

William Quan Judge
The Inner Constitution of Man



Where the thought is more than the act.

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We are such stuff as dreams are made of.

— Shakespeare¹

Have perseverance as one who doth for evermore endure, for thy shadows [personalities] live and vanish. That which in thee shall live forever, that which in thee *knows*, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life; it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike.²

It is of these “dreams” of which we are made, and of this man for whom “the hour will never strike” that I have to speak to you tonight. Or, in other words, of the inner constitution of man, divided in a sevenfold manner; called sometimes the seven-fold constitution of man. This seven-fold constitution is not confined, in our opinion, to man, but is shared with him by the whole of nature also. The consideration of this subject, therefore, properly demands that of the whole Theosophical theory of evolution, so that tonight I cannot hope to go over it, but only that part of it which particularly relates to man.

In the Theosophical theory, spirit and matter are co-existent, and co-eternal. There is no spirit without matter and, *vice versa*, there is no matter without spirit. These two are the manifestations of the One Absolute reality. That is to say, matter is at one pole of this reality and spirit at the other. In other words, spirit contains the plan, as it were, which it impresses upon matter, which receives this and carries out its evolution from the moment that manifestation begins. Therefore, this evolution is on all the seven planes. The word “plane” is used in Theosophy — and by many others before this — to indicate not only a place, but also a state or condition. For instance we have the plane of mind, of body, the spiritual, and the physical planes. This does not mean that they are separated from each other like the compartments of a ship, or floors of a house. These planes are conditions, or states, of which one may interpenetrate the other, and evolution may be carried on to perfection so far as this relates to

¹ [*The Tempest*, act IV, scene 1]

² [*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 31, Theosophical University Press ed.]

inner planes, such as those of man's septenary constitution. To illustrate: Consider the shadow from some object in an electric light thrown in a certain direction. Another electric light may throw a beam at right angles to this black shadow. The shadow and the light thus cross each other, but they do not interfere. The shadow, when it strikes an object beyond, still envelopes it in darkness, although the electric light has shone through its centre. Thus the shadow and the bright light may exist at the place where they cross, independently, otherwise they would negative each other, and there would be a cessation of light or of shadow beyond the point where they met. Instead of this, both shadow and light will continue on to their respective destinations. This sufficiently illustrates my meaning, that the planes of evolution may proceed within each other, and yet not interfere, and it is not necessary that they be separated in any sense whatever. There are many illustrations which could be drawn from science. Mr. Tyndall substantiates this with respect to the colours of the solar spectrum. We know these are all in the solar light, unseen by us until they are separated by the prism. And so on, in almost every direction, are similar illustrations.

Evolution proceeds on seven planes throughout the manifested universe. Man, in this world, is the highest manifestation of this evolution, and therefore contains within himself its higher seven planes, which before his advent were not perceptible, although they existed always in the germ. Buddha declares that man is made up or formed from thought germs. He is not alone in this assertion. Many philosophers since his time have said the same thing; that man is a thinker, and is made up of and the result of his thoughts. Western minds have become so accustomed to judging him by his mortal body, and to listen to theories which teach the conditions whereby mental states may be materially produced, that at last it has lost sight of man as a thinker at all, and cannot understand why he is made up of his thoughts. We admit that he has a body, and that this body is not thought, but declare that it is the result of his thoughts. The body, now used by all human beings, is the result of the thought of the human race in the past, which thought, at length enabled it to so mold matter as to furnish the body in which man, who is the thinker, really lives.

Man, the thinker, is not divided in this seven-fold way, but man consisting of body and other elements of his nature is so divided. This seven-fold division is not absent anywhere in nature. The seven days of a week is an instance. The layers of the skin are divided in a seven-fold way. In the growth of the child before birth, there are seven distinct divisions. In the progress and construction of the great works of man, there is even seen the seven-fold division. Of a great building, for example, the architect first formulates the plan. The materials existing in various states, represent a second stage; collecting them together after that, a third; united in the building, a fourth; decorating it, a fifth; furnishing it, a sixth; and its occupation by man, the seventh and last. And so it is with man. The ideal plan is laid down; the materials of which are scattered through space; these are collected; then built together in the various forms of nature, until that of man is reached.

Division 1

The first division of man is body, composed of what is called matter, or atoms, held together in a definite form. Have you ever reflected that your body, composed of matter, is made out of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, and therefore you

have in you portions of the tiger and all ferocious beasts, as well as the gentle? You have also vegetable and mineral matter collected in your body, for this represents all that evolution on the physical plane has accomplished in the world. With the Evolutionists of today, we admit that at one time there was only a mass of fire mist, and, although our theory of evolution does do so, it is unnecessary to go beyond that for our present purpose. These say there was first this fire mist, which, by means of the processes of nature, began to revolve into a vortex, and so continued until it became sufficiently dense for a crust to form upon it. This kept growing thicker, until we have the world as it exists today, which finally, without any life or intelligence of its own, produced these. That is, from nothing came forth something. We admit with them that this process went on, but we assert that it was in accordance with the plan laid down by other human beings, who evolved it as the result of the experience of other lives on earths which they had passed through in the great wheel of eternity. But we say further, that [in] this fire mist, of the scientists, are beings, carrying the plan of evolution with them. They first put this matter through the mineral school, so to speak, residing within each particle, and continuing the process for millions and millions of years. When this had been sufficiently accomplished these beings then passed on; that is, pushed forward some of this matter into the vegetable kingdom. This process was carried on for uncountable years. Then this same collection of beings carried the evolution of atoms up into the animal kingdom, where we are now, as mere masses of flesh, not as human shapes. This process went on until the whole mass had received education in the animal kingdom.

The geological history of the world verifies these statements, excepting, of course, the presence of these egos. I admit that its links do not give us any proof of these beings, but I insist that a survey of the whole scheme demands their presence. In the early ages we find only forms of trees; later, we observe enormous, or mammoth, beasts. They have disappeared when the necessity for them passed. There isn't even a "missing link."

The anatomist of today insists that these were the forefathers of our animals; that such and such a huge beast is the original of such and such a smaller one. The process of perfecting that brought them to the stage where they now are was done by and through these beings. Are our bodies, then, the result of this evolution? If so, we are connected with all the lower kingdoms. Without life this body would be useless, and the Theosophic theory is that there is no spot in space where there is no life. We have been accustomed to talking about life as something belonging to material bodies, but as to the intervening space, we have generally thought of it as without life. It is undoubtedly true, I think, that in every point in space there is the same stream of life, in which all beings exist, and hence this Life Principle is the second division of the Theosophic classification of man's constitution.

Division 2

Now, the question arises, what is life and what is death? Ordinarily, death is thought of as something that comes to all beings, without exception. Theosophy denies that there is such a thing as death at all. We don't say there is no death for this body. But we declare that what is called death is really life; is one of its phenomena. Man may be compared to an electric lamp, composed of carbon interposed at a break in the

wire. The current, caused to flow through this wire, reaches the carbon, is resisted and broken until the carbon is exhausted. Man is a carbon standing in a current of life, consisting of molecules united in such a manner that he is capable of living — burning — just so long. That is, carrying the theory into everyday life, he is capable of remaining active just so many hours, when he becomes fatigued because life is so strong he cannot longer resist it. In the morning he awakens, to once more renew the contest, and keeps on so doing from year to year, until life has grown too strong for him and he is compelled to give up the fight and abandon his home in the body. So that there is really no such thing as death, but only a change, an abandoning of the body. This, then, is the second division of man's nature; called in the Sanskrit philosophy, Prāna, meaning breath, because it is said that man lives by means of breath. It is derived from the sun, which is the centre of life or being for this globe.

Division 3

The next division is the astral body, called the design body, or Linga Śarīra, that on which the physical structure is built; a further materialization of the ideal plan which existed in the beginning of this evolution. Ages since, at the time animals were going through the evolution necessary to prepare the human form, only the astral man existed. This astral body was therefore first; before man existed in material form, and, I think, represents the time when according to the Christian Bible Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Paradise, for it was a state of paradise to have only an astral body at a time when a physical one would have compelled man to maintain a perpetual warfare against the monsters of prehistoric ages.

The Theosophical theory is that Adam was existing as an astral body, and having reached that point in evolution where matter could be built into this body he received a "coat of skin," or became a man of flesh and blood as he is today. I advert to this because it is from the sacred book of the Christian, which has been reviled and scoffed at because it has never been explained except in its literal sense.

The astral body is the shape of man's body, but contains in itself organs which connect the man inside the real figure with the outside organs; eyes, ears, nose, *etc.* Without the astral body it would be impossible to account for the possession of senses which are not man's true outer senses. The somnambulist, for instance, walking with his eyes open sees nothing; is looking at you and cannot see you. Our explanation is that the connection between himself in the astral body and the outer organs is cut off. In hypnotism, any organ or organs may be so cut off while others remain active, thus accounting for many of its phenomena. The astral body therefore is in reality more the man than the body, but is so connected with it that it is not able to act except in certain cases. "Mediums" are such instances. A medium is a hysterical, nervous person. We know that looking over mediumship we find them afflicted with something akin to this; catalepsy, for instance. The condition in which many curious things happen through mediums is this: The proper adjustment of all the functions, nervous, material, and mental, is really a condition of the astral body, which is able sometimes to manifest itself. In our opinion, nearly all the phenomena of Spiritualism may be traced to the astral body, are manipulations of it; and we know that when one goes to a medium he simply awakens her astral body and receives from it

his own thoughts in reply to his queries, and nothing more, except in some few rare cases.

The divorce between religion and science has been so great that the “Inner Man” has been forced to manifest improperly and out of place, in order to keep alive the evidence that there was such a body. Had science been united to and gone hand in hand with spiritual philosophy, we would have had a uniform development. Since man’s investigations have been curbed he has revolted within, and he has been manifesting this inner nature for the last forty years. The facts of Spiritualism are thus of use, but at the same time are dangerous. They bring back to the earth influences which ought not to return; pictures of old crimes which produce in men once more the desire to commit them.

Division 4

We come next to the division of passions and desires, the basis of action from which men find their incentive to do both good and evil. When a man dies and is buried his kāmīc body is released. The life principle is also released from these atoms to go into others. Then the kāmīc body, with all the passions and desires is set free. We will suppose the case of a suicide. His kāmīc body escapes full of the idea of suicide. Similarly, the man who has indulged in drinking and all sorts of sensualities, goes out full of these things. A murderer who is hung is in the same condition. Guiteau¹ would go out full of that last scene where he defied his accusers, and where he declared he would destroy all the people who had anything to do with his incarceration. What happens? Man’s higher principles go on and on with evolution, finally being reincarnated. If after death these lower elements are seized by mediums and brought back to earth, infused with additional life, not permitted to disintegrate, it is a crime. Everyone who goes to a medium and asks that their dead may return commits a crime. It is a crime against the person who is dead, and against the medium; it brings around her bad influences, for the majority that can return are full of crime. They are of the earth, earthy. Now, when I am dead my astral body will not have my senses; it will contain only my passions and desires, which swerve me as they swerve you also, and if I am drawn back against my will I may do harm. If you could actually see what occurs at a séance you would never go to another. You would see all these vile shapes enveloping the sitters like a huge octopus.² Mediumship is nothing but communicating with the astral dead; it is the worship of the dead, and as such it has been condemned for ages. Moses said “Ye shall kill a witch.”³ He prohibited his people from having anything to do with such things.

Upper Triad

Having considered the lower principles of man we now come to that which is immortal, or mind, soul, and spirit, called respectively, Manas, Buddhi, and Ātma. Ātma, or spirit, is universal, and Buddhi its vehicle. Manas is the individualized thinker, the one who is conscious. These three together are eternally passing through incarnation

¹ [Charles Julius Guiteau, 1841–1882, American preacher, writer, and lawyer who was convicted of assassinating U.S. President James A. Garfield. He was executed by hanging.]

² [cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, XIV pp. 489-92]

³ [Exodus xxii, 18]

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and coming back again and again to gain experience; to reap reward or punishment. Before birth, in the prenatal state, man is in almost the same condition that he is after death, so that a consideration of the post-mortem state will serve for the prenatal. The difference is only slight. By a simple illustration you will probably understand the ordinary, or devachanic condition after death, and its relation to life. Imagine a young Theosophist who is to deliver a speech. Previous to his appearance he thinks of it continually, perhaps for days; goes over his ideas and wonders what kind of an impression he will make. In the evening he delivers it, in a brief time compared to that he has spent in thinking about it. When he has delivered it, he thinks of the impression he has made. The next day and for many days he still thinks of it. Isn't the thought more than the act? The state of Devachan is where he is in a similar manner thinking over the things of his last life until he returns to rebirth.

Thus after the death of the body we keep up this thinking, and develop this part of our nature, until the time comes when it is exhausted, and we come back to life to continue evolution, until the race has been perfected.

