

LECTURE ON THEOSOPHY.

William Q. Judge, of New York, a prominent Theosophist, who has been identified with the society from its organization—sixteen years ago—until the present, delivered a lecture on the subject of Theosophy at the Metropolitan Hotel last night. The society has a branch in this city consisting of only a few members, presided over by Mr. John Lloyd. That gentleman had charge of last night's meeting, and introduced the speaker, who said in substance:

IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE

to cover the vast range of the subject in one lecture, and his purpose would be to give his audience a general idea of the grounds on which Theosophists rested their belief. The object of his visit was merely to aid in creating a nucleus here which would encourage men to think and examine for themselves and to help carry out the true spirit of the brotherhood of man. The churches, and nations as well, fall far short of this aim.

The two classes interested in human progress are the philanthropic and the devout, and both, when any unfamiliar scheme for such progress is submitted to them, are sure to point out that mere beliefs have wholly failed. They say, with entire correctness, that not a new platform or church is needed, but something with an object and an impulse hitherto untried.

In the middle ages the church held that no one had a right to speak contrary to Scripture, and the latter said the winds came from the four corners of the world, therefore everybody must believe that the world was square, that the Bible said the world was six thousand years old, and those who did not believe in it must go to prison. But we know better now. Scientific men revolted, and we had materialism, but some of the churches have not yet given up these dogmas.

Spirituality is ingrained in man, but there is divorce between religion and science. Christianity would be good enough, but churchianity is all have had. While pretending to follow Jesus, we have been following the old law. The religion that covers the world is oriental in origin and spirit. The science of today comes from Aristotle, and we are only living over the past. Some think that Theosophy means Hindooism. Brahminism is the religion of India. We find in all religions one truth, most of them have one God, one heaven and the doctrine of rewards and punishments. We also find idolatry in some form almost everywhere, even in America we have the idolatry of the almighty dollar. Jesus and Buddha are at the basis alike, and this basis is what we want to find, an underlying truth. Greece and Rome had the greater and lesser mysteries in which all their noted men were taught the universal truth. Evolution was known then and we are going back to find those truths.

All forms in nature were first evolved in the astral plan and there were gathered the materials which made them visible. The story of Adam is only an allegory. Life in Eden was the period of astral bodies, and the material body was afterwards added. It is admitted that the pas-

sions and desires are separate from the will and judgment. At death both passion and desire unite with the astral body and the natural body is a cast-off garment. It is the astral body which comes back in spiritual re-encarnations. This itself will die, it is not the immortal nature. Here comes in the fact of re-incarnation. No one life is adequate to a man's development. Again and again must he come to earth, to taste its quality, to lay up its experience and its discipline, each career on earth determining the nature of its successor. Two things follow: 1—Our present state discloses what we have accomplished in past lives; 2—Our present habits decide what the next life shall be. The formative power is lodged in us; our aspiration prompting, our will effecting, the aim desired. Retribution or reward comes in re-incarnation. This is not new. By it we explain differences in character. Why is a child born in Whitechapel and you here? Without re-incarnation the Christian scheme is a failure. After years of investigation our greatest men are satisfied of the correctness of this theory. Only by it can genius be explained and not on the theory of heredity. The character is made by the ergo, itself. We can't change human character by death. Man is the key of evolution. Matter is life living receives the impressions of thought. We are all responsible for ourselves and to some extent for others as well.

Does any one follow in practice Christian ethics, the cheek and cheek and the coat and cloak doctrine? Here are Christian Gentiles trying to punish the "Mormons" for carrying out the doctrines of the Bible. The evils of the day cannot be cured by legislation.

As to the relation of this doctrine of the ego to evolution, when it has once reached man it never goes back to a lower order of existence, such as the mineral or vegetable. While all sprung from a common ancestor, yet man never sprung from the ape, nor is the ape a degenerated man. We are mortal. All were once in the mineral kingdom and have advanced. The spark once started never goes back. This movable and moving threshold of the consciousness, then, appears in all nature. It can only be the result of two causes. Either an inner and a higher consciousness is shaping and transforming matter, with a definite and intelligent end in view, or it is the result of blindly acting law, working, as we have said, under the despotic need of unintelligent force. And if we are compelled to admit an inner and a higher consciousness in any single effort of nature, the fortress is taken; for step by step we shall be forced to admit a higher consciousness in all; and the question as whether man has a higher consciousness, or soul, is once more answered by the biological argument in the affirmative.

And again we are driven to the conclusion that since this higher consciousness is not dependent in any way upon the matter which it shapes to further its ends—as a potter might—for its continued existence, then it does not and indeed can not die upon the death or transformation of the latter. On the contrary, analogy, points to the fact that, as a man wears out and casts aside as useless many tools or

garments in the course of the labor of a life, so his higher ego must wear out and renew many bodies in the course of its infinite pilgrimage. Here once again the fact of and reason for re-incarnation meets us squarely as the logical result of biological investigation. And as the universe is the creation of its Higher Self, or the Creative Logos of St. John, and which, though as spirit infinitely higher, still as the absolute includes also its lower self, or matter, so man's lower personality is the creation of his higher ego, which includes without being limited in any manner by it, except perhaps as a mechanic might be limited by more or less perfect or imperfect tools.

Man is represented by the Christian apostle as composed of body, soul and spirit. Theosophy views him as of sevenfold nature. First, the body, that which we see; second, the life principle; third, the astral body, which is material but more refined and ethereal than the body; next, the passions and desires, then the immortal soul or personal spirit, and last the universal spirit dwelling within.

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There are about 400,000 people within its territory, and it was quite certain some company would commence operations here and this was organized, believing a home association would be more careful of the interests of the people than one composed of residents. It is not only a home enterprise but its financial ability to carry out to the letter all of its agreements is beyond question.