



THEOSOPHY

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Theosophy By Annie Besant.

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CONTENTS

Introduction

Section 1. Theosophy As Science

Section 2. Theosophy As Morality And Art

Section 3. Theosophy As Philosophy

Section 4. Theosophy As Religion

Section 5. Theosophy Applied To Social Problems

Section 6. A Few Details About Systems And Worlds

Section 7. The Theosophical Society

SECTION 6. A FEW DETAILS ABOUT SYSTEMS AND WORLDS

In Section III, the basic principle of the relation between Spirit and Matter was given. It may be interesting to consider some of its details. It is possible to see that the universal Æther within our Solar System – and presumably elsewhere, since there are many such Systems – contains innumerable bubbles, exactly similar in appearance to bubbles arising *within* water, empty spaces, walled in only by the surrounding water. A soap bubble floating in the air is a tiny portion of air within a surrounding film of soapy water; but the bubbles in water are tiny portions of air within a mass of water, and have no limiting film; they are kept as bubbles by the pressure of water containing them. So these bubbles are kept as bubbles by the pressure of the surrounding Æther, and as they cannot escape from this, they can only remain bubbles. They are “holes in Æther,” as H.P. Blavatsky called them long ago, “holes in space”, and she said that they were made by “Fohat”, the power of the Supreme LOGOS. Ancient books similarly speak of “the great Breath” as their cause; the analogy is obvious, since bubbles may be produced by breathing into water.

A French scientist, quoted by Mr. Leadbeater, [*A textbook on Theosophy*] says: “There is no matter; there are nothing but holes in the ether”. But out of aggregations of these holes, all that we call matter is built up.

THE BUILDING OF ATOMS BY THE FIRST LIFE-WAVE

The LOGOS of a Solar System enclose a huge fragment of the universal Æther, thus bubble-filled within His before-mentioned Ring-Pass-Not. The bubbles are visible to sight of the third spiritual sphere, and one can see that He sets up a great whirl of force, which sweeps the bubbles together into a huge mass; the Third Aspect of the LOGOS is the creative, and through this He sends forth the first Life-Wave, as it is called, which builds the bubbles into atoms, later aggregates atoms into molecules, and finally builds these into the six familiar sets of combinations, which

in the physical world are called subatomic, super-etheric, etheric, gaseous, liquid, and solid.

These original separate bubbles form the matter of the divine sphere, while that of the monadic sphere is made of groupings of the bubbles into atoms, these being formed by an impulse of the Life-Wave of creative Thought, causing minute vortices, each of which draws in 49 bubbles; thus two interpenetrating worlds are formed, the divine and monadic, the first of free bubbles, the second of some of these combined into atoms, each atom consisting of 49 bubbles.

The second impulse from the Life-Wave separates out a quantity of these 49-atom-bubbles, dissociates them, and recombines them in vortices, each of which contains 49^2 bubbles, the atoms of the spiritual world. A third impulse separates a mass of these from the remainder, dissociates them, and recombines them in vortices, each of which contains 49^3 bubbles, the atoms of the intuitional world. A fourth impulse in similar fashion yields atoms of the mental world, containing 49^4 bubbles. A fifth yields atoms of the astral world, containing 49^5 bubbles, and a sixth builds the atoms of the physical world, each composed of 49^6 bubbles. Thus are formed the interpenetrating spheres of seven types of matter, each type being the atomic basis of a world composed entirely of combinations of its own particular atom.

When this series of atoms was complete, the seventh impulse was sent forth, and this built aggregations of atoms, a vast number of different combinations; these again entered into further combinations with each other, in the process of many ages, a period of inconceivable length; during this time the glowing nebula gradually cooled, ultimately being broken up into a central Sun, with various planets revolving round him as centre. This is the vast work of the Creative Aspect of the Solar LOGOS, the "Spirit of God" who "moved upon the face of the waters" of Æther, the axis of the whirling mountain which churned up the ocean, so that out of it living things might arise.

THE RELATION BETWEEN ATOMS AND CONSCIOUSNESS

There is one point of great interest in the formation of atoms that ought not to be omitted. The Life of the LOGOS is the whirling force within the atom, that holds its component parts together. This Life gives to the

atom its distinctive quality, its essential nature, which is a particular mode of the divine Consciousness; the Hindū calls this the “Tattva”, literally the “Thatness”; “Tat”, “That”, is a reverent expression for the Divine Being, and Thatness indicates “Godness” or “God-nature”.

Each atom has thus its “Godness”. The measure of the vibration of the atom, imposed upon it by the Will of the LOGOS, is the “Tanmātra,” the “measure of That”; this is the axes of the atom, [Like the axes of crystals. They are “imaginary lines”; but imagination is the creative power, and these lines govern the form of the crystal, though they are “non-existent” .], lines of the thought-force of the LOGOS, the angular divergence of which, within the fixed limits of vibration, determines its surface form. Each type of atom has its own peculiar work, for the states of consciousness manifested by the LOGOS within His universe – what He is outside it none, save His peers, can tell – are identical in quality, though not in quantity, with the states of consciousness in Man, the faint image of His glory.

It is thus His consciousness within the atom which answers to our consciousness, stage by stage, the material of the atom faithfully reflecting each stage in the wavelengths of its vibrations. Thus the atom of the spiritual world vibrates in answer to the modes of Spirit – Spirit being its life; that of the intuitional world to the modes of Intuition – for a like reason; that of the mental world to the modes of the Intellect; that of the emotional world to the modes of Emotion and Passion; that of the physical world to the modes of Vitality – all for like reasons. Each change in consciousness in any of these states is at once answered by a change of vibration in the corresponding matter; any vibration set up in matter is at once answered by a change in the corresponding state of consciousness.

For instance, all the matter of the emotional, or astral, sphere is composed of atoms, the Life in which is Emotion, and the measure of vibration of which is correlated to emotion, to express and respond to it. The whole huge gamut of emotions, passions, desires, is played by consciousness on this matter, and pure passion and desire on this matter only; as emotion is a mingling of passion and thought, some mingling of thought-matter enters into the expression of emotion.

The matter of the mental sphere is made of atoms similarly connected with thought; the Life is Mentality, the measure of vibration is correlated to thought, to express and respond to it. As definitely as in the physical world the range of sounds lies within certain vibration-numbers, and the range of colours within others, so can thoughts and passions only be expressed by matter which vibrates within certain limits.

CHAINS

When this part of the work has proceeded sufficiently far for planets to be possible within the Solar System, a series of six globes composed of the matter of the spheres of varying densities is formed in connection with each planet – seven globes, including the planet. Such a series is called a Chain, and during its period of evolution it passes through seven stages, or lives; there is thus a succession of seven Chains, and this complete series is termed a Scheme of evolution, and is under the charge of a mighty spiritual Intelligence, called by Theosophists a “Ruler of seven Chains”, [called also a Planetary Logos, but the name causes confusion] .

There are ten of these in our Solar System, but only seven are in manifestation, ruled by the “Seven Spirits before the throne of God”, mentioned in the “Revelation of St. John”. They are at different stages of evolution, marked by the sphere of matter in which their lowest globes exist. Thus the Neptunian and the Terrene Chains have each three globes in the physical sphere, for these are both at their deepest point of descent into matter, in their middle, or fourth life. The seven globes of the Earth Chain include Mars, the Earth, and Mercury; those of the Neptunian, Neptune and his two satellites. Those who are interested in this part of Theosophical study must pursue it in larger books, for it is naturally very complicated.

THE BUILDING OF FORMS BY THE SECOND LIFE WAVE

Let us consider our own Chain. Evolution circles round a Chain seven times, and each of these cycles is appropriately called a Round. The evolutionary force is called the Second Life-Wave, and it is the Life which is sent out by the LOGOS through His second Aspect of Wisdom, the dual Aspect, Knowledge-Love. Speaking generally, this Life-Wave

descends through the spheres of matter, causing ever-increasing differentiation, and then returns, causing reintegration into unity.

Its first work is to give to matter certain qualities, fitting it to be materials for bodies; it pours itself into the three finer kinds of matter which form the higher mental sphere; matter thus infused with the second Life-Wave is called, when atomic, “Monadic Essence”, because it has become fit to be used to supply permanent atoms to Monads: [see section I., p.24] when non-atomic, i.e., molecular, matter is used, it is called “Elemental Essence” – a name borrowed from the writings of mediaeval Occultists; it was borrowed by them on the matter of which the bodies of nature-spirits were composed, for they spoke of these as “Elementals”, dividing them into classes belonging to the “Elements” of Air, Fire, Water, and Earth.

The three higher levels of the mental sphere are, regarded as mental Elemental Essence, the “first Elemental Kingdom”. All abstract “thought forms” made of this, and a large and splendid host of angels – Bodiless Devas – have bodies composed of this matter. The four lower levels of the mental sphere, suffused by the second Life-Wave, form the “second Elemental Kingdom”; of this are made the bodies of the lower angels – Form Devas. When the Life-Wave enters the astral world, the atomic matter becomes astral Monadic Essence, and the molecular matter astral Elemental Essence, the “third Elemental Kingdom”; the bodies of the lowest Angels – Passion Devas – and of very many nature-spirits are composed of this.

The Life-Wave passes on into the physical world, and performs its accustomed task; the bodies of the lower nature-spirits, fairies, gnomes, and the like, are made of the etheric matter thus suffused. The Mineral Kingdom is the turning point of density; there the second half of the work of the Life-Wave proceeds, the building up of the bodies, plants, animals, and men, now on the ascending arc; the astral and mental bodies are also built of the Elemental Essence on this ascending arc. Hence the conflict that often arises between the life of the man and the life of the matter of his bodies. The latter is pressing downwards, seeking grosser and grosser embodiment, and sharper differentiation; the former is aspiring upwards, and is seeking unity.

S. Paul naturally exclaims as to this conflict: "I find another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. " The Man must bring "the flesh" into subjection, for its life is evolutionarily downwards, on the descending arc, and his is evolutionarily upwards, on the ascending arc, taking its way to the realisation of Spirit.

THE COMING OF THE MONAD BY THE THIRD LIFE-WAVE

The point at which Man definitely "individualises", is when the Monad and his Ray – Spirit, Intuition, and Intellect – who had been brooding over the evolving forms carried in the bosom of the second Life-Wave, flashes downwards to meet the evolving embodied life, and the causal body is formed of the matter of the first elemental Kingdom, on the higher levels of the mental sphere. The human Monads are also borne on a divine current, the "third Life-wave", coming forth from the LOGOS through His first Aspect. We see, then, that the Logos sends forth three mighty waves of His Life, through His three aspects in succession: the first shapes and ensouls matter; the second imparts qualities and builds forms; the third carries down the human Monad to unite with the forms prepared by the second.

ROOT – RACES AND SUB – RACES

We must now narrow our attention to our own world. Three times has evolution swept round the series of globes of which our earth is the densest – three Rounds lie behind us. The fourth sweep has come as far as our earth, which is now evolving under its influence. Minerals, plants, animals, men, all evolve together, but we may confine ourselves to men. Seven root-types of men evolve on our earth during this stage of its life. Theosophists call these types Root-Races, and each has its own special "continent", or configuration of land.

The first two Root-Races have disappeared. Of the third, the Lemurian, which flourished on the continent of Lemuria, now beneath the Pacific Ocean for the most part, scarcely a pure specimen remains; the Negroes are its descendants from mixed marriages. The fourth, the Atlantean, spread over the earth from the continent of Atlantis, which united western Europe and Africa with eastern America; it built some of the mightiest civilisations the world has known, and the greater part of the

world's inhabitants still belong to it. The fifth, the Aryan, leads humanity today.

The sixth is in the womb of the future, but its continent is beginning its formation, and will occupy roughly, the Lemurian site; the islands now being thrown up in the northern Pacific are the indications of the commencement of a work which will demand hundreds of thousands of years for its accomplishment. The seventh lies far, far ahead. Each Root-Race divides into seven sub-races; we have the fourth Root-race divided into the Rmoahal, the Tlavatli, Toltec, Turanian, Semitic, Akkadian, and Mongolian sub-races.

The fifth Root-Race has so far, produced five sub-races: the Hindū, Arabian, Iranian, Keltic, and Teutonic; the sixth sub-race is beginning to show itself in the United States.

Each Root-Race has, as the shaper of its type and the guardian of its evolution, a Great being called a "Manu"; the name is derived from *man*, to think, the root of "man", "homme", "mann" etc.,. The Manu is *The Man*, the type-Man of a Root-Race. The great racial types may be realised by putting side by side a Negro, a Mongol, an Aryan. The sub-races differences are shown by a German and Italian. It will be seen that immense subjects of study are here opened up, profoundly interesting, though not bearing immediately on human happiness and human conduct.

SECTION 7. THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875 by a Russian, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, and an American, Henry Steele Olcott. The first brought to it her vast occult knowledge and entire self-sacrifice – she belonged to a wealthy family of the Russian nobility; the second brought extraordinary organising ability, already proved his service to his country in the purification of its military department during the Civil war. At first, on their reassertion of the Ancient wisdom in the modern world, they met a whirlwind of ridicule and contempt. Now the ideas have spread into every civilised country, and it may be said, without fear of contradiction, that it is today influencing the whole world of thought.

The basis of the Society is a little peculiar; only one thing is binding in any member – the acceptance of Universal Brotherhood.

Its objects are:

First – To form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.

Second – To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.

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

It will be seen that no member is asked either to believe or to spread Theosophical teachings. Every member is left absolutely free to study exactly as he chooses; he may accept or reject any Theosophical teaching; he remains in his own religion, Hindū, Parsī, Buddhist, Hebrew, Christian, Mohammedan, and his religion, if he holds to it strongly, will colour all his ideas. If he accepts Theosophical teachings, a strong believer in any special form of religion will present them in his own form, and is absolutely free to do so. But he must not insist on his own form of them being accepted by others.

The experiment of forming a profoundly religious body open to members of all religions equally is a unique one, but it is gradually succeeding,

with many difficulties, occasional friction between members holding strongly to opposing views, and plenty of discussion as to details. The main policy of perfect tolerance, and the reason for the policy, have been formulated as follows by myself, and have been objected to by no member. It may, therefore, be presented as stating the general view.

No person's religious opinions are asked upon his joining, nor is interference with them permitted, but everyone is required to show to the religion of his fellow-members the same respect that he claims for his own.

The Society has no dogmas, and therefore no heretics. It does not shut any man out because he does not believe the Theosophical teachings. A man may deny every one of them, save that of human Brotherhood, and claim his place and his right within its ranks.

Theosophists realise that just because the intellect can only do its best work in its own atmosphere of freedom, truth can best be seen when no conditions are laid down as to the right of investigation, as to the methods of research. To them Truth is so supreme a thing, that they do not desire to bind any man with conditions as to how, or where, or why he shall seek it.

The future of the society depends on the fact that it should include a vast variety of opinions on all questions on which differences of opinion exist; it is not desirable that there should be within it only one school of thought, and it is the duty of every member to guard this liberty for himself and for others. The Theosophical society is the servant of the Divine Wisdom, and its motto is: "There is no religion higher than Truth". It seeks in every error for the heart of truth whereby it lives, and whereby it attaches to itself human minds.

Every religion, every philosophy, every science, every activity, draws what it has of truth and beauty from the Divine Wisdom, but cannot claim it as exclusively its own, or as against others. Theosophy does not belong to the Theosophical Society; the Theosophical society belongs to Theosophy.

The Theosophical society is composed of students, belonging to any religion in the world or to none, who are united by their approval of the above objects, by their wish to remove religious antagonisms and to draw

together men of goodwill, whatsoever their religious opinions, and by their desire to study religious truths and to share the results of their studies with others. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by purity of life, by devotion to high ideals, and they regard Truth as a prize to be striven for, not as a dogma to be imposed by authority.

They consider that belief should be the result of individual study or intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. They extend tolerance to all, even to the intolerant, not as a privilege they bestow but as a duty they perform, and they seek to remove ignorance, not to punish it. They see every religion as a partial expression of the Divine Wisdom, and prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to its proselytism. Peace is their watchword, as Truth is their aim.

Theosophy is the body of truths which forms the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths, and Theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high, and to work perseveringly, is welcomed as a member, and it rests with the member to become a true Theosophist.

I may add that most of us regard the Theosophical Society as the result of spiritual impulse, sent out by the White Brotherhood, on order to save the world from sinking into Materialism, and to prepare the minds of men for the restoration of the esoteric teachings of religion. It is to us the latest of many such impulses, the earlier ones being embodied in separate religions, while this seeks to draw the existing religions into united friendly co-operation. We regard H.P. Blavatsky as a Messenger of the White Brotherhood, and many of us, I myself among the number, feel to her the deepest gratitude, because she opened to us, in this life, the gateway through which we have passed into the presence of Those who sent her.
