human being from his lower brethren of the animal and vegetable kingdoms.

Side by side with that we find the World Teacher, as we often call Him, the supreme Teacher concerned largely with the subdivisions of the great Race, concerned with the presentation I spoke of, of eternal truths in a new form fitted for the new sub-race which is gradually emerging out of its predecessors.

One thing comes out strongly and clearly as we try to take a large and rational view of human history: that there is a Plan that underlies it, a Plan according to which humanity is builded, not suddenly, not by leaps and bounds, but in a definite order. Just as the architect plans a building, and then it rises, stage by stage according to the plan, so do we find in that great

building of humanity stage after stage arising, quality after quality super-added, a definite building, not a sudden creation, and the plan of the building - Evolution. Here again I can only point you to a few proofs of that; you can multiply them almost endlessly for yourselves. Take what has gone on within what you acknowledge as history, the gradual peopling of Europe; take the coming into Europe of that great race the descendants of which are called the Latin peoples today - we call them the fourth sub-race, or the Keltic, - entering into Greece, spreading over the whole of the south of Europe, travelling northwards then for a while into Scandinavia and across from Scandinavia by Scotland - by Britain, in fact - into Ireland, peopling every land, just as a wave sweeps over a beach, peopling the great continent of Europe with a race in which emotion predominated over intellect, and beauty was the expression that was sought, and art the heritage of the sub-race. Think of ancient Greece and ancient Rome, with their splendid architecture and their magnificent sculpture; think of their successors in Italy, of the great schools of Italian painters, remembering that Art includes forms of every kind, not only in the outer shaping of wood or stone or brick, but in that subtler shaping of form to thought which we call art in literary expression, in poetry, in prose, in all the perfection of the literary excellence which is even today the pride of the Latin races. Think of the Frenchmen, how the French thinker expresses himself, and how the French nation judges the thinker. You will never find a thought accepted by the mass of the French people, nor by its judges and critics, unless the form is as perfect as the thought is good; failure in thought is almost more pardonable than failure in form - for where thought always seeks to express itself in beauty, literary perfection is a necessary condition of the success of the thought expressed. Compare that with the Teutonic, the sub-race that followed on the Keltic, where Science represents to that race what Art was to its forerunner. Realise that in the Teuton it is the mind that is seeking for full expression by knowledge rather than by form; contrast the expression of the German and the English with the French expression in science, and you will find that both in Germany and in England the thought, however strong, is often clumsy in expression, obscure in presentation; but the peoples of both countries look rather to the strength and the virility of the thought than to the perfection of its artistic expression in the form.

And just as you see there a fourth sub-race and a fifth sub-race, so a sixth sub-race is issuing, as I pointed out to you at length some years ago. There the quality to be developed, built on to the emotions, built on to the mind, is that higher quality, intuition, that is beginning to assert itself even in the philosophy of our time - that intuition which sees rather than reasons, which knows by direct vision rather than by following a chain of logical argument, that which is the power of the Spirit rather than the power of the mind or of the emotions. That is the next quality to be builded, to be the characteristic quality of the sixth sub-race of humanity.

And looking thus at it you find that religions follow a corresponding order; you find that each sub-race has its own religious note, which is as different as its note in emotional or mental expression. You see how in the first great sub-race that made India its habitation, the idea of mutual Duty of every member of the social organism was the keynote of the religion that was given by the great teachers to their people. You see the survival of that in forms too rigid, and, therefore, mischievous, in what is known as the caste system of India; but while you may see that now it is doing much of harm to the progress of the people, you are bound, if you are rational, also to see that that keynote of the social order will have to return in a higher form, in a higher civilisation, and that the sense of mutual duty and mutual obligation is the one binding force by which the nation and the community can live. And then, if you trace the second sub-race which lived on the borders of the Mediterranean, you see that to which in these modern days we give the name of Magic, the use of the human body to influence the subtler worlds by finding out the correspondences between man, who is only the microcosm, with the mighty macrocosm in which he lives, and of which he is the reflection in miniature. And if you pass on from there to Persia, it is the note of Purity which rings out above all others. If from there you go to Greece, Beauty is the keynote, as in Rome Law is the highest note struck by the civilisation. And then you come on to the Christian faith with its cry of Self-sacrifice, and the Mussulman repeating the note of the earlier teaching of the Hindu, of God, the One without a second, that the ancient Hindus proclaimed. And if you have eyes to see, you realise that all these are notes that make up the perfect chord of the One Eternal Religion, which is the knowledge of God Himself, the realisation of God in the human Spirit, the

knowledge of God because man is himself divine. And because the Theosophists, and above all the Occultists, see in all human religions but partial expressions of one great series of spiritual truths, therefore to every people they speak through their own religion, and not through a religion which is not theirs. The Theosophist would no more think of teaching the Hindu through Christian forms than he would dream of teaching the Christian through Hindu forms; any more than he would try to speak to a French audience in English, or to an English audience in French. To every man according to his own tongue; to every man according to his own faith. There is but one religion with many facets; and the perfection of religion is to see the unity in diversity among them all, and that comes from this great teaching of Brotherhood - always one Teacher for all the world's faiths through thousands and thousands of years.

Now, the idea that such Superhuman Beings had much to do with the affairs of men is no new idea, no mere Theosophical fad. In Christian antiquity you find the thought put forward that over every nation there presided a great Angel. Read the way in which Origen speaks of the Angel Guardians of nations and of the world. The idea in the East was a little more complicated. So far as I know - but there I may be wrong - I do not think that in Christian antiquity you can find the idea that Saints as well as Angels shared in the guidance of our mortal world; but in the East, whilst they recognised what here would be called "the ministry of Angels", speaking of them as the Shining Ones - so often mistranslated 'God' -whilst they recognised their work in many grades as the older Christians recognised the ministry of the nine great Orders in the angelic host, they joined side by side with them the men who had attained perfection, those who had passed that great fifth Initiation of which I was speaking to you with the others last year, men who have finished the ordinary human life, who have passed beyond the cycle of births and deaths known as reincarnation, who have reached that point of overcoming of which the Apocalypse speaks when it declare of him that overcometh he "shall be a pillar in the temple of my God and go forth no more". Those who have overcome, not for Their own gain but for the helping of humanity, Those who are liberated Spirits, who have bound Themselves in the bonds of the flesh by love and not by compulsion, Those who are divine men, who have perfected the human cycle of evolution, it is

They who share with the angelic host the guidance of evolution in the world in which we are. For this world is not lonely as it rolls through space, nor confined only to the men bound still to the wheel of births and deaths. The spiritual world interpenetrates the physical, as every religion has declared; Superhuman Beings move amongst us and take their part in the affairs of men.

If you care to read a record in written books, take some of the old Hindu books, and read how these perfected men visited the courts of kings in order to see that kingdoms were well governed and royal duties were honourably performed. You may read how such a mighty Sage and Saint, known as superhuman by the powers that He possessed, would visit the court of the King, question the King as to the condition of the people, ask him whether he is seeing that every grade of the people is supplied with all that it needs: whether the craftsman has materials ready to his hand; whether the agriculturist is well supplied with seed for the future harvest; whether the widows of his soldiers who have died in battle and the orphans left behind are carefully guarded by him; whether he is seeing to the education of his people, and taking care that all the grades of the nation are performing their appointed duties. You may read this in page after page, in story after story. And, although no longer visible, They walk among men still; the work They are striving to do is more difficult today, for it is against the battling wills of men and the resistance of the developing mind. In those days, readily was Their guidance accepted, and, therefore, They walked openly among the people; but it was necessary for human evolution that the mind should develop with all its power of challenge, with all its demand for proof, with its resistance to authority, with its refusal to obey where it did not understand. Do not be mistaken and think that this is evil; there is nothing evil which helps forward the evolution of man. The time came when the child-state had to end for a while, and the developing youth of the mind must have its way. So the Guardians drew back from sight but never from labour, and worked unseen and unhampered by the growing conditions of humanity, but with the same heart of love, the same brain of wisdom as in the elder days. It is They who pull down Empires and build them up, who bring about equilibrium between nations and do not allow a single set of national ideals so to triumph over the world that all others shall give way

before them. It is They who gradually build up a great Empire and give to some sub-race the ruling of the world; it is They who are giving to England today the possibility of the mighty part that she may play in the advancing humanity of the time, of World-Empire mightier than any Empire of the past, to be based not on the submission of conquered peoples, but on the free-will allegiance of self-governing but united communities. That is done today, not by direct order from the mouth of the recognised Superior, but by the subtler working on the ambitions and the passions and the thoughts of men. The opportunity is given, and if rejected passes away to someone else who is able to grasp, is able to utilise it. And it is because of that that many of us feel today that the fate of the future lies in the balance, whether this fifth sub-race of ours will rise to the sense of its responsibility, will know that power means duty and not oppression, and so will make a mightier rule than has ever been known in the stories of the past. But it is these greater Ones behind who really pull the strings to which our statesmen and our rulers dance obediently, and, in the pulling, educate the people, and so help forward the general evolution of the race.

Now suppose for a moment that that Theosophical idea commended itself to you as throwing light on history - which on many points of the rising and falling of Empires is obscure and unintelligible; if you can take that thought that behind all the powers that rule there is a mighty divine Will working through human imperfection with the help of Superhuman Agents, then you can look on all the troubles of the time as evidently working out to a foreseen end; you can see in the unrest and the distress not the breaking up of a civilisation, but the instability that belongs to growth and that is to be guided to progress; and you will begin to realise that if some outer forms decay, it is because the living Spirit within them is growing too large for the garments that clothed it in the past, and that we may feel secure that, as a nation does its duty, new forms will evolve fitted for its greater manifestation, and so the building up of the human race will continue as it has continued through so many changes in the past.

Let us ask now what are the special methods of the manifestation of Superhuman Men. That you may clearly follow this, I must trouble you for a moment with one or two details as to the constitution of man. You must

realise that every one of you is a living and spiritual Intelligence, that you show out the Spirit in three chief ways, the aspects of the Spirit - by Will or Power, Wisdom, and the creative activity of Intellect. Those are yourself, your innermost nature. But then you clothe yourself in matter, in order that these may develop in this lower world. The aspect of the Intellect embodies itself as mind; the aspect of Wisdom embodies itself as emotion; the aspect of Will embodies itself as self-determination in our lower world, the precedent of action. All kinds of matter are utilised by these spiritual forces in order that they may express themselves in the various worlds in which we live; but those material garments are not you; they are but the clothes you wear; and you may learn, if you will, and care to take the trouble, to separate one garment from another and to utilise them freely, as you utilise that fleshly garment which, for some of you, is the only body that you know.

For the moment, take that as hypothesis, study it at your leisure; but without understanding that it is a spiritual Intelligence working in various kinds of matter, as we know matter here, which is meant, you will not be able to understand those methods of manifestation which I have called Inspiration, Overshadowing, and Incarnation. Think, then, of the matter that you use, as a garment that can be put off and on; think of yourself as the living spiritual Intelligence with the three aspects I have mentioned; and realise that, with every change of consciousness, every mood of mind, there is a vibration in the matter in which the consciousness is clothed, which answers to the change in consciousness, changelessly as to method, each mood having its own expression in the vibrations by which matter responds.

## **I. - INSPIRATION**

Now, there is nothing save in degree different in these forms of manifestation of Superhuman Beings from the ways in which you influence each other. There is an enormous difference in degree, there is no difference of kind; every one of us, all the time, is influencing all with whom we come into contact, some more than others according to the force of consciousness which is able to have stronger vibrations of matter correlated with itself, but the way in which one consciousness influences another in the physical is by means of these vibrations of matter, which cause similar vibrations in other bodies with which they come into contact. That is the

special point that I want you theoretically for the moment to accept. Have you sometimes found in studying science that you understand a thing better when a brilliant teacher explains it, than when you read it in a book? What is the difference? It is not in the thought; the thought may be the same on the printed page and in the spoken words; but it is that the matter correlated to the changing thought of the teacher, vibrating under his greater knowledge and more highly developed powers of mind, sets vibrating the mental matter in your own body, and so enables your consciousness to answer as the vibrations again are responded to by the changing mood of thought. He transmits his thought to you through the matter that clothes you, and he raises you to a higher point of comprehension than you could win by your own unaided power. That is a constant experience; you find it with the orator as well as with the scientific teacher. A thing which is plain to you while the orator is speaking, which you grasp, which you realise, which you are sure you know, is half lost on the following day, and you find you cannot repeat it perfectly left to your unaided powers.

What, then, has the speaker done? What effect has the teacher wrought on you? He has made you answer to himself; he has inspired you by means of the contact which you have experienced from his word and from his thought. Now carry that on further, and you will find what Inspiration means. Where a higher being is inspiring an ordinary man or woman, the effect of that Inspiration is a stimulation of the faculties that the man or woman already possesses, because the matter in which he is clothed is compelled to vibrate in unison at a higher rate of vibration than he is able to initiate for himself. That is what Inspiration means. It functions or flowers, as it were, on our material garments - the vibrations of one whose body works at a higher vibration than does ours, and so the inner God is able to shine out more completely, the faculties that exist in us are stimulated under the abnormal action, and what we call Inspiration is nothing more than stimulation from a higher to a lower, imposing on the lower for the time that higher vibration, and so enabling the faculties the man already possesses to open out into flower where they only existed as bud. You may have Inspiration in art, in poetry, in literature, but its nature is ever the same, the stimulation of faculties you possess, the opening out of the hidden God through the higher vibrations imposed upon you from without.

So at once you realise there are many degrees of Inspiration, according to the power of response of the one on whom this force is exercised, his power to reproduce that which the Superhuman Being is striving to use for his stimulation, for lifting him to a higher plane of thought. And so you begin to realise that if you yourself would be inspired by higher and Superhuman Beings you must purify your vehicles in order that the finer matter in them may be able freely to respond. You must purify your physical body and brain by abstaining from all unclean and gross forms of food; you must purify your emotional nature by casting aside the animal and rising into the human emotions; you must purify your mental nature by thinking nobly, purely, grandly, by casting out of the mind, the moment it enters, any thought that is low or base or foul. For Inspiration can only work where the vehicles are made pure, and the limit of our Inspiration is the limit of receptivity which we have made by the training of the lower nature. But it is open to all of you to have that Inspiration more or less perfectly according as you become pure and noble and selfless, to each according to his measure. The thimble or the vast tank can be filled alike from an ever-flowing stream; but the size of the receptacle determines the amount of water which can flow into it, and it is ours to make the receptacle in order that the Inspiration may lead us to greater usefulness to men.

## **II. – OVERSHADOWING**

What, then, is Overshadowing? As Inspiration is stimulation by higher vibrations, Overshadowing is the dominating of consciousness for a time by the Superhuman Helper. The consciousness of the man is dominated, not stimulated. The idea dominates his thought, and becomes to him apparently his own. Many a one is overshadowed by a Higher Being who is not conscious of the source of the thoughts that come into his mind; thoughts of desire for service, thoughts of aspirations for the helping of men, these are breathed out from a higher consciousness to a lower, and they dominate the lower and become its ideal. Ideals, those fixed ideas that guide and control conduct, constantly come from the overshadowing power of a higher than ourselves, lifting up a picture so beautiful that we needs must love it, and, in loving it, try to reproduce its beauty in ourselves. And this, again, may be in different stages. The Overshadowing may be of the brain,

so that some great thought dominates the brain; it may be of the subtle mind, so that from that flow downwards to the brain these thoughts that uplift and help. Or it may be from the very Spirit itself in its subtlest garments of finer matter, so that the material, dominated for the time by the more highly opened Spirit, receives from it these great ideals which then come down to be slowly translated into life. And here again, if you would ever have that grace of Overshadowing from a higher, you must try to keep your consciousness under the control of the higher, and not of the lower. The lower is good as a servant, it is fatal as a master; the lower is useful as an instrument, it is harmful when it strives to direct. The man who would receive the Overshadowing of the higher must have the consciousness ready to respond to all that comes from above, to nothing that comes from below. For the life of a man must flow either upwards or downwards, either outwards or inwards; and those only can be overshadowed who are trying to turn to the Gods within them, and not surrendering themselves to the bodies without them, those who are trying to make love and wisdom the characteristic and natural expression of their consciousness. On them may come down that power of the higher which for the time shall dominate them and make them more than men.

### **III. – INCARNATION**

But when you come to the last of the three words I took, Incarnation, you are coming to a different method; no longer stimulation, as in Inspiration; no longer domination, as in Overshadowing; but substitution; a Higher Being who, desiring to work through some physical instrument for some great purpose, chooses a physical instrument which he can use for the purpose on which his mind and heart are set. We find such cases in the history of the past, most especially in the case of the Founders of great religions. One thing characterises most of these; it is that distinction familiar in the ancient Christian Church, held by those who were called the Gnostics or Knowers. You may remember how in the early Church there was much controversy as to the nature of Jesus Christ; how some regarded Him as God Himself, others considered that the human body was the body of a chosen disciple trained and prepared through many years of pure and noble living and devoted aspiration, in order that when you come to the time marked in the

Gospel as the baptism, the Spirit of God, the Christ Himself, might descend and abide upon him. And so those early Christian Knowers declared that the disciple Jesus and the Christ were two distinct individuals, never to be confused, and that all the disciple gave to the Christ was the outer physical body that He wore; that the inner subtler bodies were those of the Christ Himself, far higher - nay, no comparison is possible between those spiritual bodies of the Christ and anything that can be worn by mortal man on earth, - and that when He, the great Teacher, deigned to come, He took but the outer shell of His devoted disciple, and that shell, surrendered to the greater One, left the disciple himself clothed in his subtle bodies of lower evolution, while through the body of flesh the divine man was manifest; and so men saw in the face of the Christ the very vision of Divinity Himself.

That was the older, wiser teaching of the Christian Church, cast out later as knowledge grew less and confusion took the place of vision. And so in every great divine Incarnation of earlier days, the same method appears to have been followed, of a body specially prepared and trained for many years and then surrendered in loving sacrifice, in order that it might be the vehicle of a mightier Being to work out for man what none but He might do. That is called Incarnation, where the body of flesh is taken but where the Being is the supreme Teacher of the world.

And even that, if you think, is nothing so abnormal, nothing so strange; for what is each one of you but a divine Incarnation? Although the divinity in you is not unfolded as it was in Him to whom the West has given the name of the Christ, all of you are truly divine Incarnations; but the Divinity in you is but as a germ and seed, not yet unfolded into leaf and flower. But one reason why the passionate love of man has gone out to these supreme Teachers more than to any other Child of Man is not only that the beauty of Divinity is revealed in man, so that man becomes what he essentially is - divine, but because every such Teacher is the promise of the future; because you and I in aeons, in ages to come, shall also unfold the Divinity which in Him was made manifest, because, as your own Testament tells you, Christ is but the first-born among many brethren, and in every one of His brethren the beauty of the Godhead is ultimately to be unveiled, to be manifested. And so the heart of humanity goes out to Them as to the

promise of the future, as well as the splendour of the past, not only the manifestation of God triumphant in one human form, but the promise of God manifest in every human form. That every Child of Man shall be a manifested Child of God - that is the glory of Their attraction.

And never forget, you who belong to the Christian faith, that the great teacher S. Paul was not satisfied with the mere acceptance of Christian doctrines, that he was not satisfied with Baptism and Communion, the two universally recognised Sacraments of the Christian Church; he declared that they were but little children who knew but those outer elements, and that he travailed for his converts, until, as he said, "Christ be born in you"; for of what avail is Christ to you as an outer ideal unless He is born within you to reproduce the life which is His? Every great religion has its ideal, its divine mission under different names; but names are nothing where the life is one. The Buddhist thinks of the Lord Buddha, and, looking inward, he declares: "Thou art Buddha". The Hindu thinks of the divine manifestations spoken of in his own faith, and declares himself to be one with the manifestations in whom he believes. And if you give the name of Christ to that supreme Teacher who, some two thousand years ago, came to give to the West its own religion, remember that His value to you is not only that of a mighty example - though great indeed is the value of that example of perfection shown to men, - but far more that you should reproduce Him in yourself, far more that the infant Christ should be born in the cave of your heart; that in you He should develop to boyhood, to youth, to manhood, until you have grown "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ". It is not a Christ outside you who saves; it is not a Christ outside you who redeems; it is the Christ within, who transforms the man into His own image, and makes him realise that as the Father in Heaven is perfect, so is perfection the inevitable goal of man.

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## 2. SAVIOURS OF THE WORLD, OR WORLD-TEACHERS

STOCKHOLM, *15th June 1913*

FRIENDS:

We are to deal here with the special manifestations of two Superhuman Men in History and Religion, with the life, the power, of two Supreme Teachers of the world. Tonight the general theory is to be the subject of discourse; we are to trace through age after age the reappearance of this World-Teacher for the helping of man, for the founding of great religions. Then, in another discourse, we are to study the subject from its more mystical side, to consider the relation of the human Spirit to the divine, and to try to see the conditions of the unfolding of the Christ in man. Those of you who are familiar with Christian teaching will remember how the great Initiate, S. Paul, pointed out that it was the intention of the Christian religion to bring about the birth of the Christ within the individual believer, and that the Christ-Child, thus born in the human Spirit, was to grow and to develop until the full stature of the Christ was reached in man. Until that becomes objectively true, as it is ever true implicitly, in the human being, Christ cannot become the first-born among many brethren, surrounded by, those who have reproduced in themselves His own likeness, so that the great family of the Sons of God shall be realised as the rationale of the evolution of the Sons of Man.

It will be reasonable at the outset of our thinking to trace, however briefly, however imperfectly, that great human evolution which changes the imperfect into the perfect, the weak into the strong, the Son of Man into the Son of God. For it has been recognised in the great faiths of the world that there is a path which human feet may tread; and long before the Christian faith came to the helping of the world, that path was described as a narrow path, a razor path, a path difficult to tread, and the name by which it was and is known in ancient occult teaching is the same name by which Christian Mystics have called it in modern days - it has ever been named the "Way of the Cross". For the idea of the Cross as known in the ancient world

was that the life of God came down in order that the world might be lifted up through that life; and in the ancient symbolism it was said that the Spirit was crucified in matter, that Spirit descended into matter in order that matter might be uplifted into Spirit; and you may remember how Plato wrote, speaking of the second manifestation of divine life, that which in our own phraseology we call the Second LOGOS; how it was said that the LOGOS, the Wisdom, was shown in the form of a cross in the universe, decussated as a cross. That ancient idea is profoundly true, and manifests one of the great occult truths of evolution, and that is the idea that underlies the Cross in all the ancient pre-Christian faiths.

You find it ever as the sign of Spirit descending into matter, and then as the sign of Spirit triumphant over matter; so that everywhere it stands as the sign of life emerging from the grave, the grave being the matter and the Spirit the Life triumphant. It is found on ancient pottery, it is found painted in ancient frescoes, it is found carved in ancient stone and decorating the sides of the walls of temples which were ruined before the modern faith of Christianity was born. And this is natural, inasmuch as all faiths contain the same essential truths, use the same significant symbols, and those symbols ever indicate the same spiritual verities. As this truth dawns upon us not only from the statements of ancient faiths, not only from the researches of occult investigators, but from the testimony of antiquarians and archaeologists who have searched into the ruins and the fragments left behind by ancient civilisation, as we see this truth emerging from the fundamental identity of the great faiths of the world, we feel a strong power, a certainty of conviction of the essential truths of religion, which could never be ours so long as our faith depended on a single book, so long as we saw only a single revelation, instead of the constant manifestations of God in man.

And so we find in our study of religious truths that there has ever been the idea that gradually man might quicken his evolution and tread onward, step by step, along the narrow path which should lead him to the life that knows no ending, when for him the cycle of births and of deaths would be over, and the one who had overcome, who had conquered all the difficulties

of life, should become a pillar in the temple of his God, to go forth no more, but to support the temple for the reception of men.

In modern days, by those same antiquarian researches that I have spoken of, the history of our globe has been rolled far back into the centuries. Tens and hundreds of thousands of years have gradually been seen to be all too short for the story of the evolution of man. When some of us were children in the Western world, we were taught that the history of our globe was comprised within a brief six thousand years, and when, shortly before the French Revolution, that most remarkable Mayor of Paris, M. Bailly, published in Europe the chronology brought from India - the chronology brought from the Brahmanas of India, and it was seen that they reckoned the age of the world not by tens of thousands but by hundreds of thousands of years, that each age in the world which made only part of its story was to be measured by many hundreds of thousands of years - when that first came across from the East to the West, it was laughed at as Oriental exaggeration. But modern Western research has proved its accuracy, and those long ages of Brahmanic chronology are accepted by modern science, and seen to be necessary for the tremendous evolution that lies behind. So gradually, bit by bit, more and more light has been thrown upon the path, and it has come to be realised by very many - I do not for a moment pretend that in Europe it is as yet by the majority, but by many of the deeper thinkers, by those who try to solve some of the problems of the human race - it is seen by them that the only explanation of this long evolution of consciousness, which goes side by side with the long evolution of forms, must lie in a continuing consciousness which unfolds itself in body after body, in age after age, until it develops from the ignorance of the savage up to the heights of genius, up to heights of wisdom and of holiness.

And so it will come with no surprise to the student, when the idea is presented to him, that Those who are seen in the world's history towering high above Their fellow-men, Those who bear the sacred names in the great religions of the world, that Those also were once men as we are men, and have climbed upwards to Their divine perfection through the difficulties and struggles that now encompass us, Their younger brethren. When we recall the words spoken by the Christ when He was last on earth, "Be ye

therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect”, we realise that to reach such divine perfection demands not one brief span of human life, but many and many a life during which that perfection is attained, and we begin to understand that when we see the Saint on earth, he is but marking one stage of the progress along the road which each one of us shall tread; and that beyond that Saint, exquisite as his life may be, there stretch great reaches of superhuman perfection; and at the very summit of those, on the high mountain-peaks, covered as it were with the dazzling whiteness of divine perfection, there stands the flower of our race, the man who has become divine, and who is therefore able to help His younger brethren still struggling up the mountain side; that even the world’s Saviours were once men like ourselves who have evolved the God within Them, the God hidden in us, made manifest in Them.

And these great Founders of religion show marks of strange similarity. It is not only that in the story of Their lives a similar history is seen to be outlived age after age; but it is also seen that Their teachings are fundamentally identical; that over and over and over again the same moral teaching comes forth from those divine lips, the same great precepts which are to lead us to perfection are spoken in the ears of different nations, are given out in different tongues, the meaning ever the same. We notice the earliest World-Teacher who came to the instructing of the childhood of our Aryan race - in that great cradle of the Race which will once again be acknowledged in time to come as it was in the past, found in Central Asia - known under the name of Vyasa, the Teacher who gave in that far-off time the Sanatana Dharma, the Eternal Religion, the Wisdom Religion, which since has spread its branches under different names over all the children of the Aryan race; we find Him teaching: “To do good to another is right; to do evil to another is wrong”. We find Him declaring that that which you would not have another do to you, you should not do to another, but that which you would wish done to yourself, that you should do to your fellow-men. That teaching, familiar to you as the teaching of “the Golden Rule”, is a rule that has ever been given by great World-Teachers in the past; and as we see the similarity of teaching underlying differences of presentment, as in a moment I will show you, we see that these resemblances are so striking that they must needs come from a single spirit; we are not surprised to hear that the World-

Teacher remains one and the same through many and many an age of human history, through many and many a stage of human civilisation; that it is the same mighty Teacher who comes back again and again into the world He loves, who is known under different names, it is true, but the names veil the same mighty Individual, the same World-Teacher, the same Prophet of the different faiths, bringing the same message, teaching the same truths, breathing the same compassionate love; He is the same age after age, appearing in His world for its helping, and thus lifting humanity age after age another step up to the golden ladder which ends at the feet of God.

And seeing this gradually come out from the story of the past, we begin to see in human evolution two lines of mighty helping, used for the evolution and the gradual uplifting of men; two lines of saving and of guiding, the one the line of the Ruler, the other of the Teacher; the one the line of the Protector who guides the fate of nations; who builds the earth age after age into different distributions of continents and of oceans; who has in hand the evolving of the different Races of mankind - each Race bringing out its characteristic qualities, and so gradually contributing its share to the final perfection of humanity. And side by side with the line of the Ruler, the Protector, the King, we see the line of the Teacher, of the Founder of the faiths of the word, of the Guide of spiritual evolution, who gives to one faith after another its own characteristic note, its own dominant teaching; so that, as all the great truths are to be found in each faith, there is also one in each faith which dominates the rest, giving to it its own peculiar colour, evolving in it its own peculiar characteristics; just as the Races are builded into the final perfection of humanity, so the religions also are builded to bring out one by one the great qualities which are needed in spiritual evolution, until both outer and inner perfection shall crown the working out of the mighty Plan, made by the Divine Architect before our humanity was born, to reach its consummation when our world had touched its ending, and its fruitage is the perfection of humanity.

Looking at it, then, in that wide way, we see the Ruler and the Teacher coming down the stream of history side by side, each with his own work, and as the life in the East, so far as our Aryan race is concerned, is older than the life in the West, we find an eastern name given to the World-

Teacher in those eastern lands - a name which means the Essence of Wisdom; sometimes in Theosophical books you come across the name Bodhisattva, and that translated is simply Wisdom-Essence, the Essence of Wisdom, and wisdom is knowledge penetrated by love. And so the World-Teacher in those older days is known by this eastern name, just as in later days in the West the World-Teacher took the Greek name for the nations of Christendom, that name of the Anointed, the Christos, by which He is known among us.

But the difference of names must not blind us to the identity of function, and of teacher-ship. We must realise that names vary with languages, but Truth is eternal, and remains the same; and the World-Teacher brings it out from time to time in order that man may learn gradually what he could not learn at once, and realise that great Knowledge of God which is in very truth Eternal Life.

We see, then, down the ages certain great figures stand out, the Founders of religions, and I am limiting myself to the Aryan race, omitting Those that have gone before, not because that history is not also profoundly interesting, but because in a single lecture one must limit the area of discourse if the object is to be worked out of conveying such hints of knowledge as shall lead some of you to study for yourselves. For remember, that the only object of a lecture is to stimulate the hearers into study; not to give them a mere superficial idea, which is all that any lecture can do, but to be a sign-post pointing to the road along which every student must walk for himself; for only by individual study can knowledge worthy of the name be gained, and the duty of the lecturer is only to point out the way, every man having to study for himself and to gain by his own efforts a grasp of Truth.

These great Teachers, then, that we see shining out from time to time in the history of mankind, in the history of our own Race, when They appeared in our world, founded certain religions. Of those great religions the oldest in the Aryan race is that which you know in its modern form as Hinduism. That is followed by the religion that grew up in later Egypt, that spread along the borders of the Mediterranean, that shaped not the modern but the very ancient Greeks who preceded the modern, and left its traces on some of the

Mediterranean Islands, the whole basin of the Mediterranean being the receptacle of the teaching.

And then the third great faith, that which came from Persia, the very ancient Persia beyond the Persia of our books of history. Then the great stream of teaching that settled itself in Greece, among those who, in comparison with the very ancient, make up the modern Greeks, the teaching that in a moment, with the others, I will describe. Then the fifth of these streams, that expresses itself under the name of Christendom, and became the faith of the western world. Five in number you will notice, each the religion of one subdivision of the great Aryan race. For these large sub-divisions into which a Root Race, as we call it, divides itself, these great streams of emigration from a central point that spread over the world in all directions and add a new perfection to humanity, each has its own fundamental proclamation of Truth, varied as the sub-race divides again into nations, into families, but always the same root from which the trunk and branches spread; and you can see what we may call a family likeness in all the smaller branches that spring from the branch which runs back to the parent trunk. Five, then, are these sub-divisions, and five the great religions belonging each to each.

The first of these is that in which Hinduism originated - a religion which had as its special mark the sense of Duty between the members of the community, which struck the keynote of the Duty of man to man, and founded that Duty in the recognition of the One Divine Life in which every human being inheres, from which he draws his own individual life. I mentioned the name given to the World-Teacher when He came forth to found that ancient faith, the name of Vyasa, and He took as the symbol of His teaching that body, that divine body, that we call the Sun of our system. If you look at the symbol under which God is expressed in that ancient faith, you will find that it ever goes back to the Sun, from which the life of the system pours forth; for as all life in our solar system comes forth from the Sun, and every planet takes from the Sun its light and life, so in Hinduism was the Sun regarded as the outer manifestation of God Himself, the one Life of the world and of all that lived therein; and we find its central prayer - the prayer that is ever repeated by every Hindu as he turns eastwards as the

Sun rises, and bows before the Sun as its light dawns in the eastern sky - you find that ancient prayer still ringing from modern lips: "That Sun we worship; may the divine radiance make wise, may it brighten our thought". To that divine Life and Light, recognised as divine in the outer world and as the source of all physical as well as all emotional and mental and spiritual life, the cry goes up from that ancient faith day by day, that that light which we worship may shine in us and irradiate us. As the heat and the warmth and the light of the Sun were the symbols by which the World-Teacher gave knowledge and wisdom to the first religion of our Aryan race, so we find that after a while He retired and left in the field His pupils to carry on the knowledge and to spread the truths He taught.

It was not until another great emigration went forth, that which went forth to Arabia, to Egypt, along the basin of the Mediterranean, the second of which I spoke, that He again came forth from His home in Central Asia, and, taking the body of a disciple in Egypt, began to teach the same ancient truth of the One Life in every man, in the outer world as well as in his inner heart. But in Egypt He spoke a language a little different, and instead of taking the Sun itself as the symbol of divinity, He took the Light which came forth from it and which dwelt also in the hearts of men; it is from ancient Egypt that those words were drawn, so familiar to every one of you in the Fourth Gospel of the Christian Church, of the "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world". Those were the words He spoke in the name that is known in the West as Hermes, or as Thoth in the ancient Egyptian faith; He, the Messenger of the Supreme, declared that the Light which exists in the world around us lives also in our own hearts, and He taught that man should look within for the divine Light and find it burning within his own heart. He taught that when once you see the Light burning within yourself, then, and then only, shall you be able to recognise the Light as it burns in the heaven above us, as it shines in the world around us; for only as we know God in ourselves, do we learn to see God in all who are around us. Nay, to us He is not only in the man, but in the animal, the vegetable, the mineral kingdoms, for there is nothing which exists, moving or unmoving, that could for one moment be bereft of Him, in a world where all is God; there is not the lowest grain of dust that is not penetrated with the one divine Light even as it

shines out in the highest Archangel; for the Light is one, and that Light is the Light of the world.

And so He taught through Light the ancient hidden side of the old Egyptian lore. Many a sentence is to be found of the Light. The King of Egypt, the Ruler, is told that his one great duty is to “Look for the Light”, for only as the King sees the divine Light in the people that he rules can he be truly King by the grace of God, recognising divinity in his subjects as he feels it within himself. And the priests were taught to “Follow the Light”, and the people were told to “Seek for the Light”; and so everywhere in ancient Egypt the Light was the symbol of the Godhead, and only as it irradiated the heart of man could man hope to realise the splendour of the divine Life. Egypt, because its central teaching was of Light, had as the keynote of its faith, Knowledge. Knowledge and science are as much characteristic of the ancient faith of Egypt as Duty founded on the recognition of the One Life was the dominant note of ancient India. The ‘Wisdom of Egypt’ has come down through the ages, and, as you know, even one of our sciences, chemistry, takes its name from the ancient land of Khem, the old name of Egypt. For Law is the symbol of Knowledge, as Duty is the flower of Truth.

And then another emigration was to come forth, that which was to people ancient Persia. To Persia the same great World-Teacher came forth, there to give the religion that you know under the name of Zarathustra, the Teacher of Purity; and he took Fire as the symbol of God, because fire is the great purifier. When you cast gold into the fire, the dross is burnt up and only the pure metal remains. As you cast the human being into the fire of struggle and of difficulty, the dross of weakness is burnt away, and the pure gold of the strength of the Spirit remains. And when He went to Persia and took His human form, the form of a well-beloved disciple, He preached the doctrine of the Fire to the Persian people; He bade them think of God as Fire, and bade them bear reverence to the earth as the shadow of God; to keep purity in their lives, their persons, their houses, their lands - Purity being as much the dominant note of the Zoroastrian faith, as Knowledge was the dominant note of the old faith of Egypt, and Duty that of India. And thus, teaching them this Purity symbolised by Fire, He built up that mighty civilisation of which the remnant still exists after some thirty thousand years.

Again the time came when another emigration was to go forth, the fourth of these emigrating hosts, called by us the Keltic, although that name in Europe generally is restricted to some of the families that came forth from it, rather than to the root-trunk to which we give it. They, coming from their intermediate home, the Caucasus, passed from the Caucasus into Greece, and made the mighty nation of the Greeks as you know them, from ten thousand years before Christ onwards. To them the great Teacher also came, but came in other guise, though teaching the same great truths; for He came to Greece as bringing the Beautiful, and he took as symbols of the Beautiful, music which is harmony, where every power is made accordant with every other, and the perfect life is a life that breathes out music and therefore breathes out beauty. It was He who, as Orpheus, founded the great Orphic Mysteries, from which all the later Mysteries of Greece proceeded. It was He who, playing on His lyre, attracted not only human beings but also the very animals from the fields and woods; for so compelling was that marvellous melody that it won the heart of every living creature that heard it, and the very trees, it is said, bowed down in homage as the notes flowed through them and gave a fresh beauty to every form, a fresh radiance to every colour. And beginning with those Orphic Mysteries and the teaching of the Orphic Prophets of the Beautiful, Beauty became the dominant note of Greece; so that whether it embodied itself in exquisite architecture, whether it showed itself in wondrous sculpture, whether on the canvas the brush brought out the glories of colour, or whether the thinker and the poet shaped the wondrous Greek literature, you find that perfection of form which is characteristic not only of the Greeks, the forefathers, but of all the Latin races of our modern Europe - you see in them everywhere the one note of Beauty added to the ever-growing chord of human life.

And when that work was done, then the great World-Teacher who had been the same Individual appearing in the different forms, came for the last time back to India, and there He took on His last body, that you have heard of as Gautama, the Lord Buddha; for His work in this world was over, and wider fields called for His service, utter perfection having been reached by Him and His labour on earth fulfilled. You remember how here He reached what is called the perfect Illumination, the perfect Enlightenment, and then, after

teaching for some five-and-forty years of life, how He passed away from earth. But still they tell us in those eastern lands that from time to time His shadow shines forth upon the world in blessing; for He was the first of our humanity who touched that height of stainless perfection, He who, having been World-Teacher through these long ages of the past, handed on to His mighty Successor the function of teaching the Race through the further stages of its evolution - to Him who in the East is still called the Bodhisattva, who in the West appeared as the Christ.

For now another Individual, though of the same mighty Brotherhood of World-Teachers, comes forth on to the stage of the world in order to lift up our race to yet higher reaches of spirituality, to yet greater glory of perfection. And we find Him first appearing in the eastern lands under a name that you will know very well - the name of Shri Krshna - that marvellous Child of eastern stories, who is an embodied Love, and who to two hundred and fifty millions of our Race today is the supreme Object of worship and of devotion. Very brief the life that there He led. As a youth He passed away, but so marvellous was His out-welling love, so marvellous His compassionate tenderness, that even those few years of mortal life have changed, as it were, the aspect of Hinduism, and have made it a religion of Devotion where before it was rather a religion of Knowledge. Just so also among the Buddhists - the people who use the name of the Lord Buddha as that of their supreme Teacher - you find that they speak of Gautama, the Lord Buddha as the Buddha of Knowledge, but they speak of the One who is now the Supreme Teacher as the Buddha of Compassion. It was that brief life of love, which has made so wondrous a devotion in all our eastern brethren, that 'Krshna-cult', as it is called, which suddenly springs up a few centuries before the Christian era, which is not traced to an definite beginning by the ordinary Orientalist in the West. They know not the true eastern story; therefore they cannot understand the religion of love, which suddenly sprang up in that eastern land. They cannot understand why, in many points, it is so like Christianity, why it has so much said in it of divine grace, of the helping of man by God, of the lifting up of the helpless and the sinner. They cannot understand how these strange likenesses to Christianity appear in a pre-Christian form of worship. They do not dream that the secret lies in the fact that it was the same World-Teacher who is the central Object

of devotion in both, who is worshipped under the name of Krshna in India as He is worshipped under the name of Christ in Christendom. His great mission as the Christ was to the fifth sub-race of the Aryan people, those who spread over northern and western Europe, and these fourth and fifth sub-races intermingle one with the other, and you find the great faith of Christianity dominating them both.

If we saw that in the religions of the past there was a dominant virtue, its keynote, as it were, added to the great chord of perfection, if we saw that Duty and Knowledge and Purity and Beauty were the gifts of the World-Teacher of the past, who as the Lord Buddha gave the law to men, what do we find in the later religions, where the new World-Teacher has descended in order to lift humanity higher towards the perfection of divinity? We find in the cult of Shri Krshna, as I just said, an unbounded devotion, a perfect self-surrender of man to the object of his love; and if you ask me what is the note in Christianity which is the dominant note of that great faith, which rang out as the keynote, which has largely changed the atmosphere of the world, you will find that that keynote is Self-Sacrifice – the development of the individual to know the value of himself, and then, the only use of that value, to sacrifice himself for the good of his fellow-men. For just as the teaching of the Christ on earth laid so much stress on the value of the individual, as He reminded His hearers, “What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul”; as He constantly pressed on His hearers the immense importance of the individual life; so you see Him teaching by His own perfect sacrifice even unto death that lesson of Self-Sacrifice which is the central truth of Christianity. For it is only when strength has been developed, it is only when greatness has been evolved, it is only as the strong man stands out conscious, knowing his strength, it is only then that you see the full beauty of the lesson: “Let him that is first among you be as your servant”; “He that is greatest is he that doth serve”. It is Christianity that teaches us the lesson that power is meant for service, and that strength is only noble when it is bowed to the uplifting of the weak. That is the keynote of the Christian faith, adding the value and the use of strength to all the lessons from the other great religions that have gone before it in the religious evolution of man, and it is that lesson that Christendom is beginning to learn.

Already that social conscience is awakened which begins to realise that knowledge and power and strength are only human, as they are vowed to the service of the race, and which accepts that great word of a Master of Wisdom and Compassion, caught up and proclaimed, strangely enough, by an English scientist, Huxley, that “the law of Self-Sacrifice is the law of evolution for the man”. That is the latest lesson that has come from the lips of the World-Teacher, in order that the human race may be able to step one rung further up the ladder of truth and of love.

You must remember that the teaching which is sent out in a great faith is not limited in its influence to the religion which sounds it forth. When a religion becomes a dominant expression in the world, as each great world’s faith does in time, then the keynote of the religion sounds out over the other religions and you find in them also an echo of the central teaching of the one which is leading the civilisation of the world. And so you find today in eastern faiths, that this note of Self-Sacrifice, struck so loudly by Christianity, is beginning to influence the lives of the nations and to be re-echoed by people after people. And while it is still true, as I have often said in addressing an eastern audience, that this ideal of altruism, of self-sacrifice of the strong to the weak, showing itself as public spirit, showing itself forth as the sense of public duty - while I have told them that that is far more developed in the West than as yet it is in the East, still we can see in eastern nations the beginning of the answer to the keynote that in the West has been struck, and you find there also the dawning of this public spirit in which strength is to be used for service, and knowledge for the helping of the ignorant. Every faith has had this idea, but it is the central idea in Christianity.

And looking back thus at the great World-Teachers, at the two mighty Individuals, the One succeeding the other in the mission of World-Teacher, you realise that at one time there is only a single World-Teacher for all the religions of the world. They all look up to the One, though under a different name.

Are you inclined at first to think that the Christ who is so precious to yourself should be your own personal possession, and should belong only to the faith of Christianity? Is it not much more beautiful, is it not much more

inspiring, does it not make you feel your Brotherhood more with the children of other religions and the followers of other faiths, if you realise that they worship your Christ under different names, and send up the homage of adoration to the same mighty Teacher, although the name by which they call Him is other than your Greek name of the West? It seems to me that to know that great truth, that there is but the One, supreme over all faiths, that He sends out His blessings to the faithful in all religions, that the inspiration of love in them is His love that flows into them, that His love protects them, that His wisdom guides them, that He is the purifier from all superstition, is a more grandiose and inspiring view of the Christ, than if you thought of Him as belonging only to a single faith while the rest of the children of men are outside His love, His care, His thought. Have you forgotten the words that you find in your Gospel: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold"? Truly not of the Christian faith, but still belonging to the one World-Teacher, whom you here worship as the Christ. He knows His sheep and they are known of Him, although the Shepherd bears another title, and by some other name men love and adore the One.

Now has this great succession of the comings of the World-Teachers reached its ending? Has human evolution touched its goal? Are no more subdivisions of the great Aryan race to be evolved? Is there no more progress stretching on our earth before the aspiring souls of men? Are we the highest evolution that humanity is to accomplish, the crown showing out the limit of the divine power on our earth? And yet how far are we from the perfection of the Father, which is the goal marked for humanity by the Christ Himself.

We cannot believe it; and as we do not believe that the outer evolution of man is over, that there will be no more human Races budding out from the stock of humanity, so neither can we believe that the spiritual evolution of man has touched its highest point, and that the World-Teacher is withdrawn from the earth, and shall not again tread in familiar human form the roads of the world He loves. And so to many of us, I do not say to all, the fact of the comings of the past is the prophecy of the comings of the future, and we believe that whenever from the human branch a new branchlet is put forth, to that branchlet, as in the past, the great World-Teacher shall come with His message of wisdom and of love, with the wondrous inspiration of His

presence, with the placing before the eye of the new human sub-race the example of a perfect life, which shall lift humanity a step nearer to the divine. Surely the long succession is not over; surely it cannot be that the life of the divine within us shall not expand to yet fairer forms, to yet more beautiful manifestations. And so there are many among us who look for His coming again, for that same great One who took human form in Palestine, and will, we believe, take it again for the helping and uplifting of our modern world. I ask you, has there been any time in the story of the world, in all those far ages of the past, in which the need of man was greater than his need today? in which he more required a help which can only come from above? in which he had more need of a leader to guide him into the path of wisdom and of peace? Look abroad in every country at the hopeless poverty of the masses of the people; look at the ignorance, worse than the poverty - although they react upon each other, the poverty making worse the ignorance, and the ignorance breeding fresh poverty; look at the unrest in every nation; look at the discontent in those who yearn for a better social condition, for a nobler human life. See how in the young amongst you, the next generation, how the social conscience is awaking, how the more highly placed and the more wealthy are asking in every land: "What can we do for the redemption of our brethren, how can we help in the uplifting of our people?" See how on every side knowledge is growing and is beginning to grope after the inner things, the things that materialistic science will be unable to discover; and see the multiplying prayers arising from the heart of humanity, that He who once came as Teacher will come again as Teacher to the world that needs Him.

And as you think it over, pondering it in your own hearts, as you ask of the heavens above you and the world around you whether the need of man is not great enough to compel the Heart of Love again to reveal itself amongst us, then to you also shall the light of dawn become visible. Then for you too shall the Star in the East, the Morning Star, arise; and as that Morning Star presages the rising of the Sun, and is lost in the beams of glory when he rises above the horizon and sheds his light upon our earth, so shall you see in the heavens the Sign of the Star, which the wise men of old saw and followed, seeking the infant King. You shall know that already the world is beginning to listen, to listen whether the sound of His footsteps may not be

heard as they approach our earth. Will not you, many of you, join with us in the cry: "Come, O World-Teacher, to enlighten the ignorance of the world; you, who saved it in years gone by, come as our Saviour once again".

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### 3. "THE CHRIST IN MAN"

STOCKHOLM, *17th June 1913.*

FRIENDS:

We have been listening to a song of triumph over death, and the ultimate triumph of the Spirit in man over the death of the body lies in the realisation of his own eternal life - a life which is his as a part of the life universal, his indefeasible birthright, that of which none may deprive him. I think perhaps that something of scepticism may have arisen in our modern world because we have thought of man as the child of a day rather than as a native of immortality, coming down into a mortal world. For man immortality is inherent; it is the outward manifestation of that Eternity which is his as the offspring of the Eternal Himself. But we have been inclined to identify man with his body, rather than with himself; to speak of him as though the Spirit were a possession instead of the body being but a garment. And so, looking at man in upside-down fashion, it has been possible for us to ask whether he has a Spirit, whether he survives death, whereas really the question that we might very well ask is: "Why has this immortal Bird of Heaven plunged down into the ocean of matter, into mortal life?" Thus regarding man, we shall readily follow his long evolution and understand what is meant by the phrase "The Christ in man"; what is meant when the Apostle speaks of man growing to the "stature of the fulness of Christ".

In order that we may understand definitely as well as aspire greatly, we have to understand the constitution, as it were, of this human Spirit, which is ourselves; and we think of it as coming forth from the Spirit Universal, as a seed might come from a tree. And just as surely as the seed can only reproduce the likeness of its parent, so can the human Spirit only reproduce the divine Spirit whence he comes.

We have spoken of the three aspects of Spirit, symbolised in those Trinities that we find in all the great religions, whether living or dead; that triple nature of Deity is reproduced in the triple nature of the human Spirit, and so

we have seen that the Spirit has three aspects - each aspect corresponding to a similar aspect in the Divine - man verily made in the image of God, and unfolding one after another these divine aspects which lie within him.

Looking thus at the human Spirit as a seed of Divinity, we realise the full meaning of those words in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, spoken by Shri Krishna, when He is speaking as God Himself, and when He declares: "A portion of myself, a living Spirit, sent out into the world of matter". It is as a "portion of God" that we should ever regard man; a "divine fragment" he has been called by Mabel Collins in that exquisite prose poem, *The Light on the Path*; a spark, he has also been called, of a fire, and he is gradually to burn up into a flame, into the likeness of that divine Fire, of that parent Deity. So we may trace his unfolding as his bodies evolve, and realise that to complete the theory of evolution we must understand the unfolding of the divine Spirit as man.

Looking back at these three aspects, we find the first, that which reflects the Power aspect of God, as Will in the human Spirit, Will the manifestation of Power. But we realise that in man this is limited, whereas in Deity it is unlimited, and only slowly and gradually, by many an effort, by many a struggle, can this germ of Will in man develop into the Power aspect of God. Then, as the second aspect of Wisdom, or SELF-consciousness - that of the Son or the Preserver in the various Trinities we find that limited in the human Spirit as SELF-realisation. Just as you find in the Christian Scripture that the Christ is spoken of as the Image of God, as showing forth the splendour of the Supreme, so do we find in the human Spirit that it is in the realisation of his own Divinity that the unfolding of the second aspect in the human Spirit is to be found. And it is that which is spoken of as the 'Christ-aspect' in the human Spirit, answering, in this reproduction of Divinity, to the Image of the Father in the Trinity divine. Then the third aspect, that of Activity, of the creative Spirit in the Hindu view the Creator of a universe - that we see reproduced in the human Spirit as the creative intelligence, or the Intellect. For it is by intellect that man works on the outer world; it is by the creative power of intelligence that he makes for himself, as it were, a world, even as the divine Spirit bodies Himself forth in worlds and systems. And this creative intellect it is, which in its highest aspect we know as genius, genius which buds forth in wondrous forms the ideas which within

the intelligence have come into shape. And so we see in the human Spirit, Will, SELF-realisation, and creative Intelligence, all in germ, or seed in man, to be unfolded gradually in the course of evolution.

In our further study, however, we find that this unfolding of Divinity in man is not immediate, and it does not show itself in the very beginning of the path of evolution. Matter in its denser form is too little plastic, too little responsive, to answer fully to the moulding powers of the divine Spirit, who seeks therein for full embodiment. And so the Spirit first reflects himself in matter - that is, he puts down into matter his own divine powers, but those appear externally, when clothed in this denser matter, in feebler form, as the reflection may be said to be feebler than that which casts it. And as we know these aspects of the Spirit in man, we know them first through the denser body in which they are clothed, so that much of their power is shrouded, much of their divinity is lost to sight. As you might have a flame within a lamp, and then surrounding that with glasses of various colours, you would find the flame grow dimmer when looked at from without, and take on the hue of one or another glass, so does this white light of Divinity, as the denser bodies are placed around it, lose its effulgence, take on colours due to the vehicles, or the coverings, and not due to itself. So we find Will in man reproduced down here on the physical plane as that of determination to action, the effective desire which impels to act. And we find the SELF-realisation of the Spirit reflected down here in our emotions, of which the basic human emotion is love; love, trying in the lower worlds to draw the separated selves together, is the reflection of that SELF-realisation which knows all selves as one.

And the creative Intellect, bodying itself forth in the denser mental matter, shows itself as the concrete mind, with its powers divided off into mental faculties, so that its creative power becomes what we call imagination - the image-making faculty; so that that wide knowledge of the past which belonged to the aspect of the intelligence in man and the knowledge of the future also which the past connotes, that in man becomes memory and anticipation, and we find them as faculties in the concrete mind; the direct vision of Truth, growing out of the fact that intelligence has the nature of knowledge, becomes the faculty of reason, of logical induction and

deduction, whereby the vision of truth is gained by following the links of a chain of reasoning instead of by the direct vision of the emancipated intellect. So that these great powers in the creative Intellect are narrowed down to be separated faculties in this lower or concrete mind in man. And in this limitation lies the possibility of our coming into touch with matter, in order that out of matter the nourishment of experience may be drawn by which the Spirit shall be able to unfold his power and the inward-turned germ or seed of Divinity shall become the outward-turned, the expanded, blossom, the manifested God in the world of men.

We need not pause on the long evolution of these lower reflections of the Spirit. All that we need notice with regard to their growth is that they are constantly drawn out by the attractions of the outer world, and that in all the objects of the world God is ever hiding Himself, in order that by that attractive power of Himself He may draw forth the hidden divine powers which lie within the germ of Him implanted in the human form. For all that there is of attractiveness in the lower world, all that there is of beauty, of loveliness, all that there is of strength and splendour, all that there is which is worthy to be struggled for and grasped, all this is but the attractiveness of God, hiding Himself within the form, in order that He may win His children to make the efforts which are needed for the unfolding of the Divine within themselves. Hence to speak against the world, with all its attractiveness, with all its allurements, is a sign of ignorance, ignorance of the real function of the world in the evolution of man. Do you suppose that it would have been made so desirable, if it were not meant to stimulate desire? Do you suppose it would have been made so attractive, unless it had been intended to be full of attraction for the lives which therein were planted by God? The whole object of the beauties of the world, of its attractions, of its desirable things, is to draw out the child Spirit in man, so that by putting out his force, his energy, he may gradually, by exercise, develop these powers and make them what they ought to be - the reproduction of Divinity. Hence it is not well when you are dealing with all the earlier stages of evolution, to discredit the world as though it were to be shunned rather than to be studied, and the experiences hidden therein to be gathered. It is meant to give experience for the unfolding of Spirit; it is as the soil, full of various forms of nourishment which the tree is to draw in by

its roots, in order that it may grow and develop in the higher air. It is true that the prizes of the world are but toys, rightly looked at. It is true that all that the world can give ends in dissatisfaction after a time. But how foolish would be the mother who would refuse to attract the child by a glittering toy, in order that the child may put out his strength, in order that he may try to move his limbs, in order that in the effort to reach the toy he may make the effort to walk, and, even if he falls, pick himself up again and renew the struggle, because of the attractiveness of the toy that is dangled before his eyes. And so with us, as children, God dangles His toys before our eyes that we may make an effort to gain them, but the value of the toy lies in the effort to gain it and not in the toy itself. And so we ever find that the moment we have grasped it, it breaks into pieces in our hands, and then another attraction comes forth to induce us to make fresh efforts. So year after year, nay, life after life, man by struggle develops his powers, and at last reaches the point where Divinity itself may begin to be manifested within him. And so to the uttermost we should cultivate every power that we have in the lower world, until it loses its attractiveness because a glimpse of something higher has been found. There, again, that wonderful little book often called the Scripture of Yoga, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, gives us the secret of the time when the unfolding, the manifestation of the God, is ready to begin. It tells us that a time comes when a man begins to understand that these objects that attract him are not all he wants, and that then he begins to turn away from them; and, as the book goes on to say, then the objects themselves “turn away from the abstemious dweller in the body”. When we have come to the point that we see that they are not what we really want, and we begin to abstain from them, then they turn away from us, for their work for us is over. They lose their attractiveness; they no longer are able to allure us; they turn away because their lesson has been learned, because all that they can teach us has been acquired. And then the *Gita* teaches us that the very desire for them passes away when once the Supreme is seen. For truly when that perfect beauty, that perfect splendour, that perfect loveliness, have once risen as the sun over the horizon of our minds, then the broken reflections in the world must needs lose their attractiveness; for the eyes, dazzled with the sun, can see no lesser light. And then comes a period which is very trying to the evolving man. He has

lost taste for the things of the world; he no longer cares for wealth, nor power, nor fame. He has tried them all, and he finds they fail him; they are naught; they bring him no lasting good; and so he feels what is called Dispassion, the lack of desire; and in losing the desire for the things of the world, there is a sense as though he were losing life itself; for life has shown itself through desire; life has grown by the gratification of desire; life has developed by the realisation of desire; and when all the objects of desire seem unsatisfying, it is as though the very life of man were fading away, and utter dissatisfaction came down. The beauty of the earth becomes grey and cold and dead. It is a time of sore trouble, a time almost of despair; the lower is gone and the higher is not yet glimpsed. For it is the law that the higher cannot definitely show itself until the lower has lost its power to charm. And there is this interval in which life seems worthless; the man says "Is life worth living?" It is full of disappointment, of sorrow and of pain. Almost a disgust of life grows up; and then the words seem to sound out from the darkness, those strange words spoken by the Christ: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; he that loseth his life shall find it unto life eternal". It is the first word of hope that, in the losing of life, eternal life perchance is to be found. But in those moments of deep depression, well-nigh, as I said, of despair, it does not seem as though this hint applied to ourselves. We would quote it to others, but we do not feel we dare to quote it to ourselves. We feel as though we were exceptional, as though for us this word of comfort had no meaning. Yet it is a word which is ever true for man, the truth that when the shadow fails, it is because we have turned to the light, and the shadow is behind us and can no longer be seen.

And then there comes the time when a new stir of life in the Spirit itself begins to make itself felt through the bodies of matter, when the germ of spiritual life is quickened as the first throbbings of it are felt within us. Very often before that comes, everything else has been struck away that we had loved. Some great catastrophe in the lower life often heralds the feeling of the higher. Friends fall away; the most beloved, perhaps, dies and leaves the world empty and our heart forlorn; and it is in the moment of that midnight, when not only the ordinary things have lost their savour, but the dearest seem veiled in darkness, it is then that the moment comes for the birth of

the Christ within us, for the first dawning of that spiritual consciousness which shall gradually increase until it supplants all else.

And the man has come up to this through a very definite Path, a Path which is traced for us in the great religions of the world. You find it in Hinduism, in Buddhism, in Christianity, and more especially, I think, you will find a careful and scientific description of it in some of the Roman Catholic books where this path of holiness is described. I have not found in Protestant literature so full a description of its stages as you find from the pens of the Mystics of the Roman Catholic Church. There you find the stages given just as they are given in the East, save that it is divided into three stages instead of four; but that is only a matter of subdivision, unimportant, for it does not touch the primary marks and facts. The Roman Catholics call the first stage the Path of Purification; the second stage is the Path of Illumination, and the Path of Union is the third. Those are the stages in which the Christ-life in man is divided in the Occultism of the Roman Catholic Church. But Occultism is the same wherever you find it; it does not matter whether you take a Hindu book or a Buddhist book or a Christian book, provided that it is an occult treatise which deals with the realities of the spiritual life in man. All you need to do is to translate the terms into terms familiar to yourself; you will find that the stages described are identical, for there is but one Way of the Cross, there is but one method for the development of the Christ-life in man. In Hinduism and Buddhism they speak of the Path of Purification, or of Purgation, as it is sometimes called, as the Probationary Path - the path that prepares the man for the birth of the Divine within him. For it is necessary to purify before that birth can take place. The Temple must be sanctified, consecrated, before the God can be manifested therein.

And so in ancient and in modern times alike it has been declared that purification was the first step to the birth of the Christ, and that when that step had been accomplished, then the sanctification or illumination begins which lightens unto the perfect day.

We spoke yesterday of the Christ in history, but those marks to which I drew your attention in the Christ in history are to be seen also in the birth and growth of the Christ-aspect in man, in the human Spirit. For that birth which is pure and immaculate, that birth of a Virgin without stain of sin; that is the

symbol everlasting of the birth of the Christ in the purified heart, the birth of the Christ-aspect in the human Spirit. Pure must be the form into which that Spirit is born. It is what technically is called the First Initiation, and in the Gospel story it is the birth of Jesus in the stable at Bethlehem which stands as the symbol of that in the great Drama of Initiation, through which the man must pass on his way to Divinity manifested. In some of the old Christian writings, the word 'stable' is used, but sometimes 'cave'. Jesus is born in a cave, and that links us to a well-known ancient phrase in Hinduism, where it exhorts the man to search into the cave, to look within the cave, for there is something there that ought to be inquired into, yea, verily, which ought to be known. It is the cave of Initiation of every Mystic writer, and the cave is the purified heart of man, where, among the purified emotions from which all taint of evil has been purged away, the realisation of the Christ-life arises in the human Spirit, and Christ Himself is born within the heart of man. It is an idea familiar to every reader of the New Testament. Did not S. Paul say of his Christian friends, baptised and communicant, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you?" For it is the Christ within rather than the Christ without who is the true Saviour of man. Only when He is born within the human Spirit have we reached what is called salvation, for only the Christ in man can be triumphant over death, and His birth in the human Spirit is the sign of that eternal life. We speak of that as the first of the great Initiations. Five of these have to be passed through by man as the human Spirit unfolds these higher aspects.

The first, as I have said, typified by the life of the Christ as given in the Gospels, is the birth. Then the man learns certain great truths which remove from him for evermore ignorance of that which has been completely acquired. He learns by SELF-realisation that there is no such thing as separateness, that each human being is part of One Life; that each human being inheres in One Existence; that the forms are separate, but the life is one. And just as you might have a number of vessels, open to the sky above, vessels in which the sides separated each vessel from those around it, but all alike were open to the sun, and the rays of the sun could pour in through the open mouths of the vessels, and one sun by its beams could lighten and warm the whole, so is it with the human Spirit. The human Spirit is a vessel ever open to the Sun of God above; the bodies are the sides of the vessels

that separate apparently one from another, but they are all open to the one Sun of the Spirit, which can fill them all alike; and when the man has risen up into the spiritual world, he looks down upon all the forms, and they are no longer closed forms but open, no longer separating forms but all open to the light, which is seen as one and indivisible. And it is therefore one of the powers of the Christ that He can pour His life down into any of the forms that lie below Him, for they are all open to the Christ-Spirit, and His life can fill them; there is no obstruction above, though there may be division below.

And that lesson must be learned ere the man can go further. He must not only theoretically accept, but practically realise that there is no separation between himself and his fellow-men. And then he must gain that SELF-realisation which makes himself know himself in the past as one through all his lives, one through the many births that have brought him into the world, one through the many deaths by which he has left this mortal existence. He must realise his own oneness through all the many lives that stretch behind him, so that to him re-incarnation is knowledge and not belief, so that he realises, he does not only hope. And he has to learn also - it is his third great lesson, ere he can go onwards to the 'baptism' that is the second of the great Initiations - he must learn that all religions come from God, that all their forms are equally useful to those who need form, and equally useless to those who have grown beyond form, and who, instead of in the letter, live in the Spirit. When the man once knows his way into the eternal life, he needs no longer the bridges of form that once carried him over the apparent gulf, and so he realises at once the use and the uselessness of forms - their infinite value until the reality is known, and then their superfluity, their needlessness, when the reality is within his grasp.

Having learned these three lessons, he takes the second step in the Christ-life in man, typified in the Gospel story by the Baptism, when, as you remember, the "Spirit of God" came down and "abode upon" Jesus. After that Initiation it is his work to draw down the higher into the lower, so that the lower may be illuminated, filled with the light that is above. He must bring down the knowledge that in the higher world he gains into the lower form where it can be used for the helping of man. He must bring down the

powers of the Intellect into the concrete mind and merge the lower in the higher so that he may use the unified intelligence in the service of man.

One by one he must bring down, by effort and by struggle, all the powers of the Spirit that matter had hitherto hampered, for his work is to redeem matter and make it the free vehicle of Spirit. And the work between the second and the third Initiation is the spiritualisation of matter, for only in that spiritualisation can the redemption of matter lie. Then he passes on to the third, typified in the Gospel story by the Transfiguration on the Mount, where the God within has become so refulgent through the purified matter that he shines forth visibly in the eyes of those disciples whose eyes were opened to behold. Then he realises to the full the Divinity that is unfolding within him, and it is then, as the Gospel story tells you, that he sets his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. For from the Mount of Glory to the Mount of Calvary there is a path that leads straight and true. He is to pass onwards from the brightness of the man of transfiguration to the agony of the Garden, to the agony of Calvary, for the fourth Portal is beginning to rise before his eyes, and that fourth Portal is the portal of the Passion, of the Crucifixion, the life of suffering beyond all others, to be met by the accumulated strength that has been gained through the previous Initiations. For, as it is truly written, Christ must be made perfect by suffering; in that agony does the Christ-Spirit learn to feel his own inherent strength. That is the time when again the human Spirit must pass through, but pass through for the last time, that suffering in darkness. Then everything which is outside for the moment fails; everything that comes from the external world is utterly lost in the darkness that descends upon the Cross. It is that last and bitterest agony, when even the Divine within seems to have disappeared; when the rock of Deity without, on which the feet were fixed, seems to tremble under the earthquake of anguish; it is then that from the lips of the Christ-Spirit in his manhood breaks forth the agonising cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" For, for a few moments of agony, it seems to him as though the divine life is not, as though there were only darkness, and the Blazing Star of hope were quenched. He knows not, in that moment of his bitterest passion, that never is the Father nearer to the son than when the son in his agony knows not of His presence. For the son must learn the unity by being left apparently alone, and only when he has

lost the God without him, shall he discover the God within. And soon after that the strife is over. Then upon him descends the peace of death, and then comes the conquest, the triumph, the liberation, when the Spirit finds that death has no power over him, and the Initiation of the Master, the fifth, opens up before him, and he has before his eyes the unending vista of Eternity, Eternity realised within himself.

And when that realisation has overflowed his being, when he looks back with strange and tender pity on the moments when he could have imagined that that which is his deepest Self could ever be parted from him, then it is that he knows that he himself is divine in essence, then the cycle of humanity is over, and the full stature of the Christ has been attained.

Such, in poor and feeble language, is the birth and the growth of the Christ in the Spirit of man. Beyond reaches a vast progress, beyond more triumph of ever-unfolding Divinity. But the cycle of birth and death is over; He has entered into eternal life. And such is the future that stretches before each of us, such the splendid destiny which evolution has in store for each of us. Others have done it before us, and what man with his inner Divinity has done, you and I can also in time accomplish. All that we need is time - time to grow, time to unfold, time that this Spirit may develop within us; and we have as much time as we need, for sure as death to mortal life is the conquest of death by the eternal Spirit. As much time as each of us requires, as much time as each of us demands, is ours - all is ours which is necessary for the unfolding of the Divine within. The only thing we cannot do is ultimately to escape from the unfolding. We may delay it; we may retard it; we may put it off to another world, to another age; but the end is sure, for the law of humanity is to evolve unto Divinity, and because of that mighty Will, with which our own divine Will, though hidden ever, co-operates, that end is sure to every Child of Man.

But yours is the choice when you will begin that special labour, when you will begin the effort necessary for accomplishment. But of this you may be sure, that to read the story of another Christ, without developing the Christ within yourself, will be of no ultimate effect, will be of no ultimate use to you. It is written, and truly written, that no man may redeem his brother, nor make atonement unto God for him. Each must do that great work for

himself, by unfolding the Christ within and not only by worshipping the Christ without.

Beautiful and gracious, provocative of intensest love and deepest devotion, is that supreme figure of the Christ in history, in whom we see God made manifest in man. But half of its value to you will be lost unless it stirs you to aspiration, unless it makes you strong to reproduce that which you worship, to develop in yourself that which you adore in Him. For in you also the lower Self must be crucified; in you also the higher Self must rise triumphant. If on the stage of the world that glorious life has been lived amongst men of many beliefs, as the heart of every great religion, it is in order that we may first love and then reproduce; that we may admire its beauty from without and then develop its beauty from within.

And just in proportion as that lesson is learned, just in proportion as within ourselves we develop in our lower nature a faint reflection of the beauty of the Christ, so shall the day come nearer when He Himself shall be born in us, and when we shall realise better the Christ without because the Christ within answers to His call.

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## 4. THE RESTORATION OF THE MYSTERIES

LONDON, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1913.

FRIENDS:

The very title of this lecture obviously implies certain ideas on the part of the speaker. First, that the speaker believes that such things as “Mysteries” exist or have existed; clearly that they existed in the past, otherwise the word ‘restoration’ would be inapplicable; but the presence of that word in the title also implies the thought on the part of the speaker that restoration is possible. It is within the limits of that phrase that I want, if I can, to lead your thoughts tonight to these great possibilities, the evolution of which from within the man is not impossible. I want, if I can, to show you that when these Mysteries existed there was a general recognition of the fact of a higher evolution for man than the evolution that was normal and common at the time, that those higher possibilities of the human Spirit were matters of common belief, if not of common achievement; but that today the very belief in the possibility is regarded as well-nigh a superstition, an absurdity, and as long as this belief is thus regarded, man’s evolution cannot go on as rapidly as some of us believe it might advance were these believed in. With the ordinary laws of nature worked with even intelligently, progress is comparatively slow; but if it be true that a deeper knowledge can quicken the turning of the wheels of evolution; if it be true that as regards man’s higher nature knowledge may play the same part as it plays in the rapid improvement of the lower nature of the animal kingdom; if knowledge in the higher realms, as in the lower, is the great means of advance by which man learns to cooperate with nature, and by that cooperation to quicken the working of natural laws; if that be true, then at the stage that man has reached today there open before him magnificent possibilities, and those possibilities - placed within reach of achievement, however difficult that achievement may be - do seem to open up vistas of splendour and of beauty that we must naturally desire for the growth of the human race.

Now, looking at religions in the past, we find a universal recognition that Religion has two sides: one, the public or exoteric, meant for the masses of the people; the other, the hidden or esoteric, open practically only to those who were willing to strive to perfect themselves more rapidly than their fellows; open to those who were willing to pay the price of knowledge everywhere - industry, labour, self-surrender - in order that the knowledge might be gained. Exoteric religion, according to the universal view of the past, had to do with man as we know him in this lower world; man in his consciousness working in the brain, working through the physical body, expressing itself in actions, emotions, thoughts. Thought, emotion, conduct: these are the three manifestations of consciousness in man as we know him in our world; and we estimate the value of a man according to the rectitude of his conduct, the height of his emotions, the strength and subtlety of his thoughts. It is more or less recognised by modern psychology, as by ancient religion, that human consciousness is something far wider and greater than the consciousness of man as we know it expressed through the brain and the nervous system of the physical body. More and more, modern psychology is recognising that there are great fields of consciousness which are not normally manifested in the ordinary man. Quite apart from the extraordinary manifestations that we call genius, there are the realms of the subconscious, and the super-conscious, however you may like to denote them or to describe them; and you find there the field for psychological study, you find modern psychology dealing more and more boldly with these obscurities of the consciousness of man. Men like Sir Oliver Lodge and many others declare that consciousness as we know it is a very partial thing, that only a small part, we may say, of our full consciousness works in our physical brain. And so the science of our times is on the alert, looking in all directions, studying along all lines, trying to discover some of the hidden powers in man, and trying to evolve a system or a method by which those powers may be arranged within the realm of law.

Man, as the Theosophist regards him down here, is but the pale shadow of man's real self, a shadow cast down from higher worlds in which he is really a denizen, where his nativity is to be found, his true domicile, he being but a foreigner in the lower world in which he lives. And looking thus on man, we speak of the personality as including what is generally recognised as man

down here, man in his physical body, in his emotional nature, in his mental equipment; we take those three manifestations as making up his passing life, and we speak of him as really living, albeit unconsciously in two of them, in three worlds, and not in one. We trace him on the other side of death into what is called the intermediate world by some, the world of emotions and desires; and we recognise that he is living there today as much as he will ever live there after death; only for the most part he is conscious in his own emotional nature, but not conscious of the phenomena of that world, not conscious of other beings who equally with himself are its denizens, not recognising his surroundings there, not realising the various peculiarities nor knowing the laws of that world; living in it, truly, because in his own emotional nature he belongs to it, but making no observations, gathering no knowledge; not realising himself until, casting off the body in death, he passes into that world and finds himself in a world, I was going to say as real as, but more real than this, more real because some of the grosser matter has been flung aside, and there is more consciousness, less limitation of matter.

Then there is another world in which he is living - the world of mind, - but there also unconsciously, save in so far as his own thinkings are concerned. He does not recognise directly in that the thoughts of his fellow-men; for each man there is living, as it were, in his own world of thought, and there is no conscious contact between the world of thought of one man and the world of thought of another. He does not recognise the inhabitants of that mental world; he does not recognise the phenomena which there surround him; his thoughts and his emotions only are realised by him down here after they have come into the physical brain and begun through that to express themselves in the physical world. And yet he realises that those thoughts and those emotions certainly affect his body in many strange and obscure ways. He is conscious that if a surge of passion passes over his emotional nature there is a change in the circulation of the blood caused by a change in the beating of the heart; he is conscious that his breath quickens or, possibly, is partly inhibited; doctors tell him that in many other ways it may be found out that the physical body is affected by a stress of emotion, by a strain of thought, so that he is compelled to realise that even in this physical world and this body that he uses, it is not only the brain that is affected by

thought or emotion, but the whole of the body is more or less under their influence, and responds by physical changes to changes in emotional or mental consciousness.

None the less, we are obliged to say; for most of us, that we live unconsciously in those two subtler worlds. We do not realise, therefore, the enormous effects that we produce on those around us by our unconscious activities in the worlds of emotion and of thought. We send out a strong emotion and we cannot follow it; we do not see how the vibrations set up in connection with it affect the subtler bodies of our fellow-men; we do not realise that any noble emotion stimulates in those around us emotions of a similar kind, and raises the emotional level in the society in which we dwell. We do not realise that a thought of hatred, a thought of cruelty, or evil, goes out into the emotional world to affect the emotional natures of others, and may even clothe itself in crime, as where the passing hatred of numbers of respectable people set up waves in the emotional world that, striking on the nature of the congenital criminal, unaccustomed to self-control and following out an emotion by an act, may lead to a blow that ends in murder, for which every contributor has a share of responsibility in the face of the divine justice. Unconsciously then we live, to a very large extent, working good or working evil without knowing what we do, many a time breaking a precious thing; not knowing of the mischief, many a time stimulating a noble emotion, not knowing that we have shared in the great action it produces.

Exoteric religion deals with all that life of ours that shows itself on the physical plane. It affects the emotional nature by precepts, and tries to train it rightly and nobly, and does so to a very large extent, even without communicating the knowledge which might enable us consciously to realise what we are doing. And so we find the precepts of exoteric religion gradually building up noble types, gradually evolving noble characters. Time after time our dwelling in the heavenly world, the world of the mind, brings results for our next life on earth, however ignorant we may be of the method of their working. It evolves what we call our conscience, which we bring back with us in our next birth; it builds up our faculties, so that with each succeeding birth we are built into a more noble human being than we were when we left the last physical body in death; for the great laws work

without our knowledge; they bring their results, although we are unconscious of the method by which those results are wrought. And so men who honestly follow the precepts of their religion, laid down by men who know and not by the ignorant, build themselves up, however unconsciously into ever nobler manhood; for the object of exoteric religion is to create the good man, the man of high social and civic virtue, the man of unselfish, altruistic nature, the man who realises duty as the binding law of life, the man who is builded into that noble human character which is the foundation of all the higher evolution, and without the building of which the super-structure cannot be erected; hence the enormous value of exoteric religion, the many great religions of the world.

The other side, the esoteric side, starts from the point where the exoteric ends. It takes the good man, who has followed out the precepts of exoteric religion, and begins to unfold in him the powers of the spiritual Intelligence; it takes that spiritual nature of man, and, developing the higher Intellect, it leads him to a real understanding of himself and of the worlds in which he is living. It takes the second aspect of the Spirit, Intuition, and, unfolding that, it leads him to realisation of the higher truths, so that he knows instead of believing, and realises instead of only accepting. It takes the Will-power in man, the third great manifestation of Spirit, and it trains that human Will to work in perfect accord with the divine Will. It teaches the man to be a conscious helper in the evolution of his race; it shows him how, by utilising his Intellect and Intuition, he can become an effective co-worker with nature, and so it changes him from one who is carried on the stream of evolution to one of the forces that make for evolution, teaches him to become a lifting wing for humanity, helping humanity to rise more swiftly to higher levels of life and thought. It takes the inner nature and moulds that from within, not from without, as the exoteric religion does by precepts and by law; and so it gradually unfolds from the basis of the good man, the divine man, who is the crown of human evolution, preparing him to pass on into other fields of work, into other worlds of labour, full of the knowledge by which he can co-operate with Divinity, and full of the love and the compassion that stimulate him to the higher service.

Now, how does he do it? It is the method of that esoteric side of religion which has always been worked out in what have always been called the Mysteries - Mysteries because hidden, because not proclaimed in the public world, since they are of no use to men until the lessons of the exoteric religion have been learned and have been applied - intended to unfold in him the powers of consciousness whereby he may live consciously, not unconsciously, in all the subtler worlds of being, in which by evolving his inner faculties he may know by observation and not only learn by authority; in which in that emotional, in that mental, world of which I spoke, he may master all his powers as the scientist masters the powers of the lower world; he may live in those worlds using their laws, exercising their powers, controlling their manifestations, and so utilising them all for the guidance of conduct, making himself of greater use for the masses of his fellow-men. It helps him to open these up, to evolve them more rapidly, and leads him on into still higher worlds, until the spiritual nature has become in all its aspects fully evolved, so far as in human form that evolution be possible, lifting up the lower mind into the higher intellect, lifting up the emotional nature into the intuitional, into the Christ-nature in man, lifting up man's lower will, which is selfish, into the higher will that is one with the Divine, and so perfecting the human nature, and leaving the divine man with other ranges of evolution in front of him, but the lessons of this world learnt for evermore.

The existence of such methods, of such teaching, of such more rapid evolution, is a testimony which we find traced over all the history of the ancient world that it is possible for a man thus to learn, possible for a man thus to evolve; and we are told in the great religions of the world that when a World-Teacher comes forth, when he gives again in form suited to the time the eternal verities of religion, that then, side by side with the teaching of the doctrines, he also establishes Mysteries suitable to the time, to the place, to the stage of evolution, by which those who have learned the lessons of the outer faith may continue the higher evolution, and that it is from such a World-Teacher that not only the outer religions, but also the inner Mysteries have come. In all of these in the ancient world - and, as I shall show you in a moment, in the foundation of the great religion of the West, in the Christian world - the supreme Teacher gave the method of the

higher evolution and made the open way by which men more rapidly might become divine.

The method of the higher evolution and the opening of the way by which men may become more rapidly divine is that of preparation for what is called Initiation. Now what is Initiation? Put very briefly, it is an extension of consciousness. The consciousness that you know as working in your brain, that is extended - remains realised by yourself, but embraces a new world, active in that as the physical brain-consciousness is active here, and each Initiation extends the consciousness over a new area; so that this SELF-consciousness, this possibility of gaining knowledge, enlarges with each successive Initiation, gains new powers to be exercised, as well as a new world in which those powers can be exercised.

Now, where the *Mysteries* lead up, as they always do, to the first of these great Initiations, there is a long preparation that goes before the presentation for Initiation, during which powers are being gradually evolved which enable the man to grasp what is called the key of knowledge and turn it in the lock that opens to him a new world for study. And so we find in each Initiation that which is called the test, or the tests, to which the aspirant is subjected; that these are always along the line of the power of exercising the various forces and energies of that world, and showing that he has acquired the knowledge that brings them under his control. Just on the same lines as, dealing with physical plane knowledge, you may test the knowledge of your candidate by practical experiments, so in those higher realms where the examination has the name of Initiation given to it, you have this practical testing of the candidate to see how far he has acquired the powers of the world of which he claims to be a ruler, and the exercise of those powers is tested by seeing how he is able to use them under various difficult experiments that are placed before him. It is a definite gaining, then, of power, of knowledge, and knowledge and power are identical. It makes the man fit to be a candidate for one of the Initiations, and this training is carried on in what were known in the older world as the *Mysteries*. They were the schools of the preliminary training; they were places where the man was taught how to leave his body at will, how to utilise the organs and the senses of the subtler body in which he is ever

clothed; how to use them in full consciousness, when the physical organs he is accustomed to have been temporarily cast aside. He is taught how to observe, how to examine, how to discover for himself the laws of the subtler world into which he passes; and so step by step, trained in this knowledge, he becomes, as it were, a scientist of the subtle world, as here you may have the scientist of the lower world. And just as you would regard a man as ill-trained in science if he had only studied text-books, if he had never worked out experiments in the laboratory; as you would not regard a man as a competent chemist who had only read the books of other chemists and had never acquired for himself the practical experience, the manual dexterity, the knowledge as to how to do as well as how to repeat; as you would not regard such a man as a real scientist, so the true religionist cannot regard a man as deserving of that name if his knowledge is second-hand instead of firsthand, and if he has only learnt to believe on the authority of others and has never re-verified their statements by his own individual experiments. And it is that individual training, that turning of theoretical knowledge into practical, that trying of experiments in the subtler worlds, and not only reading books about them - it is that which ever made up the instruction given in the Mysteries, so that the man is able to go on to that great world - examination which has been known by the name of Initiation. When the man thus studies and thus equips himself, then his instructors present him to pass through the gate of Initiation, and it is the Mysteries that make the preparatory school for that passing, and that train him in the knowledge without which it is impossible that he should go across the threshold.

I said that the great Founders of religion established these Mysteries side by side with Their exoteric teaching, and where they were established, existing within the knowledge of the people as regards the fact that they were there, although the knowledge of them was hidden as the deeper knowledge of mathematics is hidden from the man who knows nothing of the elements of mathematical science, for it is only in that sense that things are hidden just as the fact was known, as the establishment was known to all, so pupils came forward in order that they might be admitted to these schools of the higher knowledge, called the Mysteries. We find that in the early days of any religion, take what religion you will, they passed on the

pupils from their Mysteries to those great Initiations of the Brotherhood itself, in which the higher worlds are consciously mastered, and in which ever door after door is opened to worlds yet subtler and higher.

Then we find, as we pass down the stream, that gradually those true Mysteries that trained their pupils into the leaving of the body and the evolution of the higher vehicles so that they might pass into the subtler worlds, pass into them as worlds external to themselves the phenomena of which they could study - that these were obscured; as less earnestness was found, less willingness to learn, lower Mysteries made their appearance, lesser Mysteries where the conditions exacted were less stringent and where the results consequently were less effective. Then you find, tracing them down, that instead of passing into the worlds themselves, living pictures of the worlds were unrolled before the eyes of the students who had succeeded in evolving some of the higher senses, although not able freely to use the higher body without the physical. Then came the time that you may read of in the Mysteries of Chaldea, the lower Mysteries of Egypt and of Greece, where these pictures made by real Occultists were used as the methods of instruction. And then, later still, you find traces in ancient literature of even that knowledge passing away from the esoteric religion, the esoteric side so far, and then you come to the stage where dramas were played that represent the facts of the higher worlds. You find many traces of that in Greek literature, in Egyptian, such as the Book of the Dead, the fragments of which we have; traces of it in Hindu literature also, in which no longer the going into the real worlds - that meant either that the man could leave the body, or that he could be thrown into trance and taken out of the body in full consciousness - when that was no longer generally done, where these living pictures could no longer be reproduced, then comes in the dramatic stage, the stage in which actors play upon a stage just as in a theatre today, where the actors simulate the phenomena and the beings of the higher world, and work out the Mystery Play before those who are admitted for the instruction; in which you find the many animal passions figured as animals acted by men on the dramatic stage; where the virtues are similarly personified; and where, in this way, much of real knowledge was conveyed, much of moral teaching, was given, but the reality of the super-physical had vanished, and only the representation of it remained. For

that, only a certain amount of intellectual and emotional instruction was needed; no longer the evolution of the higher bodies, no longer the unfolding of the higher senses, but only the intellectual and emotional training; the fourth stage downwards through which the Mysteries passed. And so later on you find them disappearing for lack of pupils, not for lack of teachers. The other worlds were as real as ever, the Teachers as competent as ever, but the pupils were no longer willing to fulfil the conditions which were laid down, and so you come to the stage when the reality of the Mysteries vanishes and only the outer form of them remains; and then the disappearance of them altogether, from about the fourth to perhaps the seventh or eighth centuries of the Christian era.

Looking for a moment now on the use of that training, where lay its value in the older world? It lay in the fact that the true Initiate gained a knowledge where otherwise belief was all that he could hope to have. It proved the fact of the super-physical beyond dispute to the man who had travelled through the super-physical worlds; it proved the survival of man after the body had passed through death, and made the reality of the after-death life definite and clear and within the reach of human knowledge. And it was because of those super-physical experiences, because of that actual proof in his own consciousness of the survival of human beings on the other side of death, it was because of that that Plato declared that the Mysteries took away the fear of death and gave the certainty of immortality; so also giving to those who had not experienced it teachers who could instruct them at first hand, and teach them from their own knowledge - men who spoke with authority, and not as the scribes; who spoke out of a first-hand experience, and not out of mere tradition or the study of literature written by the wise. Think what that meant to religion, to the exoteric religion of the times. See how the exoteric religion would be supported and strengthened by the testimony of those who had learned the secrets of the esoteric schools; how you would always have at the back of a faith knowledge that might be acquired, so that religion was based on the knowledge of the expert instead of on the reputation of knowledge the reality of which had passed away from earth. And so we find it declared that without the Gnostic, without the Knower, no religion was secure. And if you want to have the historical proof, look at the way in which, with the passing of the Mysteries, with the

withdrawal of the Initiates, the outer religion has lost much of its life, has lost much of its reality.

To what is due the spread of Materialism, especially during the latter part of the nineteenth century? To what was due the difficulty to which religion found itself continually reduced but to the absence of expert knowledge, the absence of people who could say "I know"? Only people were there who could say "I believe" - clergy preaching from texts of Scripture written by men of knowledge, but repeated by men of only faith, who forgot all that teaching laid down by S. Paul, himself an Initiate, of the Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge; and lower down there is only the faith which rested on the testimony of others.

As science grew stronger and stronger, it grew strong by first-hand knowledge of the physical world to which its researches were limited, but the Knowers of the other worlds, those who ought to have been the experts of spiritual science, those were not found among us, and so we could not meet experiment with experiment, knowledge with knowledge. The one could speak positively, the other could speak only hopefully. The one could bring experiment to verify, the other could only point to the experiments of the past. And it was no wonder that exoteric religion, failing the esoteric knowledge, gave way before the advances of science; that science itself became materialistic, and has had to begin to pass away from materialism without the assistance of religion, is passing out of it along the lines of its own investigation from below instead of by the illumination of knowledge brought down by the Spirit from above. It is true it is passing out of it; it is true that materialistic science is falling more and more into the background, and that science is opening its eyes to higher knowledge, to possibilities of subtler or finer worlds; but we are bound to confess - to our shame, indeed, it is - that it is winning its way onward into those subtler realms by its own study and its own researches, and not by the help that religion ought to have been able to give at the mouths of spiritual experts. It is well that it has done it; well that it is seeing the opening out of higher avenues; but how much better, if its way had been smoothed by knowledge along the lines of investigation into the higher; for even now we see the beginning of a change, when some of the first-hand investigations of our time are

beginning to be glanced at, however shyly, by scientific experts. Some men at least are beginning to ask, abroad as well as in England, whether it may not be that there are higher faculties capable of evolution which may serve as apparatus for investigation in the subtler worlds, and do for them what the microscope, the telescope, and the spectroscope have done for investigation in the physical universe; and so it seems as though a better time were opening in which the restoration of the Mysteries and their methods of instruction are coming within possibility.

I have said that in the past every religion had these Mysteries, and that is historically demonstrable. Take India, where you find the teachers surrounded by their groups of pupils, where you find the science of Yoga, as it is called, which has its own definite laws, its own definite experiments; where you begin with easy experiments, say, in the power of your own thoughts, and then go on, stage by stage, along clearly defined lines, until one after another the powers of the higher world open before you, and you can study them as perhaps you have already studied the laws and the phenomena of the physical world. But in India, as here, it is only a few people who really try in these modern days to put this ancient science into practice. Why, in a trial in which I was lately concerned, when I said that all these things were commonplaces to the orthodox Hindu, what was the answer? "Oh, yes, every orthodox Hindu believes them in theory, but we object to their being brought into the daily life of men". That is the objection brought forward against the Theosophist everywhere, that we believe as practically true what ordinary religionists believe as theoretically true. If we try to put the theory into practice, then we become fanatics if we are not charlatans, cranks, at least, with weird and uncanny ideas that are not acceptable to the common-sense man of the world. And yet those powers exist, testified to by the ancient Knowers and re-verified by the students of our day.

Go from India to Egypt, and do you not find there exactly the same traces of the Mysteries? Do you not find that the great Pharaohs of its most glorious time were Hierophants in the temple, as well as Rulers on the throne? And do you not find in the later days, when much of the "wisdom of Egypt" had also become theoretical, that on the crown of Egypt the symbol of the Asp

was still seen - that curved-forward head fixed on the crown so that it should be against the forehead of the Pharaoh, the ancient symbol of that Chakra, as it is called, whereby the third eye manifests its powers? The Pharaoh of Egypt wore on his crown the symbol of the occult powers that his predecessors had wielded but that he had lost, the material symbol of a power that had vanished, but the symbol bearing testimony to the power that once had been.

And if you go from Egypt to Greece do you not see the same thing, the great Orphic Mysteries, from which all other Mysteries were derived, and do you not find historical testimony to those Schools of Pythagoras which were graded definitely according to the knowledge that was given? Have you not read how all the best citizens in Greece, men and women - for there is no sex recognised in the Mysteries, even in the more external of them - how the best men and women of ancient Greece were all the lay disciples of those Mysteries, and were bound, while living in the outer world, to practise all the social and civic virtues which make a man or a woman priceless in service in his day and generation? And have you not read, as regards those teachings, that these only made the good man, but that the other Mysteries, the more hidden Mysteries, turned the good man into a God? The good man, with too many modern religions, is the end, the triumph, of their teachings. The good man in the ancient Mysteries was the beginning from which the higher evolution was to go forward.

Oh, but you may say, India, Egypt, Greece, these you are speaking of are in the past. In the great faith of the western nations, in the great faith of Christian teaching, are we to say that Christianity is the only one among the great religions of the world whose Founder did not establish Mysteries, whereby the higher nature might be unfolded and become useful to His Church, the Teacher of His people? The evidence is well within your reach, and you can take it at your leisure. I will only indicate for you here the places where you can study, in order to convince yourselves that Christianity is no poorer on this question of the Mysteries than the other great religions of the past. Let me first remind you of certain sayings of the Christ Himself. When His disciples were with Him in the house, He used the remarkable phrase: "Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God,

but to others in parables,” and we find in the early Church, within reach of the teaching of His disciples, that those words were quite definitely taken as meaning what we mean by Mysteries - a hidden teaching given by the Christ Himself and passed on through His apostles and disciples down to the infant Church; for we find S. Clement declaring that the Gnosis, the Wisdom, so imparted and revealed by the Son of God, had descended by transmission to a few, having been imparted unwritten by the apostles. Imparting knowledge by mouth and not by writing is one of the ancient signs of the teaching of the Mysteries, and here S. Clement claims it for the Church of Christ, and declares that that which the Christ taught to His apostles was by them transmitted to a few. Again, you hear Him giving the command “Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they should trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you”; and if you turn to this same S. Clement you will find him explaining those words exactly in the sense in which they have ever been explained - that the highest truths must not be thrown to the ignorant. “Even now I fear,” he wrote, “to cast the pearls before swine, lest they should tread them under foot and turn and rend us, for it is difficult to exhibit the really pure and transparent words respecting the true light to swinish and untrained hearers. Scarcely could anything which they could hear be more ludicrous than these to the multitude, nor any subjects, on the other hand, more admirable or more inspiring to those of noble nature.” That is one of the peculiarities of those higher truths that, spoken out to the untrained and thoughtless, they seem only ridiculous, ludicrous, as S. Clement calls them. They do not seem inspiring and elevating, for they are but jargon to the untrained mind and heart, and they cannot touch those who have not as yet mastered the very rudiments of spiritual knowledge. You have there the reason for the concealment. To give truths which are too high to be understood without training is to injure, not to help, and hence these have been confined to the Mysteries, and, as S. Paul declares: “We speak Wisdom among those that are perfect.”

But if you will take the trouble to look into it you will find the writings of the early Church full of statements as to the reality of these Mysteries. Take as one illustration as to the kind of teaching which was given there, that which you find stated by S. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, one who was claimed to

be a pupil of an apostle. You will find he speaks of himself as not yet perfect in Christ Jesus: "I but begin to be a disciple and I speak to my fellow disciples"; and yet you find him declaring that he has learnt all about the organisation and the work and the ministry of Angels, of which I was speaking to you in a former lecture; that he had been made able to understand heavenly things, and that he had become acquainted with these, but did not yet consider himself to be perfect, not having reached the complete knowledge which the Mysteries of the Church could give. And so, again, you find in that same S. Clement to whom I alluded, the statement made of the conditions which were necessary as well as of the effects. He declares that he can only write partially, enough to remind those who read of what they had already learned by word of mouth, and he uses the technical but most significant phrase that "They will remember it who have been touched with the thyrsus." Now the thyrsus was a thing that was used in the Mysteries, and carried by Initiates, and the candidate was touched by it - a highly magnetised rod - in order to stimulate in him some of those germinating powers which the Initiation was intended to bring out into full energy. And when you find a phrase like that by a man who declares that he himself was initiated, you will realise that he was writing of a thing known to those who were going to read his essay: and that they, having been similarly touched, would be able to read in his obscure wording some of the great truths which they had known in the hidden world. And Origen also gives the conditions under which people were admitted to those Mysteries. We find that it is declared that they must first have purified their minds, they must first have passed beyond the transgressions of ordinary men. You find it said that only the pure are allowed to enter, "those who for a long time have been conscious of no transgression," and you find it said that to such the Mysteries should be revealed "that were given in secret by Jesus to His chosen disciples."

There lay the strength of the early Church; there lay the power which it exercised. And they laid stress not only on purity, although that was essential, but also on knowledge. Very clearly and definitely was it said that those who would become Gnostics must be erudite, must be learned; that they ought to be trained in the knowledge of the outer world, in mathematics and other laws of scientific thought, in order that they might

have developed the intellect which was necessary for the studies of the Mysteries. And you find it laid down that, while it is true that "God the Word was sent as a physician to sinners, He was sent as a Teacher also of Divine Mysteries to those who were already pure, who sin no more, who are athletes in piety and in every virtue, and who have mastered the outer knowledge" of their day. And Origen declares, and it would be well for modern Churches to realise the truth that underlies his declaration, that while religion must have medicine for the sinner, it must also have Gnostics, Knowers, as its pillars and as its foundations; that you cannot, as he says, build a Church out of sinners. You may heal the diseased, but it is the healthy and the sound who are needed for the gaining of spiritual knowledge; and no greater blunder has ever been made than has been made by modern Christianity when it declares that all spiritual teaching ought to be within the grasp of the ignorant, and so alienates the learned, the philosophical, the scientific, where it ought to present to them a high knowledge that would train the minds which had been prepared by the studies of the Mysteries of the lower nature.

And that leads us to the point of what is necessary for the Restoration of the Mysteries the entire throwing away of the idea that knowledge is not a part of spiritual progress, the realisation that the Spirit in its three manifestations has as one of its aspects Intellect, and that that Intellect must be developed before the higher powers of the Spirit can show themselves in our world; that there must be knowledge as well as purity; that whilst purity is demanded, knowledge is also a condition, and that you must throw aside what I would almost call the deification of ignorance, which so many modern Christians have proclaimed as the glory of the Gospel of Christ. It is to the glory of that Gospel that the lowest and the worst should find something in it which shall uplift them; but it is its degradation if the thoughtful and the intellectual are in any way decried, for knowledge is needed as well as purity. And then you must have for the Restoration the desire that it shall be. You must convince yourself by historical study, by a careful reading, if you will, of those writings of the apostolic fathers of which I simply quoted one or two to show you I was not romancing in what I was saying about the early Church - you must convince yourself historically that the Mysteries were, before you will desire those Mysteries shall be

brought back to the Church of Christ. And then, not only recognising that purity and knowledge are wanted and desired in order that they may come back to us, you must also try in your ordinary life to live the heroic life and not the commonplace, in order to prepare the strong foundation on which the higher elevation of your spiritual evolution may be developed. It is not out of the commonplace, the conventional, out of those who love the praise of men and care not for the praise of the Highest; they are not the materials out of which the students for the Mysteries can be found. They will be found among those who are able to give up everything for a cause they believe to be true, among those who count not life itself dear if some higher duty makes an echo in their heart. They may be right or wrong in the particular thing they choose to sacrifice themselves for; they may be mistaken or accurate in their choice of a cause to which they give themselves; but to be able to pour out life and liberty and wealth and happiness, to care nothing for self in the face of the demand of an ideal - that makes the heroic life. And out of such materials will the Masters of the Wisdom find their disciples in the future. For life in our own day is too small and too petty, too much swayed by worldly thought and worldly convention and worldly ideas; but within that shell of convention, within that shell of worldly ideas, there is growing up the spiritual life which shall presently burst the shell and bring forward those who are fit students for the deeper knowledge of the divine Mysteries. And looking round your world of today, realise that of every man and every woman who tries to lead the heroic life, who sees a great ideal and tries to reach it, true words were spoken by Giordano Bruno, who said that the hero tried greatly, and that it was greater to try and fail than ignobly not to try at all. You may fail, but what matters failure in the other world? You may try for a thing too high for your present powers, but your powers will grow in the trying, your powers will develop in the exercising, and the value is in the powers that are developed and not in the particular thing which for the moment draws them forth. That is the way in which you should look at your human life: try to think your highest and then to realise your highest; and then, even if the thought be, as I said, partly mistaken, it is the effort that counts in spiritual stature, it is the effort by which the heroic life is judged. So, casting away the ties of your petty conventions, try to see the right and do it, whether other men see it and do it or not; throw away

that petty care for the thought and the opinion and the judgment of all around you. What matters it to you if other men and women judge you? They are your equals only; it is the judgment of the higher Ones that matters, those perfect Ones who have attained, those great Ones who have achieved, it is They whom you want as Teachers, and not the commonplace men and women around you. Qualify yourselves for Them by leading the life that is great in its conception, even if you sometimes fail in execution; for man grows by what he thinks, and the great thing he thinks today he shall realise in action tomorrow. No great act is done without great thinking; no great achievement without aiming at a great ideal. Think as highly as you can, for others' sake perhaps more than for your own; think as highly as you can, in order that you may be inspired to live, for the test of belief is the price that in life you are willing to pay for it, and the outer bondage is absolutely nought if the Spirit is gaining its freedom, if the Son of God within you is coming to his own.

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## 5. THE CONDITIONS OF INTELLECTUAL AND OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

A LECTURE BY ANNIE BESANT

*Delivered at Stockholm: 15th June 1913*

IN one way the title of this lecture is a little misleading, because the Intellect is the outward-looking aspect of the Spirit itself. The Spirit being one with the divine Spirit, a fragment of God, reproduces in himself the triple nature of Divinity, shows himself forth through three phases, the aspect of Power, or Will, the aspect of Wisdom, or SELF-consciousness, the aspect of Creative Activity, or Intellect.

But for purposes of study we are apt to separate off, and, for a reason that I will speak of in a moment, we do well to separate off, that aspect of Intellect or Creative Activity, the outward-facing aspect of the Spirit in relation to matter, because by virtue of that outwardlooking it differs in the method of its development from the two other aspects, the Wisdom-aspect and the Power-aspect, both of which may be said to be internal rather than external, to deal with realisation, so far as the second aspect is concerned, and with determination, the determining of the direction of the forces of the Spirit, so far as the Power or Will aspect is concerned. That causes this separation of methods, for in a very real sense, the aspect of Intellect is the vehicle by which the spiritual life individualises itself, draws itself in, as it were, into a form, an embodiment, and so makes itself manifest in the world as otherwise it could not do.

And therefore you find H. P. Blavatsky in the third part of the *Secret Doctrine* -speaking of the aspects of the divine Manifestation, the Logoi - says that Mahat, the third, is the highest Entity in the Kosmos. Beyond that no entity, as such, can be said to exist. A centre of life, yes, but not a limiting form. And when you come to study the manifestation of the two other aspects of the Spirit, those which we know in the Samskrit terminology as Buddhi and Atma, the Wisdom and the Will aspects of the one life, you

find in both of those that separation has ceased to be, and that the material vehicles - the sheath of Wisdom, the sheath of Will, in the matter of the fourth and fifth higher planes in our world system - are interpenetrating sheaths and not limiting bodies, manifesting in their connection with matter a subtle difference in their way of life; and you may remember that it has been written of that world of Wisdom that everything there is everything else. You no longer have the definite outline, which, however far expanding, is characteristic of the causal body or Augoeides, the body of Intellect; you have a radiating Star, in which, as from a centre, beams go forth in every direction, interweaving with each other, interpenetrating each other, so that while you feel yourself, you also feel all others at the same time, and all the limiting forms of the lower worlds become your vehicles, as much as they are the vehicles of the particular centre by whose life they have evolved.

That is why on that Christ-plane, the Christ-world, as it may rightly be said to be, you are told that the Atonement takes place, not by substitution of persons but by identity of nature, because those who have learned to use the buddhic sheath in its all-radiating force can enter into any form to vivify, to strengthen, and to purify. That is the glory of the higher world, that separation has ceased to be; there is realisation of the oneness of life. It is because of this very real difference that the methods of progress differ in those two higher aspects of the Spirit, and in the third that we speak of as Intellect. For intellect clothes itself in the last separative body. It individualises the Spirit. Hence it is spoken of as the creative Activity. It is that which gives rise to form, that which limits matter into shapes whereby it expresses the spiritual life; and although it be true that that body, built up through millions of years, dissolves at the first great Initiation and its matter is given on with its individualising force to the buddhic sheath; still, the way of evolution for it is different from that of the unfolding of the other aspects. Hence the distinction which is drawn - although Intellect rightly seen is an aspect of the Spirit and cannot be put apart from it in the unfolding of the spiritual life in the world. Inasmuch, however, as it is the essence of the 'I-ness' which makes the individual, its method of unfolding and of progress differs in general as well as in detail from the unfolding of the Wisdom and the Will aspects. You can see this in the reflection of

Intellect, which is the lower or concrete mind. And until that mind is developed, the Intellect cannot find its full evolution. Now the one condition - whether for the lower mind or for its parent, the higher intellect - the one condition of progress is complete, unfettered liberty.

That is a lesson that we all need to learn. No religion perhaps has marked this so definitely and so clearly as the first great religion of our Aryan race, that which is still known in our day, though so marred in beauty, as Hinduism. Taking that as it was in its inception, and for many and many a millennium afterwards, you find that this unfettered liberty of thought was one of the bases of the religion. And that is very strongly marked when you look at the many Schools of Philosophy that arose within that one religion, and even down to the present day are recognised as theoretically orthodox, although I am bound to say that they show their orthodoxy largely by that characteristic of quarrelling which is found wherever orthodoxy holds. You find among Indian Schools of Philosophy an atheistic one, one that does not recognise the existence of Divinity, which bases itself on what over here would be known as Atheism, and yet it is recognised as a part of Hinduism. You find another which entirely ignores a divine existence. The first, which is aggressively atheistic, is the charvaka. The second you would probably know better by name, the Samkhya. Now it was according to the ideas of that Samkhya system that the Yoga system - the system of Union - was built up, and Divinity was introduced therein, because the idea of that central life, the life of God, was necessary in order to aim at union. The Samkhya, one of the greatest of intellectual systems, ignores all question of the unity of life, recognising the many sparks thrown out without recognising the central fire - a peculiar position, characteristic of the intellect which is able to suspend a decision, and to work despite the suspended judgment, without feeling the necessity of a basic unity, which really belongs rather to the aspect of realisation than to that of cognition.

For the outward-turning aspect of the Intellect looks at a universe of diversity, and sees that diversity towards which it is perpetually turned. It is not necessary for the Intellect to look through diversity to an inner underlying unity; although it is ever groping in that direction, it cannot completely find it. It recognises that there must somewhere be a unity, but the Intellect

is not the instrument which needs the unity which is to be found, and which shows itself in the oneness of life. That is within and not without, in the Spirit and not in the diversities of the manifested forms. Hence this great system, studying interlinked evolution, the evolution of a world-system, regards it very much in the same way that the great European astronomer Laplace regarded it, when he answered Napoleon as to the place of God in his theory: "Sire, I find no need for such a hypothesis."

When the next aspect of the Spirit unfolds, then Deity shows forth, for the oneness is realised. But in the outward-going Intellect, diversity is studied in order that the Spirit may know matter, so that matter may ultimately be redeemed by the embodied life. And for the success of that, as I say, the one condition is freedom. And why? Because in the study of the outer, complete study of every form is necessary to perfect knowledge. Nothing must be excluded; nothing shut out; nothing must be left uninvestigated, unknown. And this must imply succession in study, inasmuch as the more and more you come into a world of separated phenomena, of diversity of manifestation, you must have successively the study of one after another. They cannot all be simultaneously observed, grasped, and understood. Therefore it is necessary to keep an open avenue for knowledge not yet obtained, always to remember that there is a future as well as a present and a past, and that you must not venture to forecast the future in a way that will limit the liberty of manifestation, which comes out of the infinite power of the manifesting life. There is nothing possible to which you can deny existence, for that which you deny may be in the womb of the future, waiting for your discovery. There is nothing that you must make precise, save detail. Your details may be as precise as you like, but you must never claim to know the whole, inasmuch as beyond you in the future lie innumerable phenomena which have yet to be included within the realm of knowledge. Absolute liberty, then, of investigation is needed for the work in this unfolding of the intelligence. The right to question, the right to challenge, the right to investigate, for to the Intellect there is nothing sacred save truth, and truth is known by investigation and not by dogmatising on the unknown. Hence, then, this need of perfect liberty. There is nothing outside the right of the Intellect to question. It can only know by investigation, and if you say "you must not investigate," "that is

too sacred for your investigation,” how shall you know that you are not shutting out that which is within its reach? The only limit to liberty to investigation is the power to investigate, and as long as you are able to investigate so long you have the indefeasible right to question. Hence the demand made by many to put limitation on the right of investigation and study is illegitimate. All barriers must be broken down in intellectual progress, and the claim to know everything that Intellect is able to know must never be limited by external authority, whether that authority be vested in a Church, in a man, or in a book. Only thus can Intellect progress. Hence in our Society nothing is laid down as obligation of belief. You say, “Are we not forced to believe in Universal Brotherhood?” Frankly, not as I read the object. That is the object of the Society; we are a nucleus of it - that is stated as a fact, but there is no word even there said of belief. I can imagine a man entering who has not reached conviction of that - whose inner heart aspires to it although intellectually he has not yet grasped it, and, as far as I am concerned, I would throw wide open the gates so that he shall come and learn in realisation what he is not able to learn from outside. That however might, I know, be challenged by many; it is a view that I have rather grown into myself, than grasped in my own early days of membership in the Society.

First, then, the question: “Why do we not ask for belief?” Because beliefs fetter, and because every belief that we can hold today, while it may be true as far as it goes, does not go far enough to embrace the full orb of truth. We shall know much more when we come back again, when we are re-incarnated, than we know now. Our view of truth will be much larger and fuller and completer, we may hope, when we return with more developed faculties, with higher intellectual powers. Hence, even when we are surest of a thing, we must not throw it into the form of a dogma; we must only announce as much as we see, realising that in the future we shall see much more of the same truth that we are looking at today, and that the limitation that we want to put round it today will be a fetter on our limbs when we return.

Many of us have suffered in breaking the bonds of dogma bound around us in our youth by some Church to which we belonged. The more eager our

love of truth, the more we suffered in breaking the outward form. We must not shell ourselves even in truth, because truth is infinite, being God Himself, and the breaking of the shell needs strength and causes suffering. So in the Society we have no shells, but only growing wings of the chick that has broken the shell and desires to live in a boundless world. We have beliefs, but beliefs which are ever open to the infinite; beliefs which have bases, but which have no covers to shut them in. I have sometimes said that every truth we have found, every truth that Theosophy proclaims, should be regarded as a milestone of progress, for then it has its use in the historical evolution of mankind. A milestone shows how far we have gone, and our intellectual beliefs of the moment show how far we have evolved in our journey to the truth. But if you take milestones from their proper place on the side of the road, and put them across the road as a barrier, then you have to break them into pieces before you can advance; and so you waste your time and perhaps bruise your hands by having made an obstacle that afterwards you must shatter into pieces.

Hence, remember that in your intellectual growth you should never allow yourself to be checked by authority. Authority has no place in the world of the Intellect; absolutely none. Remember what the Lord Buddha said, He, the Enlightened: "Do not believe because it is written in a sacred book; do not believe because some prophet has taught it; do not believe because your fathers accepted it"; and after reciting the grounds of belief in the outer world, he spoke one ever memorable word to warn His own disciples against making even Himself, the Enlightened, the Illuminated One, an authority: "Do not believe because I say so"; and if He, the highest embodiment of knowledge on our globe, He who had reached what we call its supreme height of enlightenment, whose very name is Wisdom, if He could say to those around Him, "Do not believe because I say so," what lower man or Church, or written word of some great Sage, shall dare to claim authority where He, the mightiest wisdom, laid it down. That is our charter of intellectual liberty. If we are not to believe even when He states, surely we have a right to hold our own fort in the face of any lower one who claims authority over our up-springing intelligence.

And that is not pride. People speak, I know, of intellectual pride; but intellectual pride means that you are proud of what you have achieved and what you hold higher than that which your fellow-men have acquired. That is impudence; that is folly; that shows limitation, limitation of knowledge. It is no crime to say: "In the name of the God within us, I recognise no authority for the Intellect save my power to know". For that power to know is divine; it is an aspect of the divine fragment embodied in us, and in claiming that supreme intellectual liberty, we are only claiming our divine birthright, and are refusing to allow any to limit that God within us, who because He is the very truth, is able to know the truth, and needs no authority save the actuality of the truth that is Himself.

And so Intellect may rightly be called the Truth-aspect of the God within, and as that develops, it gains that power of direct vision of the outer truth which makes its deception impossible, for truth is known by the spiritualised Intellect, so far above the lower mind, not by a process of argument, but by a process of intellectual vision. "Its nature," says an old Scripture, "is knowledge," and to say that its nature is knowledge is the same as to say that its nature is truth. And as you develop within yourself that unfettered power of the Intellect, it sees and knows the truth in its own world, and it knows it by direct vision, by assonance with its own nature; not by argument, not by reason, but by its own notes sounding out clearly in harmony with every truth in the outer world, no discord being possible.

As the higher Intellect develops, that which it cast down into the lower world, the shadow which you call the mind which finds truth by reasoning or by argument - with all the limitations thereby imposed on the vision which is Intellect, - is more and more brought into assonance with its projector. As you begin to develop that which is within you, it sounds out within you every note that answers to every note in the universe, and you know the truth by the perfect harmony; you know it by accord, by absence of discord. As you develop the Intellect and walk along its path of growth, falsity to you becomes a discord; you hear it with the Intellect and you do not need to argue it to be untrue; you know it to be untrue, because discordant with the God within. And that is the ultimate test gradually made possible for us, as the unfettered Intellect knows the outer world and tests the God

manifesting in the Kosmos by the God manifest within. That is why Leibnitz said that perfect knowledge among other things is “intuitive”. The intuition of the Intellect is different from the intuition of the Christ-nature in man. The one is the recognition of truth outside, known to be true by accord with that whose nature is truth. The other is the realisation of the truth within - realising, which is beyond knowing. You know the outer; you realise the inner; and when the Intellect has so developed that it embraces all outer nature within itself, then it rises into realisation, then it is merged in the Christ. One thing will show you the difference quite plainly, I think.

Intellectually you realise that there must be a unity; but when you reach the second aspect of the Spirit, you *know* there is a unity because you feel it and realise it within. The one is outside you; the other within you. The one is the intuition that looks outward on the Not-Self; the other the intuition that is the realisation of the Self within.

Now the conditions of that realisation are quite different from the constant questioning and investigation and study, which is the work of the creative intelligence. The Christ-nature is reflected in the lower world, not in the world of thought but in the world of emotion. Emotion in the lower nature is the reflection of Self-realisation in the higher. That is true theoretically. You can prove it to be true practically in your own experience. For what is it that makes you realise something of unity in the broken reflections of this lower world? It is not when you reason, but when you feel. It is when you reproduce by sympathy the emotion of another, that you can catch a glimpse of the unity which underlies the separation of the persons. You do not argue yourself into oneness with another; you sympathise yourself into oneness by the reproduction of his feeling in yourself. Wisdom, the realisation of unity in a higher world, is the Love which draws together the separated fragments in the lower world. And so it is from love, from the plane of emotion - for love is the root-emotion out of which every virtue arises, the unifying principle in the lower world - it is by the development of that, by its intensification, by its broadening out beyond all limitations of family, of nations, nay, even of humanity, until it embraces within its vast orb the whole of living things in a world where all is living; it is that which throbbing here, that heart of love in the lower world, awakens in the Christ-

world a vibration of its matter, and the realisation of the oneness of the SELF begins to dawn on man.

In studying how in the long, long past we became individuals, we found that in the lower world the impulse to individualise arose; that from the lowest world, the physical world, devotion embodying itself in an act of service, caused a vibration in the highest world where the Will is the great characteristic, and individualisation came thence to the plane where the causal body was formed; and we found that devotion, embodying itself, as it were, in love itself, called a vibration down from the Christ-world, and so individualisation came about. And then that devotion, embodying itself in mind, brought out a vibration from the world of Intellect, and so individualisation came. Thus this way of becoming an individual pointed out the relationship between the higher and the lower worlds, and then we realised that it was emotion, love, stretching out to a superior and pouring itself out to that superior in purest devotion, it was that which caused a little vibration in the Christ-world, which set the impulse to individualise the one who had felt it.

So in you the opening up of that second aspect, the Wisdom aspect, which is Self-realisation, must come by the purifying of your emotion, by the widening out to embrace all, by getting rid of every film of separation, and by trying to realise by love the unity of all that lives. As that develops in you, and that develops by sympathy and not by reason, you will find that there begin certain movements of that higher world of the Spirit which will bring about the possibility of that true realisation. It is the preparation for Initiation, where the realisation of the oneness of the Self is found. Hence the condition of that unfolding is not liberty to investigate, but depth to reproduce. As you reproduce the other in yourself, so will you make progress in the unfolding of the second aspect of the Spirit. And if you would do it aright, as I have said before, you must realise your unity with all and not only with those to whom you are naturally drawn, or to those with whom you are in moral sympathy. You must recognise that the depth of the Spirit within you is able to reproduce the feelings of all, for God dwells within all, and there is only One Self within which we are all rooted. So you must realise your unity with the outcast, the sinner, the criminal, the lowest

and the vilest of mankind, from the standpoint of the world. For the Self is within him as much as the Self is within you; and to deny the presence of God in the basest is to blaspheme Him in His highest manifestation, in His divinest light. There lies your way of progress; no separation. To feel the sin of the sinner to be your sin, and to be willing to suffer with him; to feel his disgrace to be your disgrace, and to be willing to bear it with him. There is a supreme spiritual truth, not of the Intellect but of the Christ, that He *became* sin for us, He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Not bearing sin as from without, but sharing sin as from within, and yet keeping a purity which naught can soil, for it is only while you are sinful that sin can soil you. When you are absolutely pure in the Christ-nature, no contact with sin can sully you, for it falls away from you as the water falls from the shining surface of the lotus leaf. It falls off, it cannot remain on, and purity remains to purify the sinner, while the saint bears the sin but is untouched by its foulness. That is the Mystery of the Christ - the great secret of the Saviour of men.

Then comes the unfolding of the first aspect - though these numbers are very misleading; when we speak of the second aspect and the third, of the lower and the higher, we speak of things that do not exist in the unity of the Spirit; for in this trinity of aspects, as the Church declares, none is before or after other, none is less or greater than another. Will is not greater than Wisdom or Creative Activity, nor are they less than Will. Will is that inner Self-determination which becomes possible only as Self is realised, and then you come to the paradox: "His service is perfect freedom". There is only one way in which service and freedom can exist side by side, identical in the same Spirit, and that is when you have found that there is only one Will, and that Will divine; that your Will is part of the divine Will, and that therefore what God says you say, when the Self is speaking in the plenitude of knowledge, in perfection of Self-realisation. There is no Will save His, and that Will is ours. We obey, but it is Self-obedience, for we have realised that we have no Will which is not one with Him, and that in carrying out His Will for the world, we are carrying out our own. And that inner determination to work with the *Logos* for the perfecting of His plan, that is, as it were, the final triumph of the Spirit over matter; for then matter has ceased to divide; then separation no longer exists; the Intellect individualises, and then there

is Self-realisation of unity within the individual; the Will gathers up all the divine forces in the Spirit, and makes them one-pointed with the Will that guides the worlds.

And to develop that, you must strengthen in yourself the Will of the higher as against the changing desires of the lower. Your determination must come from the Spirit within, and not from the outer objects that surround you. You must choose your path, not because this attracts, not because that repels; but only because along that path lies God's realisation for His world, and you have given yourself in perfect service, knowing that that is the last and greatest word-knowing that in surrender of the lower self to the higher, man fulfils the purpose of his being, and finds that Will, Wisdom, and Action are but one.

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## 6. THE POLICY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

*From the President's Opening Speech at the Stockholm Congress*

Now with regard to our policy. You have in Sweden a good deal to face because, for some reason (probably to make you strong for your work in the future) all the difficulties of the Society have here found a battleground, so that the differences of views are very clearly enunciated, and you have to realise that in your own country the various parties (if I may so call them) connected with this great movement have each found a footing.

That is not, I think, a thing to be regretted. Our policy in regard to these dissident parts of the Theosophical movement is an important thing, and I would venture to suggest what seems to me the wisest policy. With regard, for instance, to that part of the movement which left the Theosophical Society, under Mr Judge and is now headed by Mrs Tingley, I would earnestly ask you to let all the attack come from that side and not from ours. It is far better that you should not quarrel with them, even if they desire to quarrel with you. If you leave to them the whole of the attack and receive it with generosity, with magnanimity, and with kindly feeling, then and then alone can you hope that peace will ultimately be secured. It is yours to remember the great words of the Lord Buddha: "Hatred ceases not by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love". So if for the moment our brethren of the Universal Brotherhood find in hatred their weapon against us, let us use rather the shield of love and not the sword of hatred, and answer with kindness, with generosity and good feeling, any of the attacks that they may think right to make upon us.

Realise that with the great majority of assailants, they are working for what they believe to be the truth; and if they make the mistake of thinking that truth is best defended by attacks upon others, then let us give them credit for their good intentions, and hope that wisdom may ultimately lead them to choose a better way. So I would ask you not to answer hatred with hatred. Let them do their work and let us do ours. Remember that hatred

disintegrates, while love unites; and let us carry out our name of Brotherhood and know no exclusion, but remember it is universal.

With regard to our Brethren of the German Section who have left the Theosophical Society and enrolled themselves under a new name, surely we can show to them also the same policy of respect. They will probably reach a certain number of people whom as yet we cannot reach. There is the advantage that they are using another name, so that there is not even outwardly any conflict between us. It is true that their language is a little harsh, but, after all, the harsh language is directed against me personally rather than the Theosophical Society, and the last thing in the world that I wish is that I should be made a bone of contention between two Societies whose aim on both sides is to find the way of truth.

And so I would say with regard to them also, if they attack me, do not respond by attack against their leaders. It was necessary that they should leave us, for we cannot in the Society permit any to be excluded, and the very moment that our German National Society excluded from its membership those who held a particular belief, the belief in the near coming of a World-Teacher, it was impossible that that National Society should continue to represent the Theosophical Society in Germany. Rightly, then, they went out on a policy less broad than our own, for it is our duty to keep the breadth of the Society and to make no matter of belief reason for exclusion from our ranks. But the fact that they prefer that principle need not prevent our respect, nay, I will say our admiration; for while Dr Steiner's does not care to recommend the works of our branch of the Movement, I have always advised people to read Dr Steiner's works, not because I agree with everything in them, but because I believe that we should read every view which is put forward by the seekers after truth, and that we are the wiser and the stronger when we see the truth at different angles and from other standpoints, and do not confine ourselves alone to the study of a single line of thought.

Profoundly do I believe it to be true that the great Lords of Wisdom meet a man on any path whereon the man is treading in the search for Them, ever echoing those words of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Mankind comes to me along many roads, and on whatever road a man approaches me, on that road do I

welcome him, for all roads are mine". Let us then act in the spirit of that teaching and see in the roads of our brethren roads to the same truth, and when we meet in the centre we shall know that all roads are one.

That, then, friends, it seems to me, should be our policy, complete tolerance, inclusion of every opinion. Remember that each opinion adds something to our knowledge, and that we should try in the struggle of opinions to learn from our opponent more than from our friends, for the opponent "sees the truth at a different angle, while those who agree with us see it from our own. Such then is the policy that I would venture to lay before you as the one that appears to me to be the wisest for the Theosophical Society. Let us do our own work, let us walk along our own road, let us give out the truth to the world as we see it, but let our note, so far as may be, be the note that harmonises the discords, rather than a note which adds to the discords of the world.

**THE END**

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