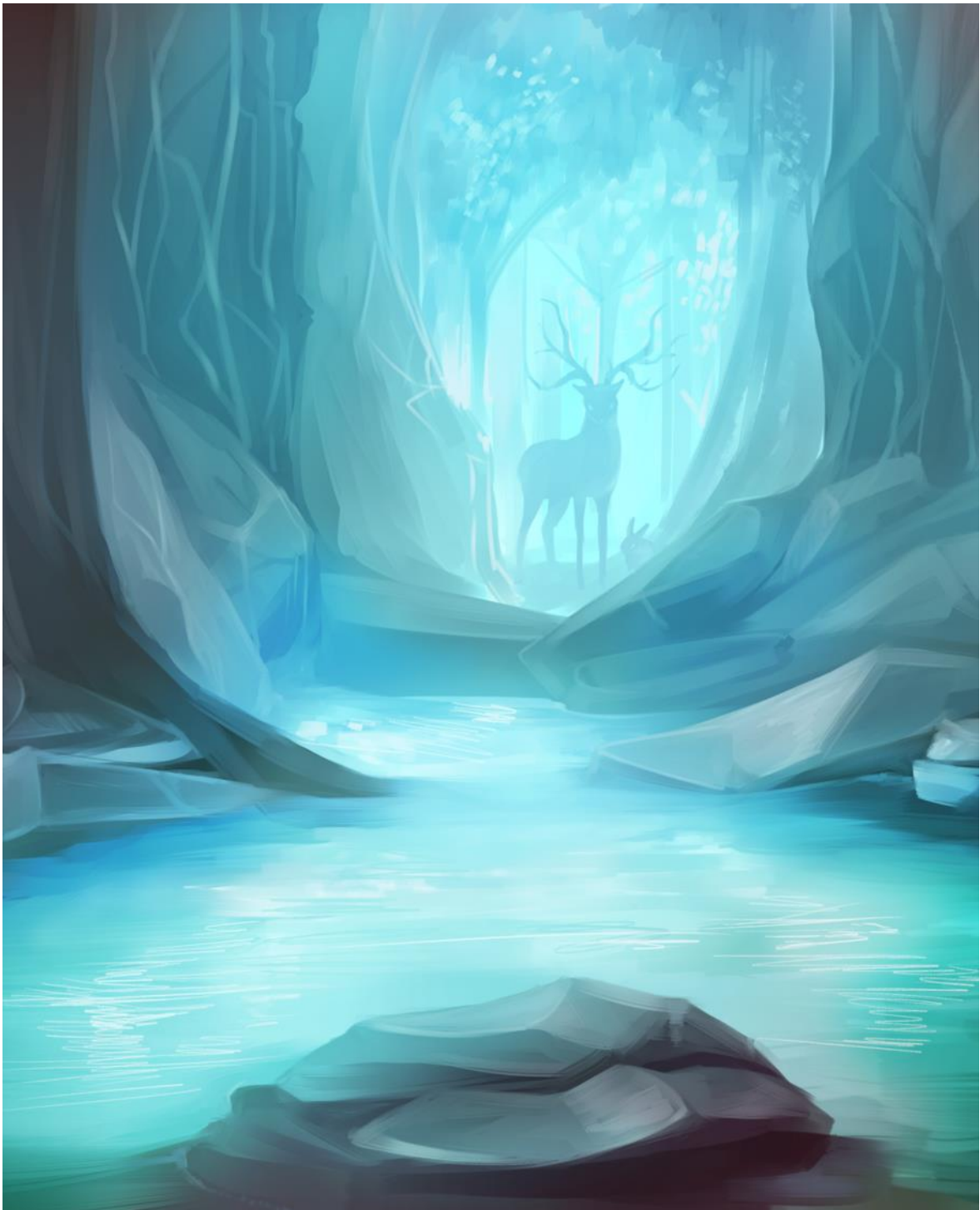


*The first step towards
the Temple of Truth*



Train of thoughts

Selfishness is the root cause of every vice and sorrow

Self-love is the prime mover of every mortal sin.	3
Vice and wickedness are an abnormal, unnatural manifestation, at this period of human evolution.	3
But truth is often stranger than fiction. Some fictions point out to some of the most hidden ulcers in social life.	4
For morality to exist between men and women, they must follow the Law of Chastity. Jesus did not teach Monasticism but the law of Contenance.	5
Of all vices, Vanity is the last and the most troublesome.	6
Yet, in no class of society at large are deceit and craft considered as Divine Virtues, except in the clerical classes of theologians.	6
In the unreal world we live in, every virtue (even a papal one) is tainted with vice.	7

The first step towards the Temple of Truth is a clean life

Forgiveness of injuries, contentment, and pity are not exclusively Christian virtues.	9
Still, the noble love of virtue for virtue's own sake, of which some ancient Pagan nations were such prominent exemplars, has never blossomed in the Christian heart.	9
Salvation by personal merit and self-forgetfulness is the greatest of all virtues and cornerstone of the teachings of Lord Buddha.	10
For virtue cannot be spoofed or hoodwinked. One has to love her for her own sake without looking for reward or profit.	10
The eminent ideal of virtue is the only basis of spiritual insight and attainment.	11
One ought to despise that virtue which prudence and fear alone direct.	11

The seven cardinal virtues are superhuman divine faculties

True virtues are faculties of the sevenfold Logoic Hierarchy. All else is burlesque and ballyhoo.	13
They are the female counterparts of the Celestial Hierarchy.	13
Virtues are one degree of the Hierarchy of Compassion, whose mission is to maintain righteousness on earth.	14
They are the Four Maharajas, Kings of the Dhyani-Chohans, who preside over and rule the four Cosmical Forces.	14
They are they who, being in this world, yet live far beyond our illusive life on earth.	15

Appendix A. Hindu and Buddhist commandments

No one who has not practiced during his whole life the ten virtues, which Manu makes incumbent as a duty, can be initiated into the Mysteries.	17
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Appendix B. On Bodhisattvic development

Letter to the Esotericists.	21
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Selfishness is the root cause of every vice and sorrow

Self-love is the prime mover of every mortal sin.

It is selfishness, especially; the love of *Self* above all things in heaven and earth, helped by human vanity, which is the begetter of the seven mortal sins.¹

Vice and wickedness are an abnormal, unnatural manifestation, at this period of human evolution.

Unless the higher Self or EGO gravitates towards its Sun — the Monad — the lower *Ego*, or *personal Self*, will have the upper hand in every case. For it is this Ego, with its fierce Selfishness and animal desire to live a senseless life (*Tanhā*), which is “the maker of the tabernacle,” as Buddha calls it in *Dhammapada*.² Hence the expression, “the Spirits of the Earth clothed the shadows and expanded them.” To these “Spirits” belong temporarily the human astral selves; and it is they who give, or build, the physical tabernacle of man, for the Monad and its conscious principle, *Manas*, to dwell in. But the “Solar” *Lhas*, Spirits, warm them, the shadows. This is physically and literally true; metaphysically, or on the psychic and spiritual plane, it is equally true that the *Ātman* alone *warms* the inner man; *i.e.*, it enlightens it with the ray of divine life and alone is able to impart to the inner man, or the reincarnating Ego, its immortality. Thus, as we shall find, for the first three and a half Root-Races, up to the middle or turning point, it is the astral shadows of the “progenitors,” the lunar Pitris, which are the formative powers in the Races, and which build and gradually force the evolution of the physical form towards perfection — this, at the cost of a proportionate loss of spirituality. Then, from the turning point, it is the Higher Ego, or incarnating principle, the *Nous* or *Mind*, which reigns over the animal Ego, and rules it whenever it is not carried down by the latter. In short, Spirituality is on its ascending arc, and the animal or physical impedes it from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution only when the selfishness of the *personality* has so strongly infected the real *inner man* with its lethal *virus*, that the upward attraction has lost all its power on the thinking reasonable man. In sober truth, vice and wickedness are an *abnormal, unnatural* manifestation, at this period of our human evolution — at least they ought to be so. The fact that mankind was never more selfish and vicious than it is now, civilized nations having succeeded in making of the first an ethical characteristic, of the second an art, is an additional proof of the exceptional nature of the phenomenon.³

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE DEVIL'S OWN THOUGHTS ON ORMUZD AND AHRIMAN) XIII p. 128; [full text in our Black versus White Magic Series.]

² [Verses] 153 and 154

³ *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 110

But truth is often stranger than fiction. Some fictions point out to some of the most hidden ulcers in social life.

A tree is known by its fruits; an Age has to be judged by its most prominent authors. The intrinsic moral value of every particular period of history has generally to be inferred from what its best and most observant writers had to say of the habits, customs, and ethics of their contemporaries and the classes of Society they have observed or been living in. And what now do these writers say of our Age, and how are they themselves treated?

Zola's works are finally exiled in their English translations; and though we have not much to say against the ostracism to which his *Nana* and *La Terre* have been subjected, his last — *La Bête Humaine* — might have been read in English with some profit. With "Jack the Ripper" in the near past, and the hypnotic rage in the present, this fine psychological study of the modern male neurotic and "hysteric," might have done good work by way of suggestion. It appears, however, that prudish England is determined to ignore the truth and will never allow a diagnosis of the true state of its diseased morals to be made — not by a foreign writer at all events. First, then, have departed Zola's works, forcibly exiled. At this many applauded, as such fictions, though vividly pointing out some of the most hidden ulcers in social life, were told really too cynically and too indecently to do much good. But now comes the turn of Count Lev Tolstoy. His last work, if not yet exiled from the bookstalls, is being rabidly denounced by the English and American press. In the words of *Kate Field's Washington*, why?

Does *The Kreutzer Sonata*¹ defy Christianity? No.

Does it advocate lax morals? No.

Does it make the reader in love with that "intelligent beast" Pozdnisheff?

On the contrary . . .

Why then is the *Kreutzer Sonata* so abused?

The answer comes: "because Tolstoy has told the truth," not as averred "very brutally," but very frankly, and "about a very brutal condition of things" certainly; and we, of the 19th century, have always preferred to keep our social skeletons securely locked in our closets and hidden far away from sight. We dare not deny the terribly realistic truths vomited upon the immorality of the day and modern society by Pozdnisheff; but we may call the creator of Pozdnisheff names. Did he not indeed dare to present a mirror to modern Society in which it sees its own ugly face? Withal, he offers no possible cure for our social sores. Hence, with eyes lifted heavenward and foaming mouths, his critics maintain that, all its characteristic realism notwithstanding, the "*Kreutzer Sonata* is a prurient book, like to effect more harm than good, *portraying vividly the great immorality of life*, and offering no possible remedy for it."² Worse still. "It is simply *repulsive*. It is daring beyond measure and without excuse;

¹ [Full text in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Vanity Fair*

. . . the work of a mind . . . not only morbid, but . . . far gone in disease through unwholesome reflection.”^{1, 2}

For morality to exist between men and women, they must follow the Law of Chastity. Jesus did not teach Monasticism but the law of Continence.

Thus the author of *Anna Karenina* and the *Death of Ivan Ilyitch*, the greatest psychologist of this century, stands accused of *ignoring* “human nature” by one critic, of being “the most conspicuous case out of Bedlam,” and by another³ called “the ex-great artist.” “He tilts,” we are told, “against the strongest human instincts” because forsooth, the author — an orthodox Russian born — tells us that far better no marriage at all than such a desecration of what his church regards as one of the holy Sacraments. But in the opinion of the Protestant *Vanity Fair*, Tolstoy is “an extremist,” because “with all its evils, the present marriage system, *taken even as the vile thing for which he gives it us* [italics are ours] is a surely less evil than the monasticism — with its effects — which he preaches.” This shows the ideas of the reviewer on *morality!*

Tolstoy, however, “preaches” nothing of the sort; nor does his Pozdnisheff say so, though the critics misunderstand him from A to Z, as they do also the wise statement that “not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth” or a vile man’s heart and imagination. It is not “monasticism” but *the law of continence* as taught by Jesus (and Occultism) in its esoteric meaning — which most Christians are unable to perceive — that he preaches. Nothing can be more moral or conducive to human happiness and perfectibility than the application of this law. It is one ordained by Nature herself. Animals follow it instinctively, as do also the savage tribes. Once pregnant, to the last day of the nursing of her babe, *i.e.*, for eighteen or twenty months, the savage squaw *is sacred to her husband*; the civilised and semi-civilized man alone breaking this beneficent law. Therefore, speaking of the *immorality* of marriage relations as at present practised, and of unions performed on commercial bases, or, what is worse, on mere sensual love, Pozdnisheff elaborates the idea by uttering the greatest and the holiest truth, namely, that:

For morality to exist between men and women in their daily life, *they must make perfect chastity their law.*⁴ In progressing towards this end, man subdues himself. When he has arrived at the last degree of subjection we shall have moral marriages. But if a man as in our Society advances only towards physical love, even though he surrounds it with deception and with the shallow formality of marriage, *he obtains nothing but licensed vice.*^{5, 6}

¹ *New York Herald*

² *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (DIAGNOSES AND PALLIATIVES) XII pp. 242-43; [full text in the same series.]

³ *Scot’s Observer*

⁴ All the italics throughout the article are ours. [ED. *Lucifer*].

⁵ p. 41

⁶ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (DIAGNOSES AND PALLIATIVES) XII pp. 243-44

Of all vices, Vanity is the last and the most troublesome.

How often does one see strong-hearted men and determined women moved by a strong aspiration towards an ideal they know to be the true one, battling successfully, to all appearance, with Ahriman¹ and conquering him. Their external *Selves* have been the battle-ground of a most terrible, deadly strife between the two opposing Principles; but they have stood firmly — and won. The dark enemy seems conquered; it is crushed in fact, so far as the animal instincts are concerned. Personal selfishness, that greed for self, and self only, the begetter of most of the evils — has vanished; and every lower instinct, melting like soiled icicles under the beneficent ray of Ahura Mazda, the radiant EGO-SUN, has disappeared, making room for better and holier aspirations. Yet, there lurks in them their old and but partially destroyed vanity, that spark of personal pride which is the last to die in man. Dormant it is, latent and invisible to all, including their own consciousness; but there it is still. Let it awake but for an instant, and the seemingly crushed-out personality comes back to life at the sound of its voice, arising from its grave like an unclean ghoul at the command of the midnight incantator.² Five hours — nay, five minutes even — of life under its fatal sway, may destroy the work of years of self-control and training, and of laborious work in the service of Ahura Mazda, to open wide the door anew to Angra Mainyu.^{3, 4}

Yet, in no class of society at large are deceit and craft considered as Divine Virtues, except in the clerical classes of theologians.

The Daityas were seduced by the wily talk of *Māyāmoha*, as Eve was seduced by the advice of the Serpent. They became apostates to the *Vedas*. As Dr. Muir translates the passage:

The great Deceiver, practising illusion, next beguiled other Daityas, by means of many other sorts of heresy. In a very short time, these Asuras (= Daityas), deluded by the Deceiver [who was Vishnu] abandoned the entire system founded on the ordinances of the triple *Veda*. Some reviled the *Vedas*, others the gods, others the ceremonial of sacrifice, and others the Brāhmins. This [they exclaimed], is a doctrine which will not bear discussion; the slaughter [of animals in sacrifice] is not conducive to religious merit. [To say that] oblations of butter consumed in the fire produce any future reward, is the assertion of a child. . . . If it be a fact that a beast slain in sacrifice is exalted to heaven, why does not the worshipper slaughter his own father? . . . Infallible utterances do not, great Asuras, fall from the skies; it is only assertions founded on reasoning that are accepted by me and by other [intelligent] persons like yourselves. Thus by numerous methods, the Daityas were unsettled by the great Deceiver [*Reason*]. . . . When the Daityas had entered on this path of error, the gods mustered all their energies, and approached to battle. Then followed a combat between the gods and the Asuras; and the latter, who had abandoned the right road, were

¹ [Man's own ignorance and selfishness in Mazdean philosophy. Ahura Mazda is the exact opposite.]

² [Enchanter.]

³ [The Mazdean Satan, *i.e.*, Ahriman or *kāma-lust*.]

⁴ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE DEVIL'S OWN THOUGHTS ON ORMUZD AND AHRIMAN) XIII p. 130

smitten by the former. In previous times they had been defended by the armour of righteousness which they bore, but when that had been destroyed they, also, perished.¹

Whatever may be thought of Hindus, no enemy of theirs can regard them as fools. A people whose holy men and sages have left to the world the greatest and most sublime philosophies that ever emanated from the minds of men, must have known the difference between right and wrong. Even a savage can discern white from black, good from bad, and deceit from sincerity and truthfulness. Those who had narrated this event in the biography of their god, must have seen that in this case it was that God who was the arch-Deceiver, and the Daityas, who “never transgressed the precepts of the *Vedas*,” who had the sunny side in the transaction, and who were the true “Gods.” Thence there must have been, and *there is* a secret meaning hidden under this allegory. In no class of Society, in no nation, are deceit and craft considered as *Divine* virtues — except perhaps in the clerical classes of theologians and modern Jesuitism.²

In the unreal world we live in, every virtue (even a papal one) is tainted with vice.

With the Pythagoreans . . . humility was no virtue, though in modern times it is considered to be the greatest of the virtues.³ With Aristotle likewise it is no virtue: for in his *Nicomachean Ethics* he says that

. . . all humble men are flatterers, and all flatterers are humble.⁴

The Ten Pythagorean Virtues are identical with those prescribed by Manu, and the Buddhist Pāramitās of Perfection.⁵

¹ J. Muir, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (Old Series) 1862, Vol. XIX p. 302

² *Secret Doctrine*, I pp. 422-23

³ [Cf. Pope Francis’ much-publicised “virtue.”]

⁴ Thos. Taylor in: *Iamblichus’ Life of Pythagoras* (1818), Ch. xxxii, p. 32

⁵ Cf. *Theosophical Glossary: Ten Pythagorean Virtues*. [See Appendices.]

The first step towards the Temple of Truth is a clean life

Writes the Master:

Observe that the first of the steps of gold which mount towards the Temple of Truth is — A CLEAN LIFE. This means a purity of body, and a still greater purity of mind, heart, and spirit.

And the latter are found more in the poor country-classes than among the cultured and the rich. That the Master's eye is upon you, Theosophists, is evidenced by the following lines from the same pen:

“How many of them [you] violate one or more of these conditions (of the right Path), and yet expect to be freely taught the highest Wisdom and Sciences, the Wisdom of the gods. As pure water poured into the scavenger's bucket is befouled and unfit for use, so is divine Truth when poured into the consciousness of a sensualist, of one of selfish heart and a mind indifferent and inaccessible to justice and compassion.” . . . “There is a very, VERY ancient maxim, far older than the time of the Romans or the Greeks, more ancient than the Egyptians or Chaldeans. It is a maxim all of them [Theosophist] ought to remember and live accordingly. And it is that a sound and pure mind requires a sound and pure body.¹ Bodily purity every adept takes precautions to keep. . . . Most of you [Theosophists] know this.”

And yet, knowing it, how few live up to this! I had rather not say whether the letter includes in this reproof Theosophists generally, or only Esotericists. It means a few, but this is for my own private information; meanwhile, these are the words addressed to all.

. . . But though they have been repeatedly told of this sine qua non rule on the Path of Theosophy and chelaship, how few of them have given attention to it. Behold, how many of them are sluggards in the morning and time-wasters at night; GLUTTONS, eating and drinking for the sensual pleasure they give; indolent in business; selfish as to the keeping of their neighbours' (brothers') interests in view; borrowing from brother-Theosophists, making money out of the loan and failing to return it; lazy in study and waiting for others to think for and teach them; denying themselves nothing, EVEN OF LUXURIES, for the sake of helping poorer brothers; forgetting the Cause in general and its volunteer, hard workers, — and even debauchees, GUILTY OF SECRET IMMORALITY in more than one form.

¹ [Cf. Juvenal's "Mens sana in corpore sano," *Satire X*, line 356 — *Kings Quotation 3724*. Also cf. "Νους υγιεινς εν σωματι υγιειν" of the Greeks, i.e., "a healthy mind in a healthy body." The phrase has been taken from a longer sentence, "orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano," i.e., "we should pray for a sound mind in a sound body," which is entirely different from the common misinterpretation that "a healthy body can produce or sustain a healthy mind." It is the other way around! — ED. PHIL.]

*And yet all call themselves Theosophists; all talk with outsiders about “Theosophical ethics” and things, with a puffed up, vain conceit in their hearts . . .*¹

Forgiveness of injuries, contentment, and pity are not exclusively Christian virtues.

They are “Christian” only because Christianity has accepted them. All these virtues were taught and practised by Buddha 600 years B.C.; as other Chinese and Indian good men and adepts accepted and taught them to the multitudes thousands of years B.C., or before Buddha. Why call them “Christian,” since they are universal?²

Still, the noble love of virtue for virtue’s own sake, of which some ancient Pagan nations were such prominent exemplars, has never blossomed in the Christian heart.

That the world is in such bad condition morally is a conclusive evidence that none of its religions and philosophies, those of the *civilized* races less than any other, have ever possessed the *truth*. The right and logical explanations of the subject of the problems of the great dual principles — right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism — are as impossible to them now as they were 1881 years ago. They are as far from the solution as they ever were. . . .³

One need not belong to the Theosophical Society to be forcibly struck with the correctness of the above remarks. The accepted creeds of the civilized nations have lost their restraining influence on almost every class of society, nor have they ever had any other restraint save that of physical fear: the dread of theocratic thumb screws,

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. III) XII pp. 596-97

² *ibid.*, (NOTES TO “BUDDHIST DOCTRINE OF THE WESTERN HEAVEN”) IX p. 136

³ From an *Unpublished Letter*, well known to Theosophists.

[This excerpt is from the only letter ever received from the Mahā-Chohan, an individual of spiritual attainment superior to that of Masters K.H. and M., and “to whose insight the future lies like an open page,” to use the expression of Master K.H. in his letter to Col. H.S. Olcott, “*formed in his own hand*,” as the Colonel says, in the early morning of November 10th, 1883, in his Camp on the Maidan outside Lahore (*vide* Vol. VI of the *Collected Writings*, pp. 22 *et seq.*, for facsimile of K.H.’s letter and pertinent data).

Strictly speaking, the “letter” from the Mahā-Chohan is not actually a letter but, as stated in a few introductory lines signed by K.H., “an abridged version of the view of the Chohan on the T.S. from his own words as given last night.” As appears from one of the sentences in that communication, its date must be 1881, and we know from the same introductory note that it was forwarded by K.H. to A.P. Sinnett, the Master saying: “My own letter, the answer to yours, will shortly follow.”

Curiously enough, the original of this communication from Master K.H., recording the views of the Mahā-Chohan, has never been found. It is not among the other letters from the Adept-Brothers which were held by A.P. Sinnett in a special box and were later published [posthumously] as *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, all the originals of which are in the holdings of the British Museum. Sometime after its reception however, it was copied and “cyclostyled” in London, and copies were sent to a few selected persons. One such copy was among the papers of C.W. Leadbeater, and another was found later in a manuscript volume in the handwriting of Miss Francesca Arundale. Using these copies, C. Jinarājadāsa published the text in the volume known as *Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series, originally published in 1919 (4th edition being of 1948).

H.P. Blavatsky of course knew of this letter and either had the original or a copy thereof, for she quotes excerpts from it in several places (such as: *Lucifer*, Vol. II, August, 1888, pp. 431-33, and her first statement issued in 1888 to the members of the newly-formed Esoteric Section). Passages from it appeared also in *The Path* magazine published by W.Q. Judge in New York (*vide* Volume VII, February 1893, opening article).

It is obvious from the context of this communication from the Mahā-Chohan, and from other statements in *The Mahatma Letters*, that the main purpose intended to be achieved at the time was to counteract Sinnett’s and Hume’s merely intellectual grasp of the teachings and their unfounded admiration for the achievements of occidental science, as contrasted with the higher spiritual objectives of the Movement which its real Founders had in view. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

[See full text of the Mahā-Chohan’s views in our Masters Speak Series. — ED. PHIL.]

and hell tortures. The noble love of virtue, for virtue's own sake, of which some ancient Pagan nations were such prominent exemplars, has never blossomed in the Christian heart at large, nor have any of the numerous post-Christian philosophies answered the needs of humanity, except in isolated instances. Hence, the moral condition of the civilized portions of mankind has never been *worse* than it is now — not even, we believe, during the period of Roman decadence.¹

Salvation by personal merit and self-forgetfulness is the greatest of all virtues and cornerstone of the teachings of Lord Buddha.

Emotionalism is *not* philosophy; and Buddha devoted his long self-sacrificing life to tear people away precisely from that evil breeding superstition.² Why speak of Buddha then, in the same breath? The doctrine of salvation by *personal* merit, and *self*-forgetfulness is the corner-stone of the teaching of the Lord Buddha.³

For virtue cannot be spoofed or hoodwinked. One has to love her for her own sake without looking for reward or profit.

It was often premised (and as unjustly as usual) that China, nearly as old a country as India, had no cosmogony. “It was unknown to Confucius, and the Buddhists extended their Cosmogony without introducing a personal God,” it is complained. The *I-Ching*, “the very essence of ancient thought and the combined work of the most venerated sages, [fails] to show a distinct cosmogony.”⁴ Nevertheless, there is one, and a very distinct one. Only as Confucius did not admit of a future life⁵ and the Chinese Buddhists reject the idea of *One* Creator, accepting one cause and its numberless effects, they are misunderstood by the believers in a *personal* God. The “Great Extreme” as the commencement “of changes” (transmigrations) is the shortest and perhaps the most suggestive of all Cosmogonies, for those who, like the Confucianists, love virtue for its own sake, and try to do good unselfishly without perpetually looking to reward and profit. The “great Extreme” of Confucius produces “two figures.” These “two” produce in their turn “the four images”; these again “the eight symbols.” It is complained that though the Confucianists see in them “Heaven, Earth and man in miniature,” we can see in them anything we like. No doubt, and so it is with regard to many symbols, especially in those of the latest religions. But they who know something of Occult numerals, see in these “figures” the symbol, however rude, of a harmonious progressive Evolution of Kosmos and its beings, both the Heavenly and the Terrestrial. And anyone who has studied the numerical evolution in the primeval cosmogony of Pythagoras (a contemporary of Confucius) can never fail to find in his *Triad*, *Tetractys* and *Decad* emerging from the ONE and solitary Monad, the same idea. Confucius is laughed at by his Christian biographer for “talking of divination” before and after this passage, and is represented as saying:

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (DIAGNOSES AND PALLIATIVES) XII pp. 239-40

² [“ . . . the cynically awful and pernicious dogma of the Protestant Church, that teaches the forgiveness of the blackest crime, provided the murderer *believes sincerely* that the blood of his “Redeemer” has saved him at the last hour — what is it but *blind* unphilosophical faith?” *q.v.*]

³ *ibid.*, (“THE THEOSOPHICAL MAHATMAS”) VII p. 244

⁴ Rev. J. Edkins, *Chinese Buddhism*, p. 323. And very wisely they have acted.

⁵ If he rejected it, it was on the ground of what he calls the changes — in other words, rebirths — of man, and constant transformations. He denied immortality to the *personality* of man — as we do — not to MAN.

The eight symbols determine good and ill fortune, and these lead to great deeds. There are no imitable images greater than heaven and earth. There are no changes greater than the four seasons [meaning North, South, East and West, *et seq.*]. There are no suspended images brighter than the sun and moon. In preparing *things for use, there is none greater than the sage*. In determining good and ill-luck there is nothing greater than *the divining straws and the tortoise*.¹

Therefore, the “divining straws” and the “tortoise,” the “symbolic sets of lines,” and the great sage who looks at them as they become one and two, and two become four, and four become eight, and the other sets “three and six,” are laughed to scorn, only because his wise symbols are misunderstood.

So the author and his colleagues will scoff no doubt at the *Stanzas* given in our text, for they represent *precisely the same idea*. The old archaic map of Cosmogony is full of *lines* in the Confucian style, of concentric circles and dots. Yet all these represent the most abstract and philosophical conceptions of the Cosmogony of our Universe. At all events it may answer, perhaps, better to the requirements and the scientific purposes of our age, than the cosmogonical essays of St. Augustine and the “Venerable Bede,” though these were published over a millennium later than the Confucian.²

The eminent ideal of virtue is the only basis of spiritual insight and attainment.

[Theosophy] placed personal purity on a level which barred out nine-tenths of these claimants from all thought of their presumed inheritance, and showed that such a condition of purity, far transcending any popular ideal of such virtue, was the absolute and all-essential basis of spiritual insight and attainment. . . . It guards and applies every aspiration and capacity to serve humanity in any man and shows him how. It overthrows the giddy pedestal, and safely cares for the human being on solid ground. Hence, in this way, and in all other ways, it is the truest deliverer and saviour of our time.³

One ought to despise that virtue which prudence and fear alone direct.

Many are called impious not for having a worse but a different religion from their neighbours, says Epicurus. Mohammedans are stronger theists than the Christians, yet they are called “infidels” by the latter, and many theosophists are regarded as atheists, not for the denying of the Deity but for thinking somewhat peculiarly concerning this ever-to-be unknown Principle. As a living contrast to the atheist, stands the theist believing in other lives or a life to come. Taught by his creed that prayer, repentance and offerings are capable of obliterating sin in the sight of the “all-forgiving, loving and merciful Father in Heaven,” he is given every hope — the strength of which grows in proportion to the sincerity of his faith — that his sins will

¹ Edkins, *op. cit.*, p. 320. He may be laughed at by the Protestants; but the Roman Catholics have no right to mock him, without becoming guilty of blasphemy and sacrilege. For it is over 200 years since Confucius was canonized as a Saint in China by the Roman Catholics, who have thereby obtained many converts among the ignorant Confucianists.

² *Secret Doctrine*, I pp. 440-41

³ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MODERN APOSTLES AND PSEUDO-MESSIAHS) XII pp. 260-61

be remitted to him. Thus, the moral obstacle between the believer and sin is very weak, if we view it from the standpoint of human nature. The more a child feels sure of his parents love for him, the easier he feels it to break his father's commands. Who will dare to deny that the chief, if not the only cause of half the misery with which Christendom is afflicted — especially in Europe, the stronghold of sin and crime — lies not so much with human depravity as with its belief in the goodness and infinite mercy of “our Father in Heaven,” and especially in the vicarious atonement? Why should not men imagine that they can drink of the cup of vice with impunity — at any rate, in its results in the hereafter — when one half of the population is offered to purchase absolution for its sins for a certain paltry sum of money, and the other has but to have faith in, and place reliance upon, Christ to secure a place in paradise — though he be a murderer, starting for it right from the gallows! The public sale of indulgences for the perpetration of crime on the one hand, and the assurance made by the ministers of God that the consequences of the worst of sins may be obliterated by God at his will and pleasure, on the other, are quite sufficient, we believe, to keep crime and sin at the highest figure. He, who loves not virtue and good for their own sake and shuns not vice as vice, is sure to court the latter as a direct result of his pernicious belief. One ought to despise that virtue which prudence and fear alone direct.¹

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (FEW THOUGHTS ON SOME WISE WORDS FROM A WISE MAN) IV pp. 498-99. [Babu Rajnarain Bose, a well-known Brahma-Samājist, wrote an article on “The Essential Religion” in the pages of the *Tatva Bodhini Patrika*. His call is for the highest virtues and a life of selflessness, irrespective of religious affiliation. H.P. Blavatsky, while strongly endorsing most of what he says, comments upon various points in Bose’s article.]

The seven cardinal virtues are superhuman divine faculties

True virtues are faculties of the sevenfold Logoic Hierarchy. All else is burlesque and ballyhoo.

The more one studies their Hierarchies and finds out their identity, the more proofs one acquires that there is not one of the past and present *personal* gods, known to us from the earliest days of History, that does not belong to the third stage of cosmic manifestation. In every religion we find the concealed deity forming the ground work; then the ray therefrom, that falls into primordial Cosmic matter (first manifestation); then the androgyne result, the dual Male and Female abstract Force, personified (*second* stage); this separates itself finally, in the *third*, into seven Forces, called the creative Powers by all the ancient Religions, and the “Virtues of God” by the Christians. The later explanation and metaphysical abstract qualifications have never prevented the Roman and Greek Churches from worshipping these “Virtues” under the personifications and distinct names of the seven Archangels. ¹

They are the female counterparts of the Celestial Hierarchy.

[The great archaeologist C.W. King] who has devoted so much time and labour to the study of Gnostic gems, corroborating our assertion, . . . shows that the entire theory is Hindu, ² and points out that the *Durgā*, or female counterpart of each Asiatic god, is what the kabbalists term active *Virtue* in the celestial hierarchy, a term which the Christian Fathers adopted and repeated, without fully appreciating, and the meaning of which the later theology has utterly disfigured. Says King, in *The Gnostics*:³

Although this science is commonly supposed to be peculiar to the Jewish Talmudists, there is no doubt that [they] borrowed the idea from a foreign source, and that, the Chaldeans, the *founders of magic art* . . . The titles *Iaō* and *Abraxas*, and several others, instead of being recent Gnostic figments, were indeed holy names, borrowed from the most ancient formulae of the East. Pliny must allude to them when he mentions the virtues⁴ ascribed by the Magi to amethysts engraved with the names of the Sun and Moon; names . . . not expressed in either the Greek or Latin tongues.⁵ In the “*Eternal Sun*,” the “*Abrax-*

¹ *Secret Doctrine*, I pp. 437-38

² [On mysteries surrounding the value of letters.]

³ [C.W. King, *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediaeval*. London, 1863; 2nd ed., 1887, reprinted by Wizards Bookshelf, *Secret Doctrine* Reference Series. Full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers. — ED. PHIL.]

⁴ *Virtutes* (miracles) as employed by Irenaeus. [Also cf. *virtutes theologicae*, the theological “virtues” of faith, hope, and love.]

⁵ [*Natural History*, xxxviii, § 41]

as,” the “*Adonai*,” of these gems, we recognize the very amulets ridiculed by the philosophic Pliny.^{1, 2}

Virtues are one degree of the Hierarchy of Compassion, whose mission is to maintain righteousness on earth.

Stanza VI.5. AT THE FOURTH (*Round, or revolution of life and being around “the seven smaller wheels*), THE SONS ARE TOLD TO CREATE THEIR IMAGES. ONE THIRD REFUSES — TWO (*thirds*) OBEY.

THE CURSE IS PRONOUNCED: THEY WILL BE BORN IN THE FOURTH (*Race*), SUFFER AND CAUSE SUFFERING. THIS IS THE FIRST WAR.

And in order to counteract the influence of the seven “badly disposed” principles, the progeny of *Spiritus*, KEBAR-ZIWA, the mighty Lord of Splendour, produces *seven other lives* (the cardinal virtues) who shine in their own form and light “from on high”³ and thus re-establish the balance between good and evil, light and darkness.⁴

Here one finds a repetition of the early *allegorical*, dual systems, as the Zoroastrian, and detects a germ of the dogmatic and dualistic religions of the future, a germ which has grown into such a luxuriant tree in ecclesiastical Christianity. It is already the outline of the two “Supremes” — God and Satan. But in the Stanzas no such idea exists.⁵

They are the Four Maharajas, Kings of the Dhyani-Chohans, who preside over and rule the four Cosmical Forces.⁶

The feminine Sephīrah, *Bīnāh*, is termed by the Kabbalist the great sea: therefore *Bīnāh*, whose divine names are Jehovah, *Yah*, and *Elōhīm*, is simply the Chaldean *Tiamāt*, the female power, the *Thalath* of Berosus, who presides over the Chaos, and was made out later by Christian theology to be the serpent and the Devil. She-He (*Yāh-Havāh*) is the supernal (Heh, and Eve). This *Yāh-Havāh* then, or Jehovah, is identical with our Chaos — Father, Mother, Son, — on the material plane and in the purely physical World.⁷ *Demon* and *Deus* at one and the same time; the sun and moon, good and evil, God and Demon.

Lunar magnetism generates life, preserves and destroys it, psychically as well as physically. And if, astronomically, she is one of the seven planets of the ancient world, in *Theogony* she is one of the regents thereof; with Christians now as much as with Pagans, the former referring to her under the name of one of their archangels, and the latter under that of one of their gods.

¹ King, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80 in 1st ed., p. 283 in 2nd ed.

² Cf. *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 233 & *fn.*

³ *Codex Nazareus* III, 61

⁴ Quoting *Isis Unveiled*, I p. 301

⁵ *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 196

⁶ [See “The Masque of Love” in the eponymous series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁷ [See “Chaos to sense, latent deity to reason” in our *Secret Doctrine’s* First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Therefore the meaning of the “fairy tale” translated by Chwolson from an old Chaldean MS. translated into Arabic, about Qū-tāmy being instructed by the *idol* of the moon, is easily understood.¹ Seldenus tells us the secret as well as Maimonides.² The worshippers of the *Theraphim* (the Jewish Oracles)

. . . carved images and claimed that the light of the principal stars [planets] permeating these through and through, the angelic VIRTUES [or the regents of the stars and planets] conversed with them, teaching them many most useful things and arts.

And Seldenus explains that the *Theraphim* were built and composed after the position of certain planets, those which the Greeks called *στοιχεια*, and according to figures that were located in the sky and called *αλεχητηριοι*, or the *tutelary* gods. Those who traced out the *στοιχεια* were called *στοιχειωματικοι* or the diviners by the planets and the *στοιχεια*.^{3, 4}

They are they who, being in this world, yet live far beyond our illusive life on earth.⁵

Above Them there is but one class of Nirvānīs, namely, the Cho-ku (Dharmakāya), or the Nirvānīs “without remains” — the pure Arūpa, the formless Breaths.

It is an erroneous idea which makes the Orientalists take literally the teaching of the Mahāyāna School about the three different kinds of bodies, namely, the Tul-pa’i-Ku, the Long-chod-Dzog-pa’i-Ku, and the Cho-Ku, as all pertaining to the Nirvānic condition. There are two kinds of Nirvāna: the earthly, and that of the purely disembodied Spirits. These three “bodies” are the three envelopes — all more or less physical — which are at the disposal of the Adept who has entered and crossed the six Pāramitās, or “Paths” of Buddha. Once He enters upon the seventh, He can return no more to earth.^{6, 7}

¹ See Book III.

² *Moreh Nebhūchīm*, Bk. III, ch. xxix

³ Seldenus, *De Diis Syriis, Syntagmata* I, cap. ii: “De Teraphim Labanis, etc.”

⁴ *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 394

⁵ [Cf. “Hermes & John on the Father of things in the World” in our Mystic Verse and Insights Series.]

⁶ [See Csoma, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1st series, Vol. VII (1838), p. 142 ff; and Schott, *Buddhismus*, p. 9, who give it otherwise. Cited on p. 38 of Schlagintweit’s *Buddhism in Tibet*.]

⁷ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (A FEW MORE MISCONCEPTIONS CORRECTED) XIV p. 436 & fn.

Appendix A. Hindu and Buddhist commandments

And now, open *Manu* and read:

Resignation, *the action of rendering good for evil*, temperance, probity, purity, repression of the senses, the knowledge of the *Śāstras* [the holy books], that of the supreme soul, truthfulness and abstinence from anger, such are the ten virtues in which consists duty . . . Those who study these ten precepts of duty, and after having studied them conform their lives thereto, will reach to the supreme condition.¹

If *Manu* did not trace these words many thousands of years before the era of Christianity, at least no voice in the whole world will dare deny them a less antiquity than several centuries B.C. The same in the case of the precepts of Buddhism.

If we turn to the *Pratimoksha-Sūtra* and other religious tracts of the Buddhists, we read the ten following commandments:

- 1 Thou shalt not kill any living creature.
- 2 Thou shalt not steal.
- 3 Thou shalt not break thy vow of chastity.
- 4 Thou shalt not lie.
- 5 Thou shalt not betray the secrets of others.
- 6 Thou shalt not wish for the death of thy enemies.
- 7 Thou shalt not desire the wealth of others.
- 8 Thou shalt not pronounce injurious and foul words.
- 9 Thou shalt not indulge in luxury (sleep on soft beds or be lazy).
- 10 Thou shalt not accept gold or silver.²

“Good master, what shall I do that I may have eternal life?” asks a man of Jesus. “Keep the commandments.” “Which?” “Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,”³ is the answer.

“What shall I do to obtain possession of Bhodi?” [knowledge of eternal truth], asks a disciple of his Buddhist master. “What way is there to become an Upāsaka?” “Keep

¹ *Manu* Bk. VI, ślokas 92-93

² *Pratimoksha-Sūtra*, Pāli Burmese copy; see also *Le Lotus de la Bonne Loi*, translated by Burnouf, p. 444.

³ *Matthew* xix, 16-18

the commandments.” “What are they?” “Thou shalt abstain all thy life from murder, theft, adultery, and lying,” answers the master.¹

Identical injunctions are they not? Divine injunctions, the living up to which would purify and exalt humanity. But are they more divine when uttered through one mouth than another? If it is godlike to return good for evil, does the enunciation of the precept by a Nazarene give it any greater force than its enunciation by an Indian, or Thibetan philosopher? We see that the Golden Rule was not original with Jesus; that its birthplace was India. Do what we may, we cannot deny Śākya-Muni Buddha a less remote antiquity than several centuries before the birth of Jesus. In seeking a model for his system of ethics why should Jesus have gone to the foot of the Himālayas rather than to the foot of Sinai, but that the doctrines of Manu and Gautama harmonized exactly with his own philosophy, while those of Jehovah were to him abhorrent and terrifying? The Hindus taught to return *good for evil*, but the Jehovahistic command was: “An eye for an eye” and “a tooth for a tooth.”²

No one who has not practiced during his whole life the ten virtues, which Manu makes incumbent as a duty, can be initiated into the Mysteries.

Unable to deny the evident superiority of their enemies’ powers, the fathers had recourse to the old but ever successful method — that of slander. They honoured the theurgists with the same insinuating calumny that had been resorted to by the Pharisees against Jesus. “Thou hast a daemon,” the elders of the Jewish Synagogue had said to him. “Thou hast the Devil,” repeated the cunning fathers, with equal truth, addressing the Pagan thaumaturgist; and the widely bruited charge, erected later into an article of faith, won the day.

But the modern heirs of these ecclesiastical falsifiers, who charge magic, spiritualism, and even magnetism with being produced by a demon, forget or perhaps never read the classics. None of our bigots has ever looked with more scorn on the *abuses* of magic than did the true initiate of old. No modern or even mediæval law could be more severe than that of the hierophant. True, he had more discrimination, charity, and justice, than the Christian clergy; for while banishing the “unconscious” sorcerer, the person troubled with a demon, from within the sacred precincts of the adyta, the priests, instead of mercilessly burning him, took care of the unfortunate “possessed one.” Having hospitals expressly for that purpose in the neighbourhood of temples, the ancient “medium,” if obsessed, was taken care of and restored to health. But with one who had, by conscious *witchcraft*, acquired powers dangerous to his fellow-creatures, the priests of old were as severe as justice herself. “Any person *accidentally* guilty of homicide, or of any crime, or convicted of *witchcraft*, was excluded” from the Eleusinian Mysteries.³ And so were they from all others. This law, mentioned by all writers on the ancient initiation, speaks for itself. The claim of Augustine, that all the explanations given by the Neo-Platonists were invented by

¹ Pittakattayan, Bk. III, Pāli Version

² *Isis Unveiled*, II pp. 163-65

³ See Taylor’s *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, ed. by A. Wilder, p. 19 (4th ed.); also Porphyry and others. [Cf. compilation on the subject in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

themselves is absurd. For nearly every ceremony in their true and successive order is given by Plato himself, in a more or less covered way. The Mysteries are as old as the world, and one well versed in the esoteric mythologies of various nations can trace them back to the days of the ante-Vedic period in India. A condition of the strictest virtue and purity is required from the *Vatu*, or candidate in India before he can become an initiate, whether he aims to be a simple fakir, a *Purohita* (public priest) or a *Sannyāsin*, a saint of the second degree of initiation, the most holy as the most revered of them all. After having conquered, in the terrible trials preliminary to admittance to the inner temple in the subterranean crypts of his pagoda, the *sannyāsin* passes the rest of his life in the temple, practicing the eighty-four rules and ten virtues prescribed to the Yogis.

“No one who has not practiced, during his whole life, the ten virtues which the divine Manu makes incumbent as a duty, can be initiated into the Mysteries of the council,” say the Hindu books of initiation.

These virtues are:

Resignation; the act of rendering good for evil; temperance; probity; purity; chastity; repression of the physical senses; the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; that of the *Superior* soul [spirit]; worship of truth; abstinence from anger.¹

These virtues must alone direct the life of a true Yogi. “No unworthy adept ought to defile the ranks of the holy initiates by his presence for twenty-four hours.” The adept becomes guilty after having once broken any one of these vows. Surely the exercise of such virtues is inconsistent with the idea one has of *devil*-worship and lasciviousness of purpose!²

Our correspondent³ is too well read in Buddhist *Sutras* not to be aware of the existence of the esoteric system taught *precisely* in the *Yogāchāra* or the contemplative Mahayana schools. And in that system the hermit or yogi life, except for a few years of preliminary teaching, *is strongly objected to* and called SELFISHNESS. Witness Buddha in those superb pages of *Light of Asia*⁴ when arguing with and reprimanding the self-torturing Yogis, whom, “sadly eyeing,” the Lord asks:

Wherefore add ye ills to life
Which is so evil?

When told in answer that they stake brief agonies to gain the larger joys of Nirvana, what does He say? This:

Yet if they last
A myriad years . . . they fade at length,
Those joys . . . Speak! Do your Gods endure
For ever, brothers?

¹ [Manu VI, śloka 92-93]

² *Isis Unveiled*, II pp. 97-98

³ [Hübbe-Schleiden]

⁴ Book the Fifth; [full text in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

“Nay,” the Yogis said,
“Only great Brahm endures; the Gods but live.”

Now if our correspondent understood as he should, these lines rendered in blank verse, yet word for word as in the *Sutras*, he would have a better idea of the esoteric teaching than he now has; and, having understood it, he would not oppose what we said; for not only was self-torture, selfish solitude, and life in the jungle simply for one’s own salvation condemned in the *Mahayana* (in the real esoteric system, not the mutilated translations he reads) but even *renunciation of Nirvana for the sake of mankind* is preached therein.¹ One of its fundamental laws is, that ordinary morality is insufficient to deliver one from rebirth; one has to practice the six Pāramitās or cardinal virtues for it:

- 1 Charity
- 2 Chastity
- 3 Patience
- 4 Industry
- 5 Meditation
- 6 Ingenuousness (or openness of heart, sincerity).

And how can a *hermit* practice charity or industry if he runs away from man? Bodhisattvas, who, having fulfilled all the conditions of Buddhahood, have the right to forthwith enter Nirvana, prefer instead, out of unlimited pity for the suffering ignorant world, to renounce this state of bliss and become *Nirmānakāyas*. They don the *Sambhogakāya* (the invisible body) in order to serve mankind, *i.e.*, to *live a sentient life after death* and suffer immensely at the sight of human miseries (most of which, being Karmic, they are not at liberty to relieve) for the sake of having a chance of inspiring a few with the desire of learning the truth and thus saving themselves. (By the by, all that Schlagintweit and others have written about the *Nirmānakāya* body is erroneous.) Such is the true meaning of the Mahayana teaching. “I believe that not all the Buddhas enter Nirvana,” says, among other things, the disciple of the Mahayana school in his address to “the Buddhas (or Bodhisattvas) of confession” — referring to this secret teaching.²

¹ [See “Compassion the Spirit of Truth,” 2nd ed. of 2009, Ch. 9, in our Major Works Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (WORLD IMPROVEMENT OR WORLD DELIVERANCE) XI p. 347 *fn. et seq.*

Appendix B. On Bodhisattvic development

From *The Voice of the Silence*, frag. III (THE SEVEN PORTALS) vs. 206-20 pp. 47-49; [full text in the same series.]

- 206 Thou seest well, Lanoo. These Portals lead the aspirant across the waters on “to the other shore.” Each Portal hath a golden key that openeth its gate; and these keys are:
- 1 DĀNA, the key of charity and love immortal.¹
 - 2 SHĪLA, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action.²
 - 3 KSHANTI, patience sweet, that nought can ruffle.
 - 4 VIRAG’, indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived.
 - 5 VIRYA, the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal TRUTH, out of the mire of lies terrestrial.
 - 6 DHYĀNA, whose golden gate once opened leads the Narjol³ toward the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation.⁴
 - 7 PRAJÑĀ, the key to which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyānis.
- 214 Such to the Portals are the golden keys.
- 215 Before thou canst approach the last, O weaver of thy freedom, thou hast to master these Pāramitās of perfection — the virtues transcendental six and ten in number — along the weary Path.
- 216 For, O Disciple! Before thou wert made fit to [49] meet thy Teacher face to face, thy MASTER light to light, what wert thou told?
- 217 Before thou canst approach the foremost gate thou hast to learn to part thy body from thy mind, to dissipate the shadow, and to live in the eternal. For this, thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in SELF.
- 218 Thou shalt not let thy senses make a playground of thy mind.

¹ [Almsgiving to mendicants, *lit.*, “charity,” the first of the six Pāramitās in Buddhism. *Theosophical Glossary*]

² [Perfect harmony in words and acts. *Theosophical Glossary*]

³ A saint, an adept.

⁴ [A state of abstraction which carries the ascetic practising it far above the region of sensuous perception, and out of the world of matter. *Lit.*, “contemplation.” The six stages of Dhyāna differ only in the degrees of abstraction of the personal Ego from sensuous life. *Theosophical Glossary*]

- 219 Thou shalt not separate thy being from BEING, and the rest, but merge the Ocean in the drop, the drop within the Ocean.
- 220 So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother.

Letter to the Esotericists.

As one sees the blemishes of his face by looking in a mirror, so has the mere holding up to you of the shining image of the true and advanced Esotericists revealed to the earnest among you your own imperfections. The disclosure is so impressive that some of the best of the members of the E.S. have, with undue precipitancy, wanted to sever their connection and leap out of the “path.” They knew not that if among them there was one who embodied in himself the ideal depicted it would be my duty to relinquish the Teacher’s chair to him. For it would be the extreme of audacity in me to claim the possession of so many virtues. That the *Masters* do, in proportion to their respective temperaments, at stages of *Bodhisattvic* development possess such *Pāramitās*,¹ constitutes their right to our reverence as our Teachers. It should be the aim of each and all of us to strive with all the intensity of our natures to follow and imitate them.

Take back your resignations, then, you sincere ones, who dazzled by the ideal held up to you in the Master’s letter, and stung by your sense of imperfection, have adopted the wrong expedient of retiring. This is the reverse of bravery. Try to realize that progress is made step by step, and each step gained by heroic effort. Withdrawal means despair or timidity. “No Arhan, O Lanoo, becomes one in that birth when for the first the Soul begins to long for final liberation.”² Read those words and remember them. “And if he falls, e’en then he does not fall in vain; the enemies he slew in the last battle will not return to life in the next birth that will be his.”³ Conquered passions, like slain tigers, can no longer turn and rend you. Be hopeful, then, not despairing. With each morning’s awakening try to live through the day in harmony with the *Higher Self*. “Try” is the battle-cry taught by the Teachers to each pupil. Naught else is expected of you. *One who does his best does all that can be asked.* There is a moment when even a Buddha ceases to be a sinning mortal and takes his first step toward Buddhahood.

So, then, to answer plain questions put to me in several letters by frightened Esotericists, I say that probably though not one of you may attain in this birth to this full ideal (of Buddhahood), yet each of you may begin to tread the “Āryāshtāṅga-Mārga.”⁴ Afraid of *Pāramitās*, are you? A man may be patient, kind and conscientious, without becoming at once a King Hariśchandra.⁵ “The sixteen *Pāramitās* are not for priests and yogis alone,” as said, but stand for models for all to strive after; and neither

¹ [*Pāramitās* are the transcendental virtues. — *W.Q. Judge.*]

² *Voice of the Silence*, p. 39

³ *ibid.*, p. 40

⁴ [*Noble Eightfold Path.* — *Boris de Zirkoff.*]

⁵ [Thirty-sixth King of the Solar Dynasty, paragon of devotion to truth and the ideal life, renowned for his proverbial patience.]

priest nor yogi, chela nor Mahātma, ever attained all, at once. Again, the idea that sinners and saints are expected to enter the *Path* is emphatically stated in *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 40, where it is said that

“not one recruit can ever be refused the right to enter on the path that leads toward the field of battle.”

Read the “*Voice*,” I say. It was written for, and dedicated to you, by Masters’ special orders. Therein you will find all your inquiries anticipated and answered.

Yours fraternally,

H. P. B.¹

Ah, friends, brothers, and many of you beloved co-workers, indeed, *indeed* little do you know of the eternal, unchangeable conditions of soul-development, and chiefly of the inexorable occult laws! Believe the Teacher from whose letter I quote, if you will not believe me, that:

Though such a person with any of the faults as above declared should fill the world with his charities, and make his name known throughout every nation, he would make no advancement in the practical occult sciences, but be continually slipping backward. The “six and ten transcendental virtues,” the Pāramitās, are not for full-grown yogis and priests alone, but for all those who would enter the “Path.”

If, explaining this, I add that gentle kindness to all beings, strict honesty (not according to the world-code, but that of Karmic action), virtuous habits, strict truthfulness, and temperance in all things; that these alone are the keys that unlock the doors of earthly happiness and blissful peace of mind, and that fit the man of flesh to evolve into the perfect Spirit-Ego — many of you will feel inclined, I fear, to mock me for saying this. You may think that I am carrying coals to Newcastle, and that each of you knows this, at least, as well as I do. You may remark, perhaps, that I am taking my rôle of “teacher” on a too high tone altogether, regarding and treating you, grown up, intelligent men and women, as I would little school-boys and girls. And some of you may indulge in the thought that it is useless for me to be teaching you to be “goody-goody” instead of going on with my *Instructions* and give you explanations about “that occult jumble of colour and sound, and their respective relations to the human principles,” as some *have* already complained. But I say again, if you are ignorant of the real occult value of even such trite truths as are contained in my “grandmother’s sermon,” how can you hope to understand the science which you are studying? Can an electrician, however well familiarized with the electric fluid and its variable currents, apply them to himself, or the body of any living man unless he knows human anatomy and is a good physician at the same time, without risking to kill his patient or himself? What is the good of knowing all about the occult relations between the forces of nature and the human principles if, by remaining deliberately

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INTRODUCTION) XII pp. 504-5

ignorant of SELF, we remain thereby as ignorant of what does or what does *not* affect each distinct principle? Are you aware that by starving, so to speak, one principle or even centre, at the expense of another principle or centre, we may lose the former and injure hopelessly the latter? That by forcing our Higher *Ego* (not Self, mind you) to remain inactive and silent, which is easily achieved by overfeeding the lower *Manas* ever gravitating down to *Kāma-rūpa*, we risk utter annihilation of our present personality?¹

Now to say that Buddha, after having reached Nirvāna, returned thence to reincarnate in a new body, would be uttering a heresy from the Brāhmanical, as well as from the Buddhistic standpoint. Even in the Mahāyāna exoteric School, in the teaching as to the three “Buddhic” bodies, it is said of the Dharmakāya — the ideal formless Being — that once it is taken, the Buddha in it abandons the world of sensuous perceptions for ever, and has not, nor can he have, any more connection with it. To say, as the Esoteric or Mystic School teaches, that though Buddha is in Nirvāna he has left behind him the Nirmānakāya (the Bodhisattva) to work after him, is quite orthodox and in accordance with both the Esoteric Mahāyāna and the Prasanga Mādhyamika Schools, the latter an anti-esoteric and most rationalistic system.

The three [Buddhic] bodies are the

- 1 Nirmānakāya (Tul-pa'i-Ku in Tibetan), in which the Bodhisattva after entering by the six Pāramitās [generosity, virtue, patience, vigour, meditation & wisdom] the Path to Nirvāna, appears to men in order to teach them;
- 2 Sambhogakāya (Dzog-pa'i-Ku), the body of bliss impervious to all physical sensations, received by one who has fulfilled the three conditions of moral perfection; and
- 3 Dharmakāya (in Tibetan, Cho-Ku), the Nirvānic body.^{2, 3}



¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. III) XII pp. 597-98; [cf. “Woe for the living dead” in our Constitution of Man Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [Cf. *Voice of the Silence*, pp. 95-97; and Hui Neng’s *Platform Sūtra*, ch. 6.]

³ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE MYSTERY OF BUDDHA) XIV pp. 391-92 & fn.