

**** Arriving safely in New York, I proceeded directly to the Archbishop, who appointed me to give a mission in three French settlements. I reached *at night, no one being aware of my arrival*. On the following morning a man stopped me on the street, and asked me very politely if I was not a Catholic priest, and, upon my replying in the affirmative, he exclaimed :

“OH, THEN, IT IS TRUE—TOO TRUE: IT IS THE DEVIL !”

In reply to my request for an explanation of this strange expression, he said : “Oh, Father ! my daughter has been possessed by the devil for many years ; I see it all now !”

“You must not believe that so easily,” I replied.

“How can I doubt it,” he answered, “when only last night she told me that a ‘black coat’ had come to—, and repeated it this morning, saying : ‘You must go ; you will find him ; you must bring him. Oh !’ said she (or rather the devil), ‘how foolish I have been to take possession of this girl ! Now I shall suffer ; he comes to torment and expel me.’ † I was so struck by the talk that I started mechanically rather than believing that I should actually find you ; but now that you are here, will you not kindly come and judge for yourself ? It is only five miles distant : you can return again this evening. I came on horseback, but I will saddle another horse while you are taking breakfast.” I assented.

During our ride he acquainted me with all the particulars of the case.

“When my daughter was three years of age—she is now fifteen—she went, as was her custom, to play with the child of a widow at a neighbouring house ; the woman gave her some toast and molasses ; when she returned home, she complained of uneasiness in the stomach, and from that time forward became melancholy, and lost the cheerfulness and good health she had previously enjoyed. She was strange in her motions ; not positively ill, but always complaining of a weight on her stomach. She would not perform as usual little services about the house, but would act in an awkward and whimsical manner. Such has been the state of the child during the past twelve years.” I learned later that the mother—who, on one occasion, during the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, gave the girl some *blessed tea* to drink, when suddenly she broke out in a rage, slapped her mother, and exclaimed : “Oh ! I am found out—I must speak now ! but thou shalt pay for it.” Then the father, gently interposing, said : “What is that ?”—calling her by name—“you strike your mother !”

“It is not—who is here, it is I,” was the answer, in a rough, hollow voice, and growling like a dog.

“Who art thou ?” said the father.

“I am the devil,” was the answer, in similar tones.

“If thou art the cursed one,” replied the father, “give the reason why thou hast taken possession of my daughter.”

“No,” said he, “I won’t. What a fool I have been to come here ! Now I must be tormented ; he is coming ; he is on the sea” (words which were not then understood. I was, indeed, on sea at that time, having embarked at Havre as above mentioned, just the day previous). For a month she was more or less in fits of rage. About the end of February she said again : “He has arrived at last, he will come soon.” When asked whom she meant, she replied : “He that must expel me ; and there shall be two.” So much I learned of the facts that preceded my arrival. The mother then repeated what her husband had already told me about the girl’s reference to me during the previous evening.

* Our motive for the suppression of names in this relation will be obvious when we state that most, if not all, of the persons are still living. However, neither the narrator, who is well known to us, nor the other priest who witnessed the manifestations, would object to have their names given if it were thought expedient.—*Ed. C. M.*

† Now really that must have been an idiotic devil ! For had he but kept quiet, no one, least of all the new comer, could have ever found him out ; hence would not have turned him out of his chosen premises.—*Ed. T.*

I was truly surprised at this narrative, seeing clearly that the devil meant me. I said that I would see the girl, but first I recommended myself to God by kneeling down and reciting the *Veni Creator*.

(To be continued.)

FRAGMENTS OF OCCULT TRUTH.

BY A LAY CHIELA.

No. VII.

THE HUMAN LIFE WAVE.

PREVIOUS essays will have given the reader a general idea of the way in which the great evolutionary life-wave sweeps round and round the seven worlds which compose the planetary chain of which our earth is a part. Further assistance may now be offered with the view of expanding this general idea, into a fuller comprehension of the processes to which it relates. And no one additional chapter of the great story will do more towards rendering its character intelligible, than an explanation of certain phenomena connected with the progress of worlds, that may be conveniently called Obscurations.

Students of occult philosophy who enter on that pursuit with minds already abundantly furnished in other ways, are very liable to misinterpret its earlier statements. Every thing cannot be said at once, and the first broad explanations are apt to suggest conceptions in regard to details which are most likely to be erroneous with the most active-minded and intelligent thinkers. Such readers are not content with shadowy outlines even for a moment. Imagination fills in the picture, and if its work is undisturbed for any length of time, the author will be surprised afterwards to find that later information is incompatible with that which he had come to regard as having been distinctly taught in the beginning. Now in these *Fragments* the writer’s effort is to convey the information in such a way that hasty weed growths of the mind may be prevented as far as possible, but in this very effort it is necessary sometimes to run on quickly in advance, leaving details,—even very important details to be picked up during a second journey over the old ground. So now the reader must be good enough to go back to the explanation given in Fragment IV. of the evolutionary progress through the whole planetary chain.

Some few words were said even in that Fragment, concerning the manner in which the life impulse passed on from planet to planet in “rushes or gushes ; not by an even continuous flow.” Now the course of evolution in its earlier stages is so far continuous that the preparation of several planets for the final tidal wave of humanity may be going on simultaneously. Indeed the preparation of all the seven planets may, at one stage of the proceedings, be going on simultaneously, but the important point to remember is that the main wave of evolution,—the foremost growing wave,—cannot be in more than one place at a time. The process goes on in the way which may now be described, and which the reader may be the better able to follow, if he constructs either on paper or in his own mind a diagram consisting of seven circles (representing the worlds,) arranged in a ring. Calling them A, B, C, &c., it will be observed from what has been already stated that circle (or globe) D, stands for our earth. Now the kingdoms of Nature as known to occultists, be it remembered, are seven in number, three, having to do with astral and elementary forces, preceding the grosser material kingdoms in the order of their development. Kingdom 1 evolves on globe A, and passes on to B, as kingdom 2 begins to evolve on A. Carry out this system and of course it will be seen that

kingdom 1 is evolving on globe G, while kingdom 7, the human kingdom, is evolving on globe A. But now what happens as kingdom 7 passes on to globe B. There is no eighth kingdom to engage the activities of globe A. The great processes of evolution have culminated in the final tide wave of humanity,—which as it sweeps on, leaves a temporary lethargy of nature behind. When the life wave goes on to B, in fact, globe A passes for the time, into a state of obscurity. This state is not one of decay, dissolution or anything that can properly be called death. Decay itself, though its aspect is apt to mislead the mind, is a condition of activity in a certain direction, this consideration affording a clue to the meaning of a great deal which is otherwise meaningless, in that part of Hindu mythology which relates to the deities presiding over destruction. The obscurity of a world is a total suspension of its activity: this does not mean that the moment the last human monad passes on from any given world, that world is paralysed by any convulsion, or subsides into the enchanted trance of a Sleeping Palace. The animal and vegetable life goes on as before, for a time, but its character begins to recede instead of to advance. The great life-wave has left it and the animal and vegetable kingdoms gradually return to the condition in which they were found when the great life-wave first reached them. Enormous periods of time are available for this slow process by which the obscured world settles into sleep, for it will be seen that obscurity in each case lasts six times* as long as the period of each world's occupation by the human life-wave. That is to say, the process which is accomplished as above described in connexion with the passage of the life-wave from globe A to globe B, is repeated all along the chain. When the wave passes to C, B is left in obscurity as well as A. Then D receives the life wave, and A, B, C are in obscurity. When the wave reaches G, all the preceding six worlds are in obscurity. Meanwhile the life-wave passes on in a certain regular progression, the symmetrical character of which is very satisfactory to scientific instincts. The reader will be prepared to pick up the idea at once, in view of the explanations already given of the way in which humanity evolves through seven great races, during each round period on a planet,—that is to say, during the occupation of such planet by the tidal wave of life. The fourth race is obviously the middle race of the series. As soon as this middle point is turned, and the evolution of the fifth race on any given planet begins, the preparation for humanity begins on the next. The evolution of the fifth race on D for example, is commensurate with the evolution, or rather with the revival of the mineral kingdom on E, and so on. That is to say, the evolution of the sixth race on D, coincides with the revival of the vegetable kingdom on E, the seventh race on D, with the revival of the animal kingdom on E, and then when the last monads of the seventh race on D, have passed into the subjective state or world of effects, the human period on E begins and the 1st race begins its development there. Meanwhile the twilight period on the world preceding D, has been deepening into the night of obscurity in the same progressive way, and obscurity there has definitely set in when the human period on D, is past its half way point. But just as the heart of a man beats and respiration continues, no matter how profound his sleep, there are processes of vital action which go on in the resting world even during the most profound depths of its repose. And these preserve, in view of the next return of the human wave, the results of the evolution that preceded its first arrival. Recovery for the reawakening planet is a larger process than its subsidence into rest, for it has to attain a higher degree of perfection against

the return of the human life-wave, than that at which it was left when the wave last went onward from its shore. But with every new beginning, Nature is infused with a vigour of its own—the freshness of a morning,—and the later obscurity period, which is a time of preparation and hopefulness as it were, invests evolution itself with a new momentum. By the time the great life wave returns, all is ready for its reception.

In the first essay on this subject it was roughly indicated, that the various worlds making up our planetary chain were not all of the same materiality. Putting the conception of spirit at the north pole of the circle and that of matter at the south pole, the worlds of the descending arc vary in materiality and spirituality, like those of the ascending arc. This variation must now be considered more attentively if the reader wishes to realise the whole processes of evolution more fully than heretofore.

Besides the earth, which is at the lowest material point, there are only two other worlds of our chain which are visible to physical eyes,—the one behind and the one in advance of it. These two worlds, as a matter of fact, are Mars and Mercury,—Mars being behind and Mercury in advance of us,—Mars in a state of entire obscurity now as regards the human life-wave, Mercury just beginning to prepare for its next human period.*

The two planets of our chain that are behind Mars, and the two that are in advance of Mercury, are not composed of an order of matter which telescopes can take cognisance of. Four out of the seven are thus of an etherial nature, which people who can only conceive matter in its earthly form, will be inclined to call immaterial. But they are not really immaterial at all. They are simply in a finer state of materiality than the Earth, but their finer state does not in any way defeat the uniformity of Nature's design in regard to the methods and stages of their evolution. Within the scale of their subtle "invisibility," the successive rounds and races of mankind pass through their stages of greater and less materiality just as on this Earth; but whoever would comprehend them, must comprehend this Earth first, and work out their delicate phenomena by correspondential inferences. Let us return therefore to the consideration of the great life-wave, in its aspects on this planet.

Just as the chain of worlds treated as a unity, has its north and south, its spiritual and material pole,—working

* It may be worth while here to remark for the benefit of people who may be disposed, from physical science reading, to object that Mercury is too near the Sun, and consequently too hot to be a suitable place of habitation for Man,—that in the official report of the Astronomical Department of the United States on the recent "Mount Whitney observations," statements will be found that may check too confident criticisms of occult science along that line. The report in question was republished in *Nature*, and for the most part, within the last six months, in some of the Indian newspapers. The results of the Mount Whitney observations on selective absorption of solar rays showed, according to the official reporter, that it would no longer be impossible to suggest the conditions of an atmosphere which should render Mercury habitable, at the one extreme of the scale, and *Saturn* at the other. We have no concern with *Saturn* at present, nor if we had to explain on occult principles the habitability of Mercury, should we set to work with calculations about selective absorption. The fact is that ordinary science makes at once too much and too little of the Sun, as the store-house of force for the solar system,—too much in so far as the heat of planets has a great deal to do with another influence quite distinct from the Sun, an influence which will not be thoroughly understood till more is known than at present about the correlations of heat and magnetism, and of the magnetic, meteoric dust, with which inter-planetary space is pervaded. However it is enough,—to rebut any objection that might be raised against the explanations now in progress, from the point of view of loyal devotees of last year's science,—to point out that such objections would be already out of date. Modern science is very progressive,—this is one of its greatest merits,—but it is not a meritorious habit with modern scientists to think, at each stage of its progress, that all conceptions incompatible with the stage reached, must necessarily be absurd. If the present essay had been written twelve months ago, and remember that as regards the information it contains it might have been written twelve milleniums ago,—we could have said nothing more than the sentence last written, had some one argued in reference to Mercury, that Mr. Proctor had summed up all that could be said on the question, and had given judgment against its habitability. As it happens in this matter, Mount Whitney has risen up to refute the Proctorian judgment,—refuting it by wrong arguments indeed, but by arguments that will be acceptable in the Proctorian arena.

* Or we may say five times, allowing for the half period of morning which precedes and the half period of evening which follows the day of full activity.

from spirituality down through materiality, up to spirituality again,—so the rounds of mankind constitute a similar series which the chain of globes itself might be taken to symbolise. In the evolution of man in fact, on any one plane as on all, there is a descending and an ascending arc; spirit, so to speak, transforming itself into matter, and matter resolving itself into spirit. The lowest or most material point in the cycle thus becomes the inverted apex of physical intelligence, which is the masked manifestation of spiritual intelligence. Each round of mankind evolved on the downward arc (as each race of each round if we descend to the smaller mirror of the cosmos) must thus be more physically intelligent than its predecessor, and each in the upward arc must be invested with a more refined form of mentality commingled with greater spiritual intuitiveness. In the first Round therefore we find man, a relatively ethereal being compared even on earth with the state he has now attained here, not intellectual but super-spiritual. Like the animal and vegetable shapes around him, he inhabits an immense but loosely organised body. In the second Round he is still gigantic and ethereal, but growing firmer and more condensed in body—a more physical man, but still less intelligent than spiritual. In the third Round he has developed a perfectly concrete and compacted body, at first the form rather of a giant ape than of a true man, but with intelligence coming more and more into the ascendant. In the last half of the third Round his gigantic stature decreases, his body improves in texture, and he begins to be a rational man. In the fourth Round intellect, now fully developed, achieves enormous progress. The dumb races with which the Round begins, acquire human speech as we understand it. The world teems with the results of intellectual activity and spiritual decline. At the half way point of the fourth Round here, the polar point of the whole seven-world period is passed. From this point onwards the spiritual ego begins its real struggle with body and mind to manifest its transcendental powers. In the fifth Round the struggle continues, but the transcendental faculties are largely developed, though the struggle between these on the one hand, with physical intellect and propensity is fiercer than ever, for the intellect of the fifth Round as well as its spirituality is an advance on that of fourth. In the sixth Round humanity attains a degree of perfection both of body and soul,—of intellect and spirituality, which ordinary mortals of the present epoch will not readily realise in their imaginations. The most supreme combinations of wisdom, goodness and transcendental enlightenment which the world has ever seen or thought of, will represent the ordinary type of manhood. Those faculties which now, in the rare efflorescence of a generation, enable some extraordinarily gifted persons to explore the mysteries of Nature and gather the knowledge of which some crumbs are now being offered (through these writings and in other ways) to the ordinary world, will then be the common apanage of all. As to what the seventh Round will be like, the most communicative occult teachers are solemnly silent. Mankind in the seventh Round will be something altogether too god-like for mankind in the fourth Round to forecast its attributes.

During the occupation of any planet by the human life-wave, each individual monad is inevitably incarnated many times. This has been partly explained already in Fragment No. V. If one existence only be passed by the monad in each of the branch races through which it must pass at least once, the total number accomplished during a Round period on one planet, would be 343 ,—the third power of 7 . But as a matter of fact each monad is incarnated twice in each of the branch races, and also comes in, necessarily for some few extra incarnations as well. For reasons which is not easy for the outsider to divine, the possessors of occult knowledge are especially reluctant to give out numerical facts relating to cosmogony,

though it is hard for the uninitiated to understand why these should be withheld. At present, for example, we shall not be able to state what is the actual duration, in years, of the Round period. But a concession which only those who have long been students of occultism by the old method will fully appreciate, has been made about the numbers with which we are immediately concerned; and this concession is valuable at all events, as it helps to elucidate an interesting fact connected with evolution, on the threshold of which we have now arrived. This fact is that while the earth, for example, is inhabited as at present, by fourth Round humanity, by the wave of human life, that is to say, on its fourth journey round the circle of the worlds, there may be present among us some few persons, few in relation to the total number, who, properly speaking, belong to the fifth Round. Now, in the sense of the term at present employed, it must not be supposed that by any miraculous process, any individual unit has actually travelled round the whole chain of worlds once more often than his compeers. Under the explanations just given as to the way the tide-wave of humanity progresses, it will be seen that this is impossible. Humanity has not yet paid its fifth visit even to the planet next in advance of our own. But individual monads may outstrip their companions as regards their individual development, and so become exactly as mankind generally will be when the fifth Round has been fully evolved. And this may be accomplished in two ways. A man born as an ordinary fourth Round man, may, by processes of occult training, convert himself into a man having all the attributes of a fifth Round man and so become what we may call an artificial fifth-Rounder. But independently of all exertions made by man in his present incarnation, a man may also be born a fifth-Rounder, though in the midst of fourth Round humanity, by virtue of the total number of his previous incarnations.

If x stands for the normal number of incarnations which in the course of nature a monad must go through during a round period on one planet, and y for the margin of extra incarnations into which by a strong desire for physical life he may force himself during such a period, then, as a matter of fact, $24\frac{1}{2}(x \times y)$ may exceed $28x$; that is to say, in $3\frac{1}{2}$ Rounds a monad may have accomplished as many incarnations as an ordinary monad would have accomplished in four complete Rounds. In less than $3\frac{1}{2}$ Rounds the result could not have been attained, so that it is only now that we have passed the half way point of evolution on this half way planet, that the fifth-Rounders are beginning to drop in.

It is not possible in the nature of things that a monad can do more than outstrip his companions by more than one Round. This consideration notwithstanding Buddha was a sixth Round man, but this fact has to do with a great mystery outside the limits of the present calculation. Enough for the moment to say that the evolution of a Buddha relates to something more than mere incarnations within the limits of one planetary chain.

Since large numbers of lives have been recognised in the above calculations as following one another in the successive incarnations of an individual monad, it is important here, with the view of averting misconceptions to point out that the periods of time over which these incarnations range are so great that vast intervals separate them, numerous as they are. As stated above, we cannot just now give the actual duration of the Round-periods. Nor indeed could any figures be quoted as indicating the duration of all Round-periods equally, for these vary in length within very wide limits. But here is a simple fact which has been definitely stated on the highest occult authority we are concerned with. The present *race* of humanity, the present 5th *race* of the 4th Round period, began to evolve about one million of years ago. Now it is not yet finished; but supposing that a million years had constituted the complete life of the race, how would it have been divided up for each in-

dividual monad? In a race there must be rather more than 100, and there can hardly be 120 incarnations for an individual monad. But say even there have been already 120 incarnations for monads in the present race already. And say that the average life of each incarnation was a century, even then we should only have 12,000 years out of the million spent in physical existence, against 988,000 years spent in the subjective sphere, or there would be an average of more than 8,000 years between each incarnation.* Certainly these intervening periods are of very variable length, but they cannot contract to anything less than about 1,500 years, in any case,—leaving out of account of course the case of adepts who have placed themselves quite outside the operation of the ordinary law,—and 1,500 years if not a quite impossibly short, would be an extraordinarily brief interval between two rebirths.

THE CAVE OF THE ECHOES.

A STRANGE BUT A TRUE STORY.†

IN one of the distant governments of the Russian empire in a small town, on the very borders of Siberia, a mysterious tragedy occurred some twenty-five years ago.

About six versts from the little town of P——, famous for the wild beauty of its scenery, and for the wealth of its inhabitants—generally proprietors of mines and iron foundries—stood an aristocratic mansion. Its household consisted of the master, a rich old bachelor, and his brother, a widower and the father of two sons and three daughters. It was known that the proprietor, Mr. Izvertzoff, had adopted his brother's children, and, having formed an especial attachment for his eldest nephew, Nicholas, he had made him the sole heir to his numerous estates.

Time rolled on. The uncle was getting old, the nephew coming of age. Days and years had passed in monotonous serenity, when, on the hitherto clear horizon of the quiet family, appeared a cloud. On an unlucky day one of the nieces took it into her head to study the zither. The instrument being of purely Teutonic origin, and no teacher for its speciality residing in the neighbourhood, the indulgent uncle sent to St. Petersburg for both. After diligent research only one Professor could be found willing to trust himself in such close proximity to Siberia. It was an old German artist, who, sharing equally his earthly affections between his instrument and a pretty blonde daughter, would part with neither. And thus it came to pass that, one fine morning, the old Professor arrived at the mansion with his music-box under one arm and his fair Munchen leaning on the other.

From that day, the little cloud began growing rapidly; for, every vibration of the melodious instrument found a responsive echo in the old bachelor's heart. Music awakens love, they say, and the work begun by the zither was completed by Munchen's blue eyes. At the expiration of six months the niece had become an expert zither-player, and the uncle was desperately in love.

One morning, gathering his adopted family around him, he embraced them all very tenderly, promised to remember them in his will, and wound up by declaring his unalterable resolution to marry the blue-eyed Munchen. After which he fell upon their necks and wept in silent rapture. The family, understanding that they were cheated out of the inheritance, also wept; but it was for another cause. Having thus wept, they consoled themselves and tried their best to rejoice, for the old gentleman was sincerely beloved by all. Not all of them rejoiced though. Nicholas, who had been himself smitten to the heart by the pretty German, and found himself at once defrauded of his belle and his uncle's money, neither rejoiced nor consoled himself, but disappeared for a whole day.

* See in this connection page 35 of Vol. I of *Isis Unveiled*, beginning at the last paragraph of page 34.

† This story is given from the narrative of an eye-witness, a Russian gentleman, very pious, and fully trustworthy. Moreover, the facts are copied from the police records of P——. The eye-witness in question attributes it of course partly to divine interference and partly to the Evil One.—Ed.

Meanwhile, Mr. Izvertzoff had given orders to prepare his travelling carriage for the following morning. It was whispered that he was going to the Government town, at some distance from there, with the intention of altering his will. Though very wealthy, he had no superintendent on his estate, but kept his books himself. The same evening, after supper, he was heard in his room scolding angrily at his servant, who had been in his service for over thirty years. This man, Ivan, was a native of Northern Asia, from Kamtchatka. Brought up by the family in the Christian religion, he was thought very much attached to his master. A few days later, when the first tragic circumstance I am about to relate, had brought all the Police force to the spot, it was remembered that Ivan was drunk on that night; that his master, who had a horror of this vice, had paternally thrashed him and turned him out of his room; and that Ivan had been seen reeling out of the door and heard to mutter threats.

There was on the vast domain of Mr. Izvertzoff a curious cavern, which excited the curiosity of all who visited it. It exists to this day, and is well known to every inhabitant of P. * * * A pine forest, which begins nearly at the garden gate, climbs in steep terraces up to a long range of rocky hills, which it covers with a broad belt of impenetrable vegetation. The grotto leading to this place which is known as the "Cave of the Echoes," was situated about half a mile from the mansion, from which it appeared as a small excavation in the hill side, almost hidden by luxuriant plants, but not so as to prevent any person entering it from being readily seen from the terrace of the house. Entering the grotto, the explorer finds at the rear a narrow cleft, having passed which he emerges into a lofty cavern, feebly lighted through fissures in a ceiling fifty feet high. The cavern itself is immense, and could easily hold between two and three thousand people. A part of it was then paved with flags, and often used in the summer as a ball-room by picnic-parties. Of an irregular oval, it gradually narrows into a broad corridor, which runs for several miles under ground, intercepted here and there by other chambers, as large and lofty as the ball-room, but, unlike the first, impassable otherwise than in a boat, as they are always full of water. These natural basins have the reputation of being unfathomable.

On the margin of the first of these, was a small platform, with several mossy rustic seats arranged on it, and it is from this spot that all the phenomenal echoes are heard in all their weirdness. A word pronounced in a whisper or a sigh seems caught up by endless mocking voices, and instead of diminishing in volume, as honest echoes do, the sound grows louder at every successive repetition, until at last it bursts forth like the repercussion of a pistol-shot, and recedes in a plaintive wail down the corridor.

On the evening in question M. Izvertzoff had mentioned his intention to have a dancing party in this cave on his wedding day, which he had fixed for an early date. On the following morning, while preparing for his departure, he was seen by his family entering the grotto, accompanied only by the Siberian. Half an hour later Ivan returned to the mansion for a snuff-box, which his master had forgotten in his room, and went back with it to the cave. An hour later the whole house was startled with his loud cries. Pale and dripping with water, Ivan rushed in like a mad man and declared that M. Izvertzoff was nowhere to be found in the cave. Thinking he had fallen into the lake, he had dived into the first basin in search of him, and got nearly drowned himself.

The day passed in vain attempts to find the body. The Police filled the house, and louder than the rest in his despair seemed Nicholas, the nephew, who had returned home only to receive the sad tidings.

A dark suspicion fell upon Ivan, the Siberian. He had been struck by his master the night before, and had