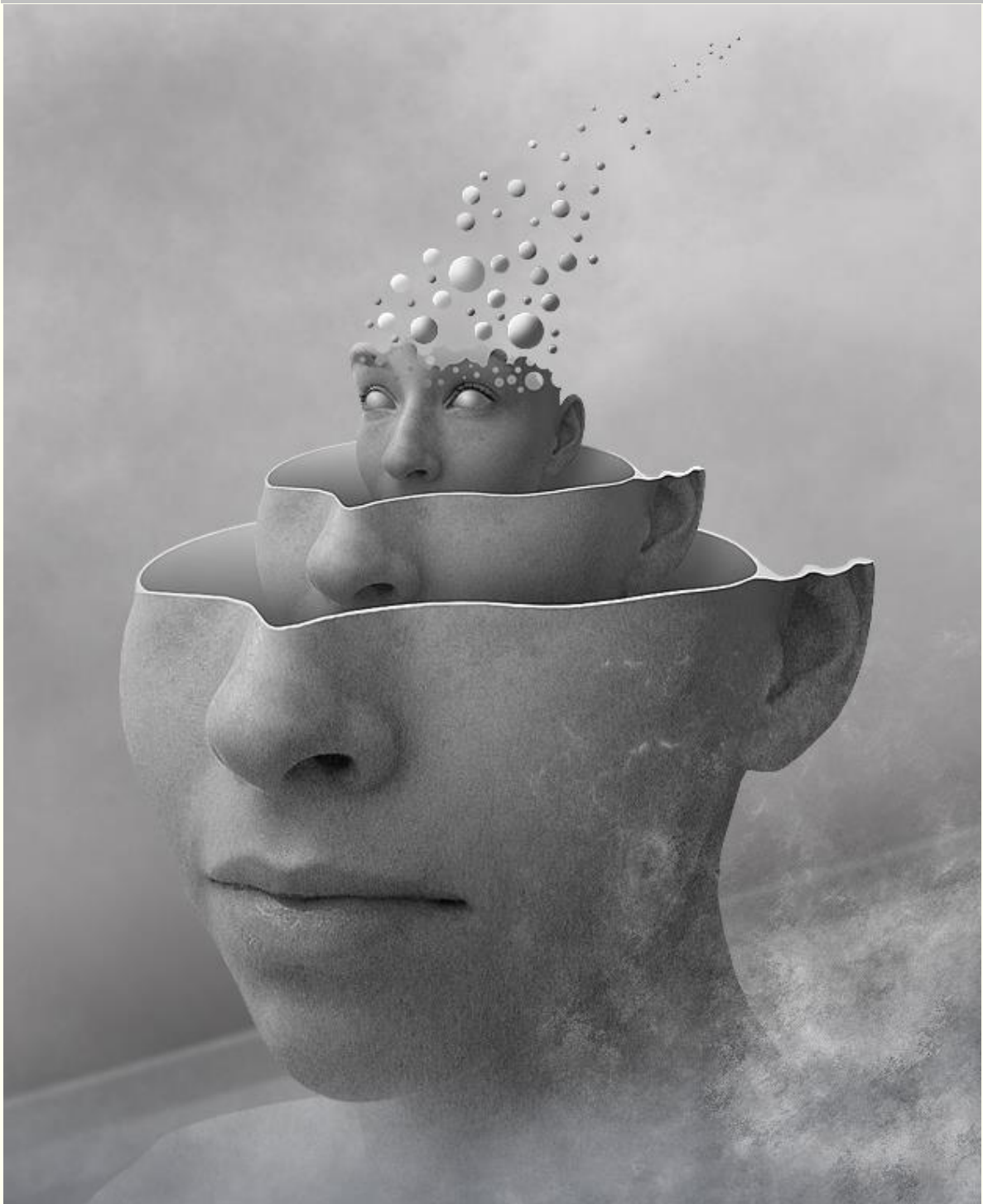


*A Master of Wisdom
on death and recollection
of our previous lives on earth*



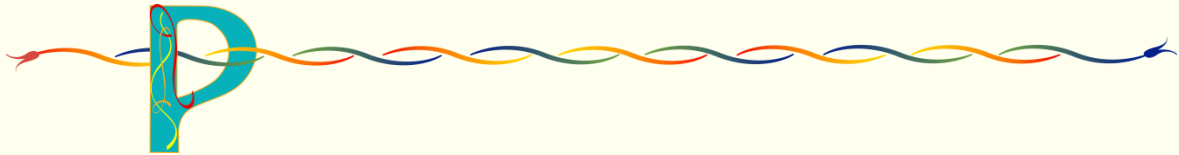
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¹ Frontispiece illustration, by Leo Patzelt. Illustration of page 7, by Liliana Muñoz.

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A trans-Himalayan Master on death and recollection of previous lives

Selections from A.T. Barker (*Transc. & Comp.*), edited by C. Humphreys & E. Benjamin. *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett from the Mahatmas M. & K.H.* (1st ed. 1923). Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1962 (3rd ed.) [Combined ed.]¹

Questions 15-29 from A.P. Sinnett to Master K.H., in: Mahatma Letter 23a (93a) pp. 143-45; 3rd Combined ed. Received at Śimla: October, 1882.

Answers from Master K.H. to A.P. Sinnett, in: Mahatma Letter 23b (93b) pp. 166-74; 3rd Combined ed.

Question 15

When you wrote “Have you experienced monotony during that moment which you considered then and now so consider it — as the moment of the highest bliss you have ever felt?” . . .

No, good friend; I am not as indiscreet as all that, I left you simply to your own reminiscences. Every mortal creature, even the less favoured by Fortune, has such moments of relative happiness at some time of his life. Why shouldn't you?

. . . Did you refer to any specific moment and any specific event in my life, or were you merely referring to an X quantity — the happiest moment whatever it might have been?

Yes, it was an X quantity I referred to.



Question 16

You say: “Remember we create ourselves, our Devachan and our Avīchi, and mostly during the latter days and even moments of our sentient lives.”

It is a widely spread belief among all the Hindus that a person's future pre-natal state and birth are moulded by the last desire he may have at the time of death. But this last desire, they say, necessarily hinges on to the shape which the person may have given to his desires, passions, etc., during his past life. It is for this very reason, *viz.* — that our last desire may not be unfavourable to our future progress — that we have to watch our actions and control our passions and desires throughout our whole earthly career.

¹ [Throughout our study notes, the *Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* are cited by two numbers: the first, corresponds to the “combined edition” of A.T. Barker, edited by C. Humphreys & E. Benjamin (1st ed. 1923); 3rd ed., Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1962. The second number (in parentheses), refers to the “Chronological edition,” as arranged and edited by V.H. Chin Jr. Quezon City: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993. — ED. PHIL.]

Question 17

But do the thoughts on which the mind may be engaged at the last moment *necessarily* hinge on to the predominant character of its past life? Otherwise it would seem as if the character of a person's Devachan or Avīchi might be capriciously and unjustly determined by the chance which brought some special thought uppermost at last?

No man dies insane or unconscious, as some physiologists assert. Even a madman, or one in a fit of delirium tremens, will enjoy perfect lucidity at the moment of death, though unable to say so to those present. A man may often appear dead, yet from the last throbbing of his heart, and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body, the brain thinks and the Ego lives over his whole life over again.

Speak in whispers, ye, who assist at a death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Keep quiet just after Death has laid her¹ clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of Past casting its reflection upon the Veil of Future.

It cannot be otherwise. The experience of dying men — by drowning and other accidents — brought back to life, has corroborated our doctrine in almost every case. Such thoughts are *involuntary* and we have no more control over them than we would over the eye's retina to prevent it perceiving that colour which affects it most. At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners picture after picture, one event after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse, and memory restores faithfully every impression entrusted to it during the period of the brain's activity. That impression and thought which was the strongest naturally becomes the most vivid and survives so to say all the rest which now vanish and disappear for ever, to reappear but in Devachan.² No man dies insane or unconscious — as some physiologists assert. Even a madman, or one in a fit of delirium tremens will have his instant of perfect lucidity at the moment of death, though unable to say so to those present. The man may often appear dead. Yet from the last pulsation, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body — the brain thinks and the Ego lives over in those few brief seconds his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye, who assist at a death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have you to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting its reflection upon the Veil of the Future.

¹ [in Greek mythology, death is a man; Thanatos, however, rarely appears in person. Instead, Persephone, a woman, is said to be the "bringer of death."]

² Good gracious! Had I forgotten in my hurry to add the last *five words*, would not I have caught it as a charge of *flat* contradiction!

Question 18

“The full remembrance of our lives will come but at the end of the *minor cycle*.”

Does “minor cycle” here mean one round, or the whole Manvantara of our planetary chain?

That is, do we remember our past lives in the Devachan of world Z at the end of each round, or only at the end of the seventh round?

At the end of the seventh Round, at the threshold of the long Nirvana that awaits us after we leave Globe Z, we will remember our collective lives on earth.

Irretrievably bad must be that Ego that yields no mite from its fifth Principle, and has to be annihilated in the Eighth Sphere.

Yes; the “full” remembrance of our lives (*collective lives*) will return back at the end of *all the seven Rounds*, at the threshold of the long, long Nirvana that awaits us after we leave Globe Z. At the end of isolated Rounds, we remember but the sum total of our last impressions, those we had selected, or that have rather forced themselves upon us and followed us in *Devachan*. Those are all “probationary” lives with large indulgences and new trials afforded us with every new life. But at the close of the minor cycle, after the completion of all the seven Rounds, there awaits *us no other* mercy but the cup of good deeds, of *merit*, outweighing that of *evil* deeds and *demerit* in the scales of Retributive Justice. Bad, irretrievably bad, must be that Ego *that* yields no mite from its fifth Principle, and *has* to be annihilated, to disappear in the *Eighth Sphere*. A mite, as I say, collected from the Personal Ego suffices to save him from the dreary Fate. Not so after the completion of the great cycle; either a long Nirvana of Bliss (unconscious though it be in, and according to, your crude conceptions); after which — life as a Dhyāni-Chohan for a whole Manvantara, or else “*Avīchi Nirvana*” and a Manvantara of misery and Horror as a — *you must not* hear the word nor I — pronounce or write it. But “those” have nought to do with the mortals who pass through the seven spheres. The *collective Karma* of a future Planetary is as lovely as the *collective Karma* of a * * * * is terrible. Enough. I have said too much already.



Question 19

You say: “And even the shells of those good men whose pages will not be found missing in the great book of lives — even they will regain their remembrance and an appearance of self-consciousness only after the sixth and seventh principles with the essence of the fifth have gone to their gestation period.”

And even the shells of those good men, whose pages will not be found missing in the great book of lives, will regain their remembrance and self-consciousness after the sixth and seventh principles, enriched with the essence of the fifth, have gone to their gestation period.

Verily so. Until the struggle between the higher and middle duad begins — *with the exception of suicides who are not dead but have only killed their physical triad, and whose Elemental parasites, therefore, are not naturally separated from the Ego as in real death* — until that struggle, I say, has begun and ended, no shell can realize its position. When the sixth and seventh principles are gone, carrying off with them the finer, spiritual portions of that which once was the *personal* consciousness of the fifth, then only does the shell gradually develop a kind of hazy consciousness of its own from what remains in the shadow of personality. No contradiction here, my dear friend — only haziness in your own perceptions.



Question 20

A little later on: “Whether the personal Ego was good, bad or indifferent, his consciousness leaves him as suddenly as the flame leaves the wick — *his perceptive faculties* become extinct for ever.”

Well? can a physical brain *once dead* retain its perceptive faculties: that which will perceive in the *shell* is something that perceives with a borrowed or reflected light. See notes.

Then what is the nature of the remembrance and self-consciousness of the shell? This touches on a matter I have often thought about — wishing for further explanation — the extent of personal identity in elementaries.

The flame has left that candle forever; but are the particles that moved, their motion producing the objective flame, annihilated or dispersed for all that? Never. Relight the candle, and the same particles drawn by mutual affinity will return to the wick.

Memory is one thing, and perceptive faculties quite another. A madman may remember very clearly some portions of his past life; yet he is unable to perceive anything in its true light because the higher portion of his Manas and Buddhi are paralysed in him. That which will “perceive” in the shell is something that perceives with a borrowed or reflected light.

All that which pertains to the materio-psychological attributes and sensations of the five lower skandhas; all that which will be thrown off as refuse by the newly born Ego in the Devachan, as unworthy of, and not sufficiently related to the *purely* spiritual perceptions, emotions and feelings of the sixth, strengthened, and so to say, *cemented* by a portion of the fifth, that portion which is necessary in the Devachan for the retention of a divine spiritualized notion of the “I” in the *Monad* — which would otherwise have no consciousness in relation to object and subject at all — all this “becomes *extinct for ever*,” namely at the moment of physical death, to return once more, marshalling before the eye of the new Ego at the threshold of Devachan and to be rejected by It. It will return for the *third* time *fully* at the end of the minor cycle, after the completion of the seven Rounds when the *sum total* of collective existences is weighed — “merit” in one cup, “demerit” in the other cup of the scales. But in that individual, in the Ego — “good, bad, or indifferent” in the isolated *personality* — consciousness leaves as suddenly as “the flame leaves the wick.” Blow out your candle, good friend. The flame has left that candle “for ever”; but are the particles that moved, their motion producing the *objective* flame annihilated or dispersed for all that? *Never*. Relight the candle and the same particles drawn by mutual affinity will return to the wick. Place a long row of candles on your table. Light one and blow it out; then light the other and do the same; a third and fourth, and so on. The same matter, the same gaseous particles — representing in our case the *Karma* of the personality — will be called forth by the conditions given them by your match, to produce a new luminosity; but can we say that candle No. 1 has not had its flame extinct for ever? Not even in the case of the “failures of nature,” of the *immediate* rein-

carnation of children and congenital idiots, etc., that so provoked the wrath of C.C.M.,¹ can we call them the *identical* ex-personalities; *though the whole of the same life-principle and identically the same* MANAS (fifth principle) *re-enters a new body* and may be truly called a “reincarnation of the *personality*” — whereas, in the rebirth of the Egos from *devachans* and *awitchis* into Karmic life it is only the spiritual attributes of the Monad and its Buddhi that are reborn. All we can say of the re-incarnated “failures” is that they are the reincarnated *Manas*, the fifth principle of Mr. Smith or Miss Grey, but certainly not that these are the reincarnations of Mr. S. and Miss G. Therefore, the explanation, clear and concise (though perhaps less literary than you might make it) given to C.C.M. in *The Theosophist* in answer to his spiteful hit in *Light*,² is not only correct but *candid* also; and both yourself and C.C.M. were unjust to Upāsika³ and even to myself who told her what to write; since even *you* mistook my wail and lament at the confused and tortured explanations in *Isis* (for its *incompleteness* no one but we, her inspirers, are responsible) and my complaint of having had to exercise all my “ingenuity” to make the thing plain, for an avowal of *ingeniousness* in the sense of cunning and craft, whereas *ingenuousness* — a sincere desire (though very difficult of realization) to mend and clear up the misconception — was meant by me. I do not know of anything since the very beginning of our correspondence that displeased *the Chohan* so much as that. But we must not return to the subject again.

Personal consciousness does always vanish at death; and when the centre of memory is re-established in the shell, it will remember and speak out its recollections but through the brain of some living human being.

But what is then “the nature of the remembrance and self-consciousness of the shell?” you ask. As I said in your note — no better than a reflected or borrowed light. “Memory” is one thing, and “perceptive faculties” quite another. A madman may remember very clearly some portions of his past life; yet he is unable to perceive anything in its true light for the higher portion of his *Manas* and his *Buddhi* are paralysed in him, have left him.⁴ Could an animal — a dog, for instance — speak, he would prove [to] you that his memory in direct relation to his canine personality is as fresh as yours; nevertheless his memory and instinct cannot be called “perceptive faculties.” A dog remembers that his master thrashed him when the latter gets hold of his stick — at all other times he has no remembrance of it. Thus with a shell; once in the aura of a medium, all he perceives through the borrowed organs of the medium and of those in magnetic sympathy with the latter, he will perceive very clearly — but *not further* than what the shell can find in the perceptive faculties and memories of *circle* and medium — hence often the rational and at times highly intelligent answers; hence also a complete oblivion of things known to all but that medium and

¹ [Charles Carlton Massey, 1838–1905, British barrister, Christian mystic, psychical researcher, founder and first president of the Theosophical Society in England, also a co-founder of the Psychical Research Society. After the Hogson Report, in which H.P. Blavatsky was described “as one of the most accomplished, ingenious, and interesting impostors in history,” Massey resigned from the Theosophical Society.]

² [Consult “Madame Blavatsky against Spiritualism,” in our Blavatsky Speaks Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ [H.P. Blavatsky]

⁴ [Consult “Woe for the living Dead,” in our Constitution of Man Series. — ED. PHIL.]

circle. The shell of a highly intelligent, learned, but utterly unspiritual man who died a natural death, will last longer, and the *shadow* of his own memory helping — that shadow which is the refuse of the sixth principle left in the fifth — he may deliver discourses through trance speakers and repeat parrot like that which he knew of and thought much over it, during his life-time. But find me *one single* instance in the annals of Spiritualism where a returning shell of a Faraday or a Brewster (for even they were made to fall into the trap of mediumistic attraction) said one word more than it knew during its life-time. Where is that scientific shell, that ever gave evidence of that which is claimed on behalf of the “disembodied *Spirit*” — namely, that a free Soul, the Spirit disenthralled from its body’s fetters perceives and sees that which is concealed from living mortal eyes? Challenge the Spiritualists fearlessly, I say! Defy the best, the most reliable of mediums — Stainton Moses¹ for one — to give you through that high disembodied shell, that he mistakes for the “Imperator” of the early days of his mediumship, to tell you what you will have hidden in your box, if S.M. does not know it; or to repeat to you a line from a Sanskrit manuscript unknown to his medium, or anything of that kind. *Pro pudore!*² *Spirits* they call them? Spirits with *personal* remembrances? As well call personal remembrances the sentences screeched out by a parrot. Why don’t you ask C.C.M. to test + ? Why not settle his and your mind at rest by suggesting to him to ask a friend or an acquaintance *unknown* to S.M. to select an object the nature of which will remain in its turn unknown to C.C.M., and then see whether + will be able to name that object — something possible even to a good clairvoyant. Let the “Spirit” of Zöllner — now that he is in the “fourth dimension of space,” and has put up an appearance already with several mediums — tell them the last word of his discovery, complete his astro-physical philosophy. No; Zöllner when lecturing through an intelligent medium, surrounded with persons who read his works, are interested in them — will repeat on various tones that which is known to others (not even that which *he alone* knew, most probably), the credulous, ignorant public confounding the *post-hoc*³ with the *propter-hoc*⁴ and firmly convinced of the *Spirit’s* identity. Indeed, it will be worth your while to stimulate investigation in this direction. yes; personal consciousness does leave everyone at death; and when even the centre of memory is re-established in the shell, it will remember and speak out its recollections but through the brain of some *living* human being. Hence . . .



¹ [William Stainton Moses, 1839–1892, English cleric and spiritualist medium, often writing under the pen name of M.A. Oxon, guided by a spirit called “Imperator.” He was a member of the Spiritualist Group in England, as well as of The Theosophical Society, but he estranged himself from the latter.]

² [For shame! Cf. *Sed ego adolescentulus initio sicuti plerique studio ad rem publicam latus sum, ibique mihi multa adversa fuere. Nam pro pudore, pro abstinentia, pro virtute, audacia, largitio, avaritia vigeabant.* (Sallust, *Belum Catilinæ*, Ch. II, § 3-6)

I myself, however, when a young man, was at first led by inclination, like most others, to engage in political affairs; but in that pursuit many circumstances were unfavourable to me; for, instead of modesty, temperance, and integrity, there prevailed shamelessness, corruption, and greed. — *tr.* Watson]

³ [after the event]

⁴ [because of this]

Question 21

The spiritual Ego goes circling through the worlds, retaining what it possesses of identity and self-consciousness, always neither more nor less.

- 1 But it is continually evolving personalities, in which at all events the sense of identity while it remains united with them is very complete.
- 2 Now these personalities I understand to be absolutely new evolutions in each case. A.P. Sinnett is, for what it is worth — absolutely a new invention. Now it will leave a shell behind which will survive for a time
- 3 Assuming that the spiritual monad temporarily engaged in this incarnation will find enough decent material in the fifth to lay hold of.
- 4 That shell will have no consciousness directly after death, because “it requires a certain time to establish its new centre of gravity and evolve its perception proper.”
- 5 But how much consciousness will it have when it has done this?
- 6 Will it still be A.P. Sinnett of which the spiritual Ego will think, even at the last, as of a person it had known — or will it be conscious that the individuality is gone? Will it be able to reason about itself at all, and to remember anything of its once higher interests. Will it remember the name it bore?
- 7 Or is it only inflated with recollections of this sort in mediumistic presence, remaining asleep at other times?
- 8 And is it conscious of losing anything that feels like life as it gradually disintegrates?

. . . A more or less complete, still dim recollection of its personality, and of its purely *physical* life. As in the cases of complete insanity the final severance of the two higher duads (7th – 6th and 5th – 4th) at the moment of the former going into gestation, digs an impassable gulf between the two. It is not even a portion of the fifth that is carried away — least of all 2^{1/2} principles as Mr. Hume¹ crudely puts it in his *Fragments* — that go into Devachan leaving but 1^{1/2} principles behind. The *Manas* shorn of its finest attributes, becomes like a flower from which all the aroma has suddenly departed, a rose crushed, and having been made to yield all its oil for the *attar*² manufacture purposes; what is left behind is but the smell of decaying grass, earth and rotteness.

- 1 Question the second is sufficiently answered, I believe. (Your second para.) The *Spiritual Ego* goes on evolving personalities, in which “the sense of identity” is *very complete* while living. After their separation from the *physical Ego*, that sense returns very dim, and belongs wholly to the recollections of the *physical*

¹ [Allan Octavian Hume, 1829–1912, member of the Imperial Civil Service in British India, political reformer, ornithologist, and botanist. He was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, a party that led the Indian Independence Movement (1857–1947). Hume was an early Theosophist and the recipient of some letters from Mahatmas K.H. and M.]

² [essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers]

man. The shell may be a perfect Sinnett when wholly engrossed in a game of cards at his club, and when either losing or winning a large sum of money — or a Babu Smut Murky Dass trying to cheat his principal out of a sum of rupees. In both cases — ex-editor and Babu will, as shells, remind anyone who will have the privilege of enjoying an hour's chat with the illustrious disembodied angels, more of the inmates of a lunatic asylum made to play parts in private theatricals as means of hygienic recreation, than of the Cæsars and Hamlets they would represent. The slightest shock will throw them off the track and send them off raving.

- 2 An error. A.P. Sinnett is *not* “an absolutely *new* invention.” He is the child and creation of his antecedent personal self; the *Karmic* progeny, for all he knows, of Nonius Asprenas, Consul of the Emperor Domitian — (94 A.D.) together with Arricinius Clemens, and friend of the *Flamen Dialis* of that day (the high priest of Jupiter and chief of the *Flaminis*) or of that *Flamen*¹ himself — which would account for A.P. Sinnett's suddenly developed love for mysticism. A.P.S., the friend and brother of K.H., will go to *Devachan*; and A.P.S., the Editor and the lawn-tennis man, the Don Juan, in a *mild* way, in the palmy days of “Saints, Sinners and Sceneries,” identifying himself by mentioning a usually covered mole or scar — will, perhaps, be abusing the Babus² through a medium to some old friend in California or London.
- 3 It *will* find “enough decent material” and to spare. A few years of Theosophy will furnish it.
- 4 Perfectly correctly defined.
- 5 As much as there is of the *personality* — in A.P.S.'s reflection in the looking glass — of the real, living A.P.S.
- 6 The Spiritual Ego will not think of the A.P.S. *the shell*, any more than it will think of the last suit of clothes it wore; nor will it be conscious that the individuality is gone, since the only *individuality* and *Spiritual personality* it will then behold [will be] in itself alone. *Nosce te ipsum*³ is a direct command of the oracle to the *Spiritual monad* in *Devachan*; and the “heresy of Individuality” is a doctrine propounded by *Tathāgata* with an eye to the Shell. The latter, whose bumptiousness is as proverbial as that of the medium when reminded that it is A.P.S. — will echo out: “Of course, no doubt, hand me over some preserved peaches I devoured with such an appetite for breakfast, and a glass of claret!” — and who after this who knew A.P.S. at Allahabad, will dare doubt his identity? And, when left alone for one short instant by some disturbance in the circle, or the thought of the medium wandering for a moment to some other person — that shell will begin to hesitate in its *thoughts* whether it is A.P.S., S. Wheeler, or Ratigan; and end by assuring itself it is Julius Cæsar.
- 7 — and by finally “remaining asleep.”

¹ [Priest of Ancient Rome]

² [Hindi courtesy title equivalent to English Messrs.]

³ [Know Thyself]

8 No; it is not conscious of this loss of cohesion. Besides, such a feeling in a shell being quite useless for nature's purposes, it could hardly realize something that could be never even dreamed by a medium or its affinities. It is dimly conscious of its own physical death — after a prolonged period of time though — that's all. The few exceptions to this rule — cases of half successful sorcerers, of very wicked persons passionately attached to Self — offer a real danger to the living. These very material shells, whose last dying thought was Self, Self, Self — and to live, to live! will often feel it instinctively. So do some suicides — though not all. What happens then is terrible for it becomes a case of *post mortem* lycanthropy. The shell will cling so tenaciously to its semblance of life that it will seek refuge in a new organism in any beast — in a dog, a hyena, a bird when no human organism is close at hand — rather than submit to annihilation.



Question 22

What is the nature of the life that goes on in the “Planet of Death?” Is it a physical reincarnation with remembrance of past personality, or an astral existence as in Kama Loka? Is it an existence with birth, maturity and decay, or a uniform prolongation of the old personality of this earth under penal conditions?

A question I have no right to answer.



Question 23

What other planets of those known to ordinary science, besides Mercury, belong to our system of worlds?

Are the more spiritual planets — (A, B & Y, Z) — visible bodies in the sky or are all those known to astronomy of the more material sort?

Mars and four other planets of which astronomy knows yet nothing. Neither A, B, nor Y, Z, are known; nor can they be seen through physical means however perfected.



Question 24

Is the Sun (a) as Allan Kardec¹ says: a habitation of highly spiritualized beings?
(b) Is it the vertex of our Manvantaric chain? and of all the other chains in this solar system also?

(a) Most decidedly not. Not even a Dhyāni-Chohan of the lower orders could approach it without having its *body* consumed, or rather annihilated. Only the highest “Planetary” can scan it.

(b) Not unless we call it the vertex of an angle. But it is the vertex of all the “chains” collectively. All of us dwellers of the chains — we will have to evolve, live and run the up and down scale in that highest and last of the septenary chains (on the scale of perfection) before the Solar Pralaya snuffs out our little system.



Question 25

You say: It may happen “that the spiritual spoil from the fifth will prove too weak to be reborn in Devachan, in which case *its* sixth will then and there re-clothe itself in a new body — and enter upon a new earth existence, whether upon this or any other planet.”



Question 26

This seems to want further elucidation. Are these exceptional cases in which two earth lives of the same spiritual monad may occur closer together than the thousand years indicated by some previous letters as the most inevitable limit of such successive lives?

. . . “in which case *it*” — the “*it*” relates to the sixth and seventh principles, not to the fifth, for the *manas* will have to remain a shell in each case; only in the one in hand it will have no time to visit mediums: for it begins sinking down to the eighth sphere almost immediately. “Then and there” in the eternity may be a mighty long period. It means only that the monad having no *Karmic* body to guide its rebirth falls into *non-being* for a certain period and then reincarnates — certainly not earlier than a thousand or two thousand years.

No, it is not an “exceptional case.” Save a few exceptional cases in the case of the initiated such as our Teshu-Lamas and the Bodhisat was and a few others, no monad ever gets reincarnated before its appointed cycle.

¹ [Consult “The Perispirit of Allan Kardec,” in our Constitution of Man Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Question 27

The reference to the case of Guiteau is puzzling.¹ I can understand his being in a state in which the crime he committed is ever present to his imagination, but how does he “toss into confusion and shuffle the destinies of millions of persons?”

“How does he toss into confusion.” . . . If instead of doing today something you have to do you put it off till the next day — does not even this — invisibly and imperceptibly at first, yet as forcibly — throw into confusion many a thing, and in some cases even shuffle the destinies of millions of persons, for good, for evil, or simply in connection with a change — may be unimportant in itself — still a *change*? And do you mean to say that such an unexpected, horrid murder has not influenced the destinies of millions?



Question 28

Obscurations are a subject at present wrapped in obscurity.

They take place after the last man of any given round has passed on to the next planet. But I want to make out how the next superior round forms are evolved. When the fifth round spiritual monads arrive what fleshly habitations are ready for them? Going back to the only former letter in which you have dealt with obscurations I find:

(a) “We have traced man out of a round into the Nirvānic state between Z and A. A was left in the last round dead. [See note.] As the new round begins it catches the new influx of life, reawakens to vitality, and begets all its kingdoms of a superior order to the last.”

Here we are, again. Verily ever since I had the folly of touching upon this subject — *i.e.*, of harnessing the cart before the horse — my nights are bereft of their hitherto innocent sleep! For Heaven’s sake take into consideration the following facts and put them together, if you can.

- 1 The individual units of mankind remain 100 times longer in the transitory spheres of *effects* than on the globes;
- 2 The few men of the fifth Round do not beget children of the fifth but of your fourth Round.
- 3 That the “obscurations” are not *Pralayas*, and that they last in a proportion of 1 to 10, *i.e.*, if a Ring or whatever we call it, the period during which the seven

¹ [Charles Julius Guiteau, 1841–1882, American writer and lawyer, who assassinated United States President James A. Garfield on July 2nd, 1881. Guiteau falsely believed he had played a major role in Garfield’s victory, for which he should be rewarded with a consulship. He was so offended by the Garfield administration’s rejections of his applications to serve in Vienna or Paris that he decided to kill Garfield, and shot him at the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Station in Washington. President Garfield died two months later from infections related to his wounds. In January 1882 Guiteau was sentenced to death for the crime, and was hanged five months later.]

Root races have to develop and reach their last appearance upon a globe during *that* Round — lasts say 10 million of years (of course it lasts far longer), then the “obscuration” will last no longer than *one* million. When our globe having got rid of its last fourth Round men and a few, very few of the fifth, goes to sleep, during the period of its rest the fifth Round men will be resting in their Devachans and Spiritual lokas — far longer at any rate than the fourth Round “angels” in theirs since they are *far more perfect*. A contradiction, and a “*lapsus calami*¹ of M.” — says Hume; because M. wrote something quite correct though he is no more infallible than I am and might have expressed himself, more than once, very carelessly.

“I want to make out how the next superior Round forms are evolved.”

My friend, try to understand that you are putting me questions pertaining to the highest initiations. That I can give you a *general* view, but that I dare not nor will I enter upon details — though I would if I could satisfy you. Do not you feel that it is one of the *highest mysteries* than which there is no higher one?

(a) “Dead” but to resurrect in greater glory. Is not what I say, plain?



Question 29

But has it to begin at the beginning again between each round, and evolve human forms from animal, these last from vegetable, etc. If so to what round do the first imperfectly evolved men belong? *Ex hypothesi*² to the fifth; but the fifth should be a more perfect race in all respects.

At the seventh Round men will become gods; and animals, intelligent beings.

Of course not, since it is *not* destroyed, but remains crystallized, so to say — in *statu quo*. At each Round there are less and less animals — the latter themselves evolving into higher forms. During the first Round it is *they* that were the “kings of *creation*.” During the seventh men will have become *Gods*, and animals — intelligent beings. Draw your inferences. Beginning with the second Round, already evolution proceeds on quite a different plan. Everything is evolved and has but to proceed on its cyclic journey and get perfected. It is only [on] the first Round that man becomes from a human being on Globe B, a mineral, a plant, an animal on Planet C. The method changes entirely from the second Round; but — I have learned prudence with you; and *will say nothing* before the time for saying it has come. And now, you [have] had a volume; when will you digest it? Of how many contradictions will I have to be suspected before you understand the whole correctly?

¹ [slip of the pen]

² [According to the hypothesis proposed]



Globe
Z

Duration of each Round

Round 1	154,285,714
Round 2	308,571,428
Round 3	462,857,142
Round 4	617,142,856
Round 5	771,428,570
Round 6	925,714,284
Round 7	1,079,999,998
Total	4,319,999,992

(BCW XIII 303)



Globe
A



We are here! On Globe D,
Round 4, Root-Race 5, our
Beautiful Earth, fulcrum
of the Great Kalpa, with
its Seven Root-Races.

Globe
D

Globe
G



Impulses of Spiritual Consciousness evolve wave-like in a 7-fold pattern along a chain of 7 man-bearing Globes (i.e., Planets or Spheres) plus 5 arupa-loka or unmanifested, re-visiting each one 7 times. A single passage through every Globe is termed Planetary Round or Ring, in the course of which 49 Root-Races of Humanity emerge, each one progressing through 7 Sub-Races (see Diagram 2). Every Round repeats on a higher scale the evolutionary work of the preceding Round. (Cf. SD I 187)

Integrative Theosophical Studies
**OUR PLANETARY CHAIN
 OF SEVEN ROUNDS**
 Diagram cum Emblem
 After *The Divine Plan*, pp. 218, 342

A Day of Brahmā (Maha Brahmā) equal to 1,000 Maha Yugas, or 4,319,999,992 terrene years, followed by the Night of Brahmā, or Naimittika Maha Pralaya, of an equal duration. For an in-depth analysis of the Caduceus of the Spheres, see "Keys to the Mystery Language" in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series.

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 Revision 10.13

Suggested reading for students.



From The Masters Speak Series.

- EARLY FRAGMENTS OF ESOTERIC COSMOGONY
- MAHA CHOCHAN'S VIEW ON THE TS
- MAHATMA LETTER NO. 10
- MAHATMAS AND THEIR BODIES
- MASTER KH DEFENDS MADAME BLAVATSKY
- MASTER KH ET ALII ON INGRATITUDE
- MASTER KH ON HIGHER METAPHYSICS
- MASTER KH ON THE DIVINE SELF SEEN BY SELF
- MASTER KH ON THE PANORAMIC VISION AT DEATH
- MASTER M ON ATMAN AND BRAVE SOLDIERS
- MASTER M ON THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES
- PEARLS OF WISDOM FROM A MASTER OF WISDOM
- THE EUROPEAN HISTORY IS ENTIRELY AT SEA
- THE INFLUENCE OF GEOMAGNETISM ON WEATHER AND MAN
- THE MIGHTY POTENCY AND NOBLE AIM OF THE PROGRESSIVE MIND
- THE OLDEST ARMENIAN MONASTERY





- DEATH AND IMMORTALITY
- DEATH AND POST-MORTEM STATES
- DEATH HAS NO TERRORS
- ELIPHAS LEVI ON DEATH AND SATAN
- LÉVI ON DEATH BEING THE BIRTH-PANG OF LIFE
- TIBETAN TEACHINGS ON AFTER-DEATH STATES
— *in our Constitution of Man Series.*
- JULIAN AND SOCRATES WERE PUT TO DEATH FOR THE SAME CRIME”
— *in our Buddhas and Initiates Series.*

